

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Epiphany's Epistle



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July 2026



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

*Reverend David Armstrong-Reiner,
Pastor*

***“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.

Coffee Hour - 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast 2nd Sundays monthly @ 8:30 a.m.

Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.

*Worship Service and special services
are also streamed
live via Facebook and the Epiphany
YouTube pages*

DEADLINE!

Sunday, July 26 is the deadline for information to be submitted for the August 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

Two hundred and fifty years ago, on July 4, 1776, the colonists declared their independence from Britain and sought to found themselves on principles of freedom, so that all may know “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” On this day we celebrate that birthday and the incredible blessing of this country in which we live.

Yet, the reality of our country is that we have grown into what our Declaration of Independence meant when it said that “all ... are created equal.”

When our country was founded, the right to vote was extended only to property-owning white males. Not until 1856 was the right to vote extended to all white men in this country.

And we know the history of African-Americans in this country. The Constitution only considered them three-fifths of a human being. They were not considered equal. And even after the Emancipation Proclamation freeing them from slavery in 1863 and the passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment in 1868 and 1870, full voting rights would not be granted until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Women were not granted the right to vote until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

Native Americans would not be fully granted the right to vote until 1924, though some states would continue to disenfranchise them until 1948.

Chinese immigrants were not allowed to vote until 1943.

Eighteen to twenty year olds would not be allowed to vote until 1971.

We have proclaimed freedom and equality as a country, but we confess that we have often failed to live up to that freedom and equality – even for our own people.

And, so while we will celebrate our ideals with fireworks and band music, while we marvel in this “grand experiment” with speeches, flags, and barbecues, we also challenge ourselves to continue to fight against those forces among us that would suggest that such freedom and equality are limited to specific types of people.

I wonder, however, whether we have taken the time to reflect on what freedom really means. We often think that freedom means doing whatever you want, but that view is short-sighted and immature. It has always been the case that freedom of speech or religion or assembly only extends to the point that others are not harmed.

Paul challenges us to think of freedom differently when he says, “For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1) In Christ we are set free from any past life or struggle. We call this freedom “forgiveness.” Yet, just like in the American political system, this freedom does not mean that we can do whatever we want. Paul says that our freedom gives us a responsibility. Freedom does not turn us in on our selves. It turns us out toward others. We are freed to love, freed to serve.

Martin Luther put it this way: “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly free servant of all, subject to all.”

(continued on next page)

Congregation News & Activities

Whom have you been freed to love? Whom have you been called to serve? How has God's freedom and forgiveness empowered you to be God's presence and to live God's kingdom?

May the celebration of our country's freedom inspire you to live in God's freedom – subject to none, subject to all.

In Christ,
Pastor David




Sunday Coffee Hour
We encourage you to drop in for a coffee and fellowship hour anytime from 9-9:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday.

Breakfast is Served Monthly!

Every second Sunday

8:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall


A freewill offering will be collected.



Women's Bible Study meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Library and will resume August 18th for the new year. Join us!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

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



COME JOIN OUR BIBLE Study

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



CALLING ON ALL CRAFT PEOPLE. THE ALTAR GUILD WOULD LOVE TO HAVE MORE BANNERS TO PUT UP. WE HAVE THREE LOCATIONS TO HANG THEM UP. IN THE SANCTUARY, NARTHEX AND IN THE HALLWAY TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. THE BANNER NEEDS TO BE 44 INCHES WIDE AND CAN BE 60 TO 80 INCHES LONG. WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE GROUPS MAKE THEM OR ANY INDIVIDUAL. THERE IS NO TIME FRAME FOR THIS AND WHEN YOU COMPLETE ONE JUST LET MARGARET HILL OR EVELYN

BROWN KNOW AND WE WILL PUT THEM UP. YOU MAKE THEM FOR ANY SPECIAL SEASON OR TO BE DISPLAYED DURING THE YEAR. LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT YOU COME UP WITH.



*Thanks to all who contributed to
The Refuge Center's annual
Baby Bottle Campaign.
They are busy counting donations
and will notify us of our total
contribution in the next few weeks!*

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!

Social Ministry

The Social Ministry project for July is collecting school supplies. We will distribute them to Elks Aidmore, Project ReNeWal and to STRIVE. We need pencils, erasers, pens, regular notebooks, spiral notebooks, composition notebooks, college and wide rule notebook paper, glue sticks, crayons and colored pencils. We will have tubs set up for your donations in the narthex starting Sunday, July 5.

