

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Epiphany's Epistle



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## December 2023



***“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](mailto:staff@conyerselc.org) or visit our website [www.conyerselc.org](http://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, December 24, is the deadline for information to be submitted for the January newsletter. You can email your news to the church office at [staff@conyerselc.org](mailto: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).

### **4 Ways to Give ...**

- ✓ Bring 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](http://www.conyerselc.org)
- ✓ Consider automatic giving. Contact the church office to find out how to set this up.



## **HOLIDAY CLOSINGS**

**The church office will be closed  
on Monday, December 25 and  
Monday, January 1.  
Have a blessed and safe holiday!**

## *From Pastor David*

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Christmas decorations seemed as if they went up especially early this year. Halloween was barely over before I began to see Christmas lights. And though I encourage you to put up your decorations up this month, please remember one thing even now: It is not Christmas yet. This is the season of Advent.

For many, if we think of Advent at all, we think about Advent calendars, where we open a small box each day for the candy inside. They line themselves up to get us ready for Christmas Day, and perhaps the small candy itself is only preparing our stomachs for the Christmas Feast to come.

Yet, if we relegate Advent to that calendar with candy, we miss out on an opportunity for a spiritual awakening.

Yes, Advent is the four-week period before Christmas. Yes, Advent is about waiting and preparation. But what are we waiting and preparing for?

Too often I have been guilty of viewing Advent with “Christmas lenses.” I saw Advent only as a time of waiting for the birth to happen, a waiting for Christmas. I treated Advent like the eighth month of pregnancy, when the only thing you can think about is, “When is this baby finally going to arrive?”

But Advent invites us to prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus. Advent joyfully anticipates a time when all things will be made new. Advent invites us to prepare our lives to be aligned with God’s inbreaking Reign.

Advent invites us to join in where we see the Spirit at work, where God is preparing a way. When we see works of love, peace, mercy, and justice, we join in and declare, “Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel ....”

Advent invites us to look beyond the cynicism and despair of the world and to see where hope is breaking through. We do not have to be defined by hatred and division. We look to the God who loves us and makes us one. And when we see how the former things are passing away and the new is coming, we sing once again, “Oh come, Oh come, Emmanuel ....”

Advent invites us to see the world in a new way. When we are tempted to see the world in despair, Advent invites us to see God’s hope for the world. When we are tempted to see the brokenness of the world, Advent invites us to see God’s healing and wholeness. When we are tempted to see the division in the world, Advent invites us to God’s unity. When we are tempted to see hatred and exclusion, Advent invites us to see God’s all-inclusive, unconditional love. And even knowing that all this will never completely be fulfilled in our lifetime, even so we pray, “Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel ....”

Advent also invites us to see that Jesus not only came two thousand years ago. Jesus will not only come again sometime in the future. Jesus comes to us each and every day. Sometimes Jesus comes in expected ways. Jesus comes to us in worship, in prayer, in communion, in baptism. But then – just like that manger so long ago – Jesus also comes in unexpected ways. Jesus comes in a sunset. Jesus comes in a smile of a stranger or a hug from a loved one. Jesus comes when we help someone. Jesus comes when we receive help from others. Sometimes Jesus is revealed in a moment of quiet that overwhelms us. And as we keep our eyes and our hearts open to the countless ways that Jesus is revealed, we live out the prayer, “Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel ....”

So in this season of Advent, let us move away from simply awaiting the birth of Christmas. Let us instead embrace the next Coming of Christ and how our lives are transformed in anticipation of it.

In Christ,  
Pastor David

## **ADVENT ADULT CLASS**

Come and join us on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. during Advent as we explore Advent hymns and reflect on their meaning for us.

December 3 - Advent Class  
December 10 - Advent Class  
December 17 - Advent Class  
December 24 - No Class  
December 31 - No Class

## ***Wednesday Evening Advent Services 7:00 p.m.***



Wednesday evening Advent Services will be held on  
December 6, 13 & 20 at 7:00 p.m.

Our evening will begin at 6:00 p.m. with supper in the Main Hall. At 7:00 p.m. we will begin worship together in the Sanctuary. We will be using the popular Holden Evening Prayer Service. The following groups will host our soup and sandwich supper:

December 6<sup>th</sup>: Music, Book Club, Social Ministry  
December 13<sup>th</sup>: Worship, Fellowship, Men's Bible Study  
December 20<sup>th</sup>: Church Council, WELCA, WINGS



## **Annual Congregational Meeting Part I Sunday, December 17**

The annual congregational meeting, part I, will convene on Sunday, December 17, immediately following worship service. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.



# Congregation News & Activities



## MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

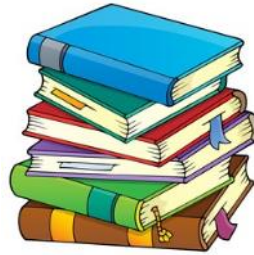
Thursday Mornings  
8:00 to 9:00 a.m.  
Fellowship Hall

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

## WOMEN'S Bible Study



We invite you to join us for the Women's Bible Study on Tuesday, December 5, at 9:30 a.m. This year we will be exploring the richness and the beauty of the Psalms. For December, we will discuss Psalms 27, 63 & 139.



## WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

The Epiphany Women's Book Club will meet on Monday, December 11, at 6 p.m. in the church library for our potluck dinner and to pick our books for next year. Any woman in the church is invited to join us, just bring a food item and book suggestions. For more information call Evelyn Brown at 404-825-4615 or e-mail [evbrown56@gmail.com](mailto:evbrown56@gmail.com).

