

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Epiphany's Epistle



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EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
2375 GA Hwy 20 SE
Conyers, GA 30013
(770) 483-6222
conyerselc.org
staff@conyerselc.org

Reverend David Armstrong-Reiner,
Pastor

November 2024

GROWING in
GENEROSITY
Rooted in Faith



*“Follow Christ, Live Faithfully,
Serve All”*

General Information



We are an active church with friendly people who are journeying with God through Jesus Christ. Come join us!

For more information, please call us at 770-483-6222, email us at staff@conyerselc.org or visit our website www.conyerselc.org.

Sunday Morning Activities

Sunday Adult Forum - 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.

Worship Service is also streamed live via Facebook and the Epiphany YouTube pages

Weekly Online Devotion

Wednesdays - 7:00 p.m.

via Facebook Live on the Epiphany Facebook page



DEADLINE!

Sunday, November 24 is the deadline for information to be submitted for the December newsletter. You can email your news to the church office at staff@conyerselc.org. Thank You!

OFFICE HOURS: Please note that the church office hours will be 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, until further notice (except for adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances).

5 Ways to Give ...

- ✓ Bring your contribution with you to worship service on Sundays.
- ✓ Mail in your contribution to Epiphany Lutheran Church, 2375 GA Hwy. 20 SE, Conyers, GA 30013.
- ✓ Click on the DONATE tab on our web page at www.conyerselc.org
- ✓ Consider automatic giving. Contact the church office to find out how to set this up.
- ✓ Click on the QR code to give electronically.



From Pastor David

Consider for a moment what Epiphany Lutheran Church means in your life. What brings you here? What keeps you here? What gives you hope and meaning? As this place has given you a sense of home or family or community, so you by your presence make this place a home or family or community for others. Your generosity allows all of this to happen.

The activity in our church building itself witnesses to our generosity:

- **Worship:** Our worship attendance keeps growing, so that we often see over 70 people in church, praising God. With our streaming services, we reach another 30 more households each week. Our choir leads us in praise each Sunday. Our bell choir rings out on a regular basis.
- **Faith Formation:** 12-15 adults gather for our Sunday adult class. Children come for Children's Church. Confirmation classes have begun again with 3 students. 5-8 men study Scripture each Thursday. Our women's Bible Study now meets twice a month with 5-10 attending.
- **InfoLife:** If you wander down the hall after our worship, you will hear the worship of InfoLife Church led by Pastor Trujuan Humphries. 25 people praise God each Sunday, with another 250 (!) reached online.
- **Boy Scouts:** On Monday and Thursday evenings Troop 447 meets here with an average of over 40 youth attending between their Cub Scout Pack and Boy Scout Troop.
- **Quilters:** Two different quilting groups bring their crafting skills inside our building with over 30 women here each month. These groups have been with us for the past fifteen years!
- **Special Needs:** On Saturday mornings special needs adults practice for an upcoming program. Last July we hosted a Special Needs Vacation Bible School with over 20 special needs children and adults.

At the same time, we face some grim realities. Though those who pledge give beyond their pledge, the number of pledges are down due to deaths and to those who have moved. Our expenses rose – a fiscal reality we all experience. Though we are blessed with a healthy endowment fund, we used \$65,000 from that fund this past year to pay for regular expenses. These financial realities are not sustainable for our long-term future.

Our church council is seeking to do all we can to address our financial situation.

- **We have analyzed each line item in the budget**, cutting and saving expenses wherever possible. As one example, we are negotiating with our internet provider in order to reduce that expense.
- We are **exploring and implementing alternate revenue streams**. Weight Watchers and InfoLife Church continue to rent from us. We are growing in relationship with TELIC Empowerment, which works with the special needs community. Kosrae Church will begin worshiping here in this coming month. We rent our facility on a regular basis, and we are actively seeking ways to make our space known further.
- The Endowment Committee has invited Ana Lugo, our Region 9 Gift Planner, to return to Epiphany on December 8 to encourage us to consider Epiphany for a Legacy Gift and as a part of our Estate Planning.

From Pastor David

So as we approach our Intent Sunday on November 10, we need your help:

- **For those who have pledged this past year, THANK YOU!** Your commitment and contribution to Epiphany allow our ministry to continue and thrive. As you fill out your intent for 2025, please know the difference you make. If you can increase your pledge – even by the smallest amount – you grow the impact our congregation makes.
- **For those who give but have not pledged, PLEASE CONSIDER DOING SO now.** Your pledge helps us to know the resources we are working with in our budgeting process. All that happens at Epiphany happens because of your contributions. We need your help and support as we move forward in faith.
- **For those who have not given, LET THIS MOMENT BE THE START of a new journey.** Fill out an intent card today. Return it on November 10. Join us fully in making Christ known.
- **For all of us together, help us MAKE KNOWN our congregation to the community.** Invite your friends and neighbors to be a part of us. Invite them to hear the empowering message of God's grace.

Despite our struggles, all of you continue to witness to our core value of **ENTHUSIASTIC GENEROSITY**. You live a grateful life that shares abundantly from your blessings. We call our generosity enthusiastic, because of the joy that overflows into our lives as we give of ourselves. We have heard of the impact of our generosity from the stories over these past few weeks.

- **TELIC Empowerment** shared about how our ministry with the special needs community created a desire to partner with us to further our impact.
- Our gifts and involvement with **Phoenix Pass** allow the story of success we heard from Ariston and her children.
- **Pastor Juan Humphries** witnessed to how our partnership together shows our community the unity we have in Christ.

Paul describes generosity this way:

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

Our grateful response in generosity shows the world that God provides us everything. We have enough, more than enough to share. And we live in the hope for an even more robust ministry next year.

We still feel the financial struggle, but these stories remind us that we can and will make a difference. We have a shared vision that this congregation and the ministries we support are more important than ever.

Prayerfully consider how you will share of God's abundance. Pray about how you can be more generous. On Intent Sunday, November 10, bring your intent card to declare the generosity you intend to share with us.

Thank you for being part of this exciting congregation. Pray for our common work together as we continue to reach out with the Gospel.

In Christ,
Pastor David

Congregation News & Activities



All Saints Sunday November 3

After the Reformation, Lutherans adopted the celebration of All Saints Sunday as a time to remember those members who passed away in the past year.

Meghan Younkin - 11/26/2023

Gary Lindemann - 3/2/2024

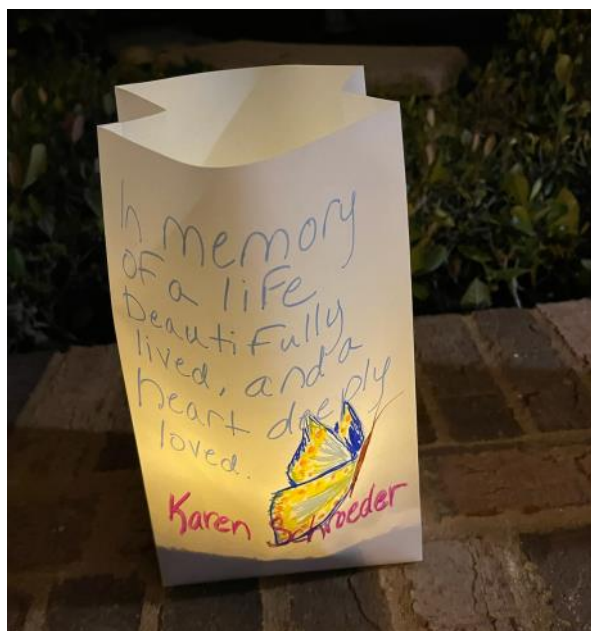
Cynthia Parker - 3/9/2024

Bruce Ahlstrand - 6/1/2024

Brigitte McMillan - 6/28/2024

Sheila Sipe - 8/21/2024

As part of our celebration, decorated luminaries have also been created and set out in honor of deceased congregation members and loved ones. The luminaries will be displayed daily through Wednesday, November 6th.





November 3

As we give thanks for the many gifts and blessings in our lives this month, so we give thanks for our pets. Please bring your pets for a Blessing of the Animals service on Sunday, November 3, at 1 p.m. in the Pavilion.

Upcoming Presentation on Charitable Giving Through an Estate Plan

The Endowment Fund was established here at Epiphany in 2016 after a bequest from the estate of Ona Lester. Since then, there have been additional donations following the deaths of Bob Lange and Frank Zahm. Every year, distributions are made from the fund to support non-budgeted programs for the congregation, as well as for outside charitable organizations in the community and beyond.

This important ministry can continue to grow if donations continue to be added to the fund. Some members of the congregation have included Epiphany in their wills. If you are unsure how that can be done, please consider attending an upcoming presentation by Pastor Ana Lugo. Pastor Lugo is the Regional Gift Planner for the ELCA Foundation, Florida-Bahamas and Southeastern Synods.

Pastor Lugo will be at Epiphany on Sunday December 8. She will give a presentation before the service, at 9:00 am, and again after the service. Please plan to attend this important presentation.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor David or Bryan Peterson (Endowment Committee Chair).

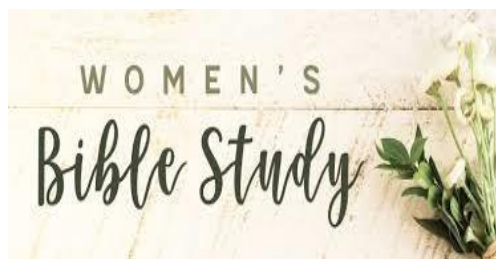
Congregation News & Activities

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS

Join us as we continue our alternating series of classes at 9 a.m.
in the Fellowship Hall:

Contradictions in the Bible - What do we do when passages do not line up?

The Not-So-Minor Prophets - An overview of the last twelve books of the
Old Testament



*The Women's Bible Study meets on the
1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month and
will be studying Luther's Small Catechism.
Come join us as we learn about our Lutheran faith.*

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Thursday Mornings
8:00 to 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship Hall

*Pastor David leads a discussion on the
upcoming Sunday's lessons.*



Fellowship Committee Update

This month, we have rescheduled our Games Night, which was postponed in the wake of the chemical fire in Conyers. The new date is Wednesday, November 13th. Come at 6:00 to enjoy chicken salad sandwiches (note menu change), with friendly competitive game playing starting at 7:00. Bring your own games along with a snack to share.

We also have a request for our Epiphany friends. The kitchen needs to replenish its stock of clean, plastic containers (8oz to 24oz) to use for leftover food. Examples would include sour cream containers, Cool Whip containers, to-go containers, etc. Our only request is that they have a secure lid. There will be a bin in the Narthex where you can drop them off. Reusing containers is easy, cost effective, and a great way to declutter your kitchen. Thanks.

Margaret Hill & Julie Peterson

Social Ministry

For November, we are once again donating to Rockdale Emergency Relief for their Thanksgiving food baskets to the needy in our community. Our commitment is 100 each – 5lb all-purpose flour, 4lb sugar, canned pumpkin puree. Please leave your donations in the narthex. Financial donations to purchase the items can also be made. Indicate RER and amount on your envelope. The deadline for receipt is Sunday, November 17.



Every Step Walking Fellowship combines physical walking with faith & fellowship to encourage a healthy living. Good for body, mind, heart and spirit. Weekly walks will include 20 minutes of safe & gentle indoor walking, 20 minutes of devotion, sharing & prayer, and an optional 20-minute "extra mile" of moderate outdoor walking. Open to all regardless of physical limitations.



Weekly walks meet at the Fellowship Hall on Thursday mornings @ 9:30AM.

Contact Vicar James,

vicar.james@epiphanyelc.org

or 404-304-4763.

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

The Epiphany Women's Book Club will meet at 7 pm on Tuesday, November 19 in the church library. We will discuss "Bright Lights, Big Christmas" by Mary Kay Andrews. All women of Epiphany are invited. For more information call Evelyn Brown at 404-825-4615 or e-mail her at evbrown56@gmail.com.



Meals On Wheels Needs Your Help!

A short 1.5 to 2 hour commitment is all it takes on a Saturday morning to ensure that people in need in our community receive a meal. Has not knowing what's required held you back from volunteering? If so, you are welcome to either ride along to see how it all works, or I can give you a complete written explanation. Just contact Tim Lohr at 404-807-2192, or by email at timlohr@icloud.com. Otherwise, you can simply write your name on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

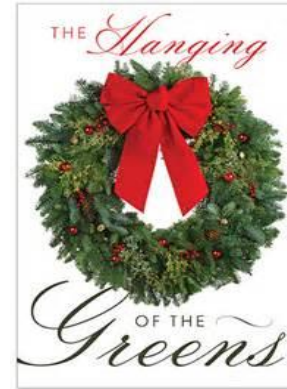
*Tim Lohr

Congregation News & Activities



Donations are needed to purchase **poinsettias** for the Sanctuary for Christmas. Those who donate will receive one of the poinsettias after the holidays. The cost of the poinsettias is \$15 for the 6" and \$30 for the 8".

The signup sheet is on the table in the narthex with space if you'd like to make a dedication. Notate "poinsettia" on your check and place in the offering basket. Thank you!



Volunteers are needed to come out on Saturday, November 30 at 10:00 a.m. to decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas. Please come out and lend a hand!

Did you know Kroger has a Community Rewards Program?

This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your Shopper's Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Card. Here's how it works:

- 1. Create a digital account.** A digital account is needed to participate in Kroger Community Rewards. If you already have a digital account, simply link your Shopper's Card to our account code so that credit for all your transactions will apply toward Epiphany Lutheran Church.
- 2. Link your Card to an organization.**
 - a. Sign in to your digital account at: www.kroger.com/account/communityrewards/
 - b. Enter Epiphany's Organization Number: LR632 under "Find an Organization".
 - c. Click the "Enroll" button under Epiphany Lutheran Church
- 3. Your organization earns.** Any transactions moving forward using the Shopper's Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, at no added cost to you. Kroger donates annually to participating organizations based on your percentage of spending as it relates to the total spending associated with all participating Kroger Community Rewards organizations.

Thanks for your participation!





NAMI

National Alliance on Mental Illness

**Rockdale & Newton
Counties GA**

Supporting Rockdale, Newton, Jasper, Walton, Butts, & Morgan Counties.



1st MONDAYS
6:30 to 8:00 PM

NAMI Family Support Groups are peer-led for adults who are supporting loved ones with mental health challenges. We meet monthly to share our experiences and offer each other hope and empathy in a non-judgemental space.

There are two ways to participate in our FREE Monthly Support Groups.

In-person at the **Grit & Grace Addiction Recovery Support Center**
located at **1400 Parker Rd. SE, Conyers GA, 30094**

OR

by Phone or Video using Zoom



<https://tinyurl.com/NAMIRnFamilySupportGroup>

Visit us online at **namirockdalenewton.org**

Call the NAMI HelpLine (M - F, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m., ET.) at
1-800-950-NAMI (6264) for support and connection to resources.

***During a Mental health or substance use crisis Call 988
or the Georgia Crisis and Access Line at 1-800-715-4225.
If you dial 911 ask for a mental health trained police officer.***

Birthdays & Anniversaries

THIS MONTH'S birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Austin Ruffin | 20 Isaac Allen |
| 2 Abby Harper | Jackson Atkins |
| 3 Phoenix Kenney | 22 Frank Harbin |
| 6 Bob Hickly | Mary Schlueter |
| 7 Jo Hickly | 23 Joshua McCurry, Jr. |
| 10 Peggy Lawrence | 26 Jennifer Kenney |
| 12 Ophlin Facey | Stephen Kuhn |
| 17 Achol Bol | 30 Kathleen Roston |
| Neal Lange | |
| Bill Schroeder | |
| Phillip Viohl | |
| 18 Don Harris | |
| Kaylee Wilson | |

THIS MONTH'S anniversaries

	Date	Years
John & Megan Beaucher	8	16
Phillip & Carrie Viohl	14	26
George & Mary Leach	18	59
John & Ruth Winner	21	9
Donald & Susan Jenkins	25	33

And Just For Fun...

Pastor David celebrating his beloved and World Series winning Los Angeles Dodgers!



Council Meeting Minutes - October 15th

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order @ 5:40 PM. In attendance were Pastor David, Vicar James, Peggy Lawrence, Riki DeLamar, Anita Smith, Nancy Stover, Tracy Parker, Deidre London, and Tim Lohr.

The group had sharing time.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

The Minutes from the previous meeting (9/22/24) were reviewed: Motion was made to accept the minutes with one correction: Spelling of Kosrae Church is with a K instead of a C by Anita Smith and seconded by Tracy Parker to accept the Minutes with this correction. Motion carried.

AGENDA:

The agenda for today's meeting was presented and reviewed. Motion was made to accept the agenda as presented by Tracy Parker. Motion was seconded by Riki DeLamar and carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

1. FINANCIAL SECRETARY Sharon Skinner
2. TREASURER Tracy Parker

Operating income for September was \$20,265.48 with \$827.42 in designated funds. Total expenses were \$27,850.89. Discussion about the deficit. The only place we have extra funds is the Endowment Fund. Pastor advised that November and December tend to have increased giving, but that October's receipts were down from normal. This is partially due to lost congregation members. Tracy indicated that she is teaching Anita the process for financials. They are working a couple of hours a week. Anita is learning how to process invoices and payroll, scanning and attaching and setting up accounts for special projects and ministries. They have identified there are 2 systems for cable. Getting a larger router may decrease costs by allowing us to cancel one of them. They will investigate further. We also have a 3rd phone line for the fax machine. Do we still need it? QuickBooks upgrade it needed to allow for QuickBooks to be used for budgeting purposes. The cost for this is \$17.00 per month. A member of the council volunteered to cover that cost monthly so that we could be more efficient. Kosrae Church has given us a deposit and the first month's rent towards meeting at the church. Sharon Skinner is processing giving statements. We are starting the stewardship drive. Motion made to request \$25,000 from the endowment fund to the operating budget by Peggy Lawrence and seconded by Tracy Parker. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

See written report. There was one correction, Member visits was 5, not 4.

1. Stewardship Campaign has started.
2. Confirmation class is having guest speakers.
3. Internship cluster retreat in Hickory, NC. Will be October 21-22.
4. Pastor will be on vacation 11/20 to 11/29. Vicar James will be preaching during his absence.

Statistics: (September 23 – October 15)

Worship: 3 Sundays

Hospital Visits:

Member Visits: 5

Counseling: 1 pre-marital

Life Passages:

Pastors Meeting: 1 Pastor Preaching

Committee Meetings:

Education: 2 Confirmation, 3 Men's Bible Studies, 1 Women's Bible Studies, 3 Adult Ed Classes

Other Meetings/Events:

Community Visits: 1

Council Meeting Minutes - October 15th

VICAR'S REPORT:

See written report. The Walking Fellowship group had 7 attendees this week.

OLD BUSINESS:

Building needs, improvements, and updates. Some improvements have been made to the narthex. It still needs to be painted. We have had a member volunteer to sponsor refinishing (stripping and waxing) the floor in the fellowship hall. We will start obtaining quotes. Still need to get quotes on replacing the A/C systems. Our phone system is old and needs upgrades. Two toilets out of order in the women's restroom. ** Late note 10/17 – the toilets have been repaired – thank you Bruce!

Kosrae Church will be meeting 3 times monthly at 4 PM. They are paying \$750 per month for building usage.

NEW BUSINESS:

Nominating Committee - Pastor will be forming a nominating Committee to find persons willing to serve on council for 2025.

Pre-budget matters – we need to add lawn maintenance as a line item in next year's budget. Certain aspects of the mowing need to be supplemented. It was requested that if any of the ministries need earmarked funds, to please make a request so that it can be included in next year's budget.

REPORTS:

PRESIDENT – No written report.

VICE PRESIDENT – No written report.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Discipleship – No written report.
2. Outreach – See written report.
3. Nurture – See written report.
4. Administration – No written report.
5. Worship – No written report.

Columbarium Report: None.

The November Council Meeting will be held 11/17/24 after the service. Anita, Tim, and Tracy will provide lunch. There was a Motion to adjourn at 7:15 pm and was carried. Session closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rikita S DeLamar