~ Evelyn Brown



WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

The Epiphany Women's Book Club will meet on Tuesday, July 21 at 7 p.m. in the Library. Any woman in the church is invited to join us. For more information call Evelyn Brown at 404-825-4615 or e-mail evbrown56@gmail.com. The remaining book selections for 2026 are:

July: "The Stolen Life of Colette Marceau: A novel" by Karen Harmel

August: "Dark Wild Shore" by Charlotte McConaghy

September: "Maybe We Should Talk to Somebody" by Lori Gottlieb

October: "Road Trip" by Mary Kay Andrews

November: "Comfort and Joy" by Kristin Hannah

EveryStep Walking Fellowship Group



We continue to walk every Thursday at 9:30 AM in the fellowship room. One of the verses we walked to was John 16:16 in which Jesus said to His disciples, "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again, in a little while you will see me". Jesus later said in verse 20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy". The disciples experienced joy when Jesus was resurrected, but not everyone in the world experienced joy. Our discussion focused on the contrast between the world's and God's values, which can

make us feel like "misfits" and that we do not belong in the world. However, we concluded we must promote the Kingdom of God, bringing others into His Kingdom, doing the work He asks us to do regardless of the continuing tensions we experience. Our sorrows can be turned into joy when we focus on the resurrection.

Evelyn did the health presentation, demonstrating exercises to improve balance. Most of us have balance issues and struggled with the exercises. We recognized that these exercises could improve our balance if done consistently. One exercise was the single leg stand, which you can initially use a chair to prevent toppling over. We decided as a group to include these exercises routinely prior to our devotion to increase our leg strength necessary for better balance.

Patty Finch Guthrie

Snowball Mountain Challenge: VBS for All July 12 - 16

Get ready to hit the slopes at this year's inclusive Vacation Bible School, **Snowball Mountain Challenge**, running **July 12-16 (Sunday - Thursday), 5:30-8:00 p.m.** at Epiphany Lutheran Church. This is our **ninth year** of offering a VBS designed especially for children, youth, and adults with special needs, along with their families and caregivers.



Each evening will include:

- **Dinner together**
- **Music and Bible story time**
- **Crafts and games** (including some “snowy” surprises!)
- Visits from **therapy dogs, first responders, and other special guests**
- Quiet spaces and flexible support for those who need a break

Our theme this year invites us to “climb” together in faith, courage, and community, knowing that God is with us on every part of the journey.

How you can help:

- **Volunteer:** We need helpers for crafts, games, food service, water night, and one-on-one support.
- **Donate:** We're seeking:
 - Restaurant meal sponsorships
 - **Gift cards** (Kroger, Michael's, Publix)
 - **Craft supplies and simple games** for all ages
 - **Water night items** (balloons, slip and slides, etc.)

If you'd like to register, volunteer, or donate, please email Valerie Vinson at staff@conyerselc.org.

Mark your calendars and pray with us as we prepare for another joyful year of VBS for all!



NAMI

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Rockdale & Newton Counties GA

We offer three FREE Monthly Support Groups



REGISTER for the
**NAMI Family
Support Group**
Held on the 2nd
Monday of each
month from
6:30 - 8:00 pm.

REGISTER for the
**Mental Wellness in Recovery
Support Group**
Held at 12:30 pm on Mondays



[https://tinyurl.com/
NAMIMentalWellness](https://tinyurl.com/NAMIMentalWellness)

Visit us online at
namirockdalenewton.org



REGISTER for the
**NAMI Connection
Recovery Support
Group**
Held on the 3rd
Monday of each
month from
6:30 - 8:00 pm.

It's okay to not be okay.

Silence the Shame

Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255 or 988

Veteran Crisis Line: Dial 988 & Press 1

Depression Hotline: 1-888-640-5174

Addiction Hotline: 1-877-266-3111

Crisis Text Line: Text "SILENCE" to 741741

NAMI Hotline: 1-800-950-6264

Eating Disorder Hotline: 1-844-228-2962

Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233

Postpartum Help Line: 1 (800) 944-4773

Self Harm Hotline: (877) 455-0628

Trevor Project: 1 (866) 488-7386

www.stevelfund.org

www.blackfemaletherapists.com

www.therapyforblackmen.org

www.asianmhc.org

www.latinaxtherapy.org

www.activeminds.org

www.therapyforblkgirls.com

www.muslimmentalhealth.com

We need your support to improve mental health outcomes for all members of our community!

Your support can help to improve and save lives! You can support NAMI Rockdale Newton

1. Share info about our FREE monthly support groups held on the 1st & 3rd Monday
2. Become a NAMI Rockdale Newton member
3. Join the NAMI Rockdale Newton leadership team
4. Become a volunteer to support us in our community outreach
5. Become a NAMI GA group facilitator to support others in knowing they are not alone
6. Become a NAMI GA instructor to train community members about mental health

Join our [NAMI Walks Team: Steppin' Over Stigma!](#) to plan for next year's event.

Birthdays & Anniversaries



- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Riki DeLamar | 22 Olivia Duffy |
| George Lumsden | 26 Haley Brickell |
| 3 Tim Carey | Kaitlyn Lanier |
| 7 Adelaide Harper | Daniel Withers |
| Heather Moore | 28 Frances Riley |
| Bruce Stuart | |
| 10 Connie Brickell | |
| 13 Terri Lange | |
| Julie Peterson | |
| 21 Jeanette Hinckson-Fraser | |
| Joshua McCurry Sr | |



	Date	Years
Neal & Terri Lange	5	51
David & Mary Armstrong-Reiner	10	33
Gregory & Connie Brickell	15	37
Ed & Frances Riley	19	58
Edward & Lois Stegherr	26	73

Did we miss announcing your birthday, anniversary or special event? If so, please email the church office at staff@conyerselc.org so that we may update our records. Thank you!

Altar Flowers

If you would like to honor, or memorialize, a special person or occasion with “fresh” altar flowers, the cost is \$30 per arrangement (\$60 total - and sign on both posted calendars). On weeks when no altar flowers have been requested, we will use seasonal arrangements. If you only want one arrangement (\$30), a separate table has been designated in the sanctuary for those special arrangements.



The flower calendar is posted in its’ usual place in the narthex. Remember to include the cost in an envelope and mark it - Flowers. Call the church office on 770-483-6222 if you have any questions.

Council Meeting Minutes - June

Group convened in the Fellowship Hall following the Sunday Service at 11:30am. In attendance: Pastor David Armstrong-Reiner, President Peggy Lawrence, Vice-President Anita Smith (and guest Dave Smith), Secretary Riki DeLamar, Lane Carlisle, Deidre London, Tim Lohr, Julia Mumford, Nelson Kelly, Greg Holcomb, Michael Thompson (and Music Director Don Harris).

The Group enjoyed lunch and had sharing time.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:15pm by Peggy Lawrence.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The Minutes from the previous meeting were distributed and reviewed. Motion made to accept as presented by Julia Mumford. Second by Lane Carlisle. Motion carried.

Agenda: The agenda for today's meeting was presented and reviewed. Motion was made to accept the agenda with the addition of adding "Quilt Donation" under New Business by Anita Smith. Second by Michael Thompson. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

1. FINANCIAL SECRETARY
2. TREASURER

Sharon Skinner
Tracy Parker

There were not any Financial Reports available to review.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

See written report.

Welcomed 4 new members last week. We are accepting applications for VBS. Pastor, Mary, and Bryan attended the Synod Convention. Pastor was recognized for 25 years since ordination, and Mary was recognized for 30 years. They will be leaving for vacation after church next Sunday (6/21).

May 20, 2026 – June 14, 2026

Worship: 4 Sunday Worship

Hospital Visits: 1

Member Visits: 1

Counseling:

Life Passages: new members reception 6/7

Pastors Meeting:

Committee Meetings: VBS planning, Endowment Committee, Music Search Committee, Music Search Committee with candidate for Music Director

Education: 3 Men's Bible Study, 4 Adult Ed Classes, 1 Women's Bible Study

Other Meetings/Events: Southeastern Synod Assembly (5/28-30). Discovery Class (5/24)

Community Visits:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Music Director Search – Bennett Craft met the choir 2 weeks ago. He met with the Search Committee last week. Pastor checked on his references/prior employment. All results were positive. The Search Committee is recommending that the Council approves us to move forward with offering the Music Director position to Bennett Craft, with a possible start date around September. Deidre London seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. HVAC – We are receiving donations toward the cost of replacing the broken HVAC (Choir room and the Bathrooms). We do not have a current total of the amount received. Anita will obtain an updated amount, and let us know.

Council Meeting Minutes - June

3. Giving Options – With the cost of Vanco, our online giving option (we paid nearly \$1500 in 11 months last year), we have been looking into other giving options. With the work of Julia Mumford, we have looked into Zeffe, which does not charge but has restricted payment options, especially in terms of frequency of payment. Zelle also has no fees, but some members are not comfortable with Zelle. Julia has also suggested Stripe, which does have fees but allows for more flexibility. A concern has been expressed that we want to present a more affordable option while also offering an ease in giving. Pastor has been contacting area churches to see what methods they use for accepting contributions. Christ Lutheran in Oakwood researched other options but stayed with Vanco. Trinity Lutheran in Lilburn uses Vanco but also added Zelle to help lower costs. Pastor researched also through the ELCA Clergy Facebook group and found that churches primarily use either Vanco or Tithely. Tithely makes you sign up before disclosing the charges, which makes us leery. It is possible that Vanco may offer a discount for ELCA churches, which Sharon Skinner is investigating. We are seeking