## SOCIAL MINISTRY

The postcards for our Christmas gift outreach event are located in the Narthex. Please take a card and sign up on the sheet provided. All gifts need to be back to the church office by Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Please attach the postcard to your wrapped gift. Thanks so much.



## 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](mailto:timlohr@icloud.com). Otherwise, you can simply write your name on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

\*Tim Lohr



**COVINGTON-CONYERS  
CHORAL GUILD**

Roger Waters, Musical Director & Conductor  
Steve Traylor, Assistant Director  
Michael Davis, Accompanist

*presents*

*We Wish You  
Christmas*

A HOLIDAY CONCERT  
FILLED WITH SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

**Thursday • December 7, 2023**

**Friday • December 8, 2023**

**First Baptist Church  
1139 Usher Street NW  
Covington, GA 30014**

**DOORS OPEN AT 7:30 P.M.  
CONCERT BEGINS AT 8:00 P.M.**

**Tickets are \$15 per person.  
Purchase from any  
Choral Guild member,  
at the door the night of the  
performance, or visit our  
website at [www.choralguild.org](http://www.choralguild.org)  
to purchase online.**



## ***Christmas Eve Services*** ***Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>*** ***4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.***

**Our Family Carol Service (sing the familiar carols of Christmas with candle lighting and Holy Communion) will be at 4:00 p.m. and our Festive Holy Communion Service (our traditional Holy Communion Service with candle lighting) will be at 7:30 p.m.**



***There will be no 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, December 24.***



## ***Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>*** ***10:00 a.m.*** ***with Holy Communion***

*Why do we have a Service of Lessons and Carols? Did you know that Christmas is not a one-day celebration on December 25<sup>th</sup>? Christmas is a 12-day season that **begins** on Christmas Day. For that reason, we refrained from singing Christmas carols during Advent, waiting for the birth of Jesus.*

*So, on this Sunday we will let loose with the carols we love to sing. We dwell with the words of the Christmas story in all its fullness and richness. We bathe in the waters of Christmas, rejoicing in the midst of the twelve days. Our Service of Lessons and Carols proclaims to those around us that we do not take one day to lift up God's Incarnation in Jesus. Rather, we lift up the twelve days until the light of Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup> and we let Jesus be born into our lives anew.*

## ***Epiphany of Our Lord Service*** ***with Holy Communion*** ***Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 p.m.***

***\* Burning of the greens will follow the service \****



# *Birthdays & Anniversaries*

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- 1 Brigitte McMillan
- 4 Miriam Holcomb
  - Jessica Lange
  - Abel Mauldin
- 5 Rene Kuhn
- 13 Noel Skinner
- 15 Andy Hill
- 16 Becky Jones
  - Sierra Stanley
- 18 Cassandra Johnson
- 20 George Withers
- 21 Jason Baker
- 22 Aaron Hulschulze
- 25 Gwen Hulschulze
  - Kase Nieman
  - John Winner
- 29 Claire Lawrence



	Date	Years
Noel & Sharon Skinner	8	45
Tim & Theresa Lohr	14	49
Wayne & Kim Johnson	31	41



# *Council Meeting Minutes - October 15*

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Call to Order: President Rene Kuhn

Opening Prayer: Pastor David Armstrong-Reiner

Monthly Updates by Council Members

Attendance Roll Call: Present: Pastor David Armstrong-Reiner, Doris Webb, Rene Kuhn, Peggy Lawrence, Bill Schroeder, Tim Lohr, Anita Smith, Pat Viohl, Sheila Sipe, Michael Thompson, Kathy Roston

Note: We want to thank Peggy Lawrence for the wonderful quiche pies provided and jars of dessert, and Anita Smith for the fruit bowl.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Approved unanimously

Adoption of Meeting Agenda: Approved unanimously

Financial Reports:

- Financial Secretary: Sharon Skinner reports
- Treasurer: Financial report unanimously approved

September Financials:

- Total Expenses - \$35,181.62
- Total Contributions - \$18,074.26
- General Checking Account: -\$770.58
- Tracy emailed the council that she had to transfer \$5,500 from the Endowment account in September (remaining Balance \$7,916.86)

Pastor's Report: Pastor David Armstrong-Reiner

- Update on sick and shut-in members
- Intruder in the building

Old Business:

- Finance Committee update (tabled)
  - a. Financial policies and procedures
  - b. Budget preview
  - c. Need for co-treasurer
- Contract with Sow and Grow Foundation (done)
- Nominating Committee (tabled)

New Business: Tabled

Reports: Tabled

- President: (Rene Kuhn)
- Vice President: (Peggy Lawrence)
- Stewardship Committee Reports:
  - Administration: (Kathy Roston & Pat Viohl, Liaisons)
  - Discipleship: (Peggy Lawrence & Michael Thompson, Liaisons)
  - Nurture: (Bill Schroeder & Doris Webb, Liaisons)
  - Outreach: (Samantha Granville, Anita Smith, Tim Lohr, Liaisons)
  - Worship: (Tracy Parker & Sheila Sipe, Liaisons)

Next Month Meeting Date: November 19, 2023

Lunch will be provided: Kathy Roston and Pat Viohl on November 19, 2023.

Submitted by: Doris Webb, Secretary of the Epiphany Church Council (2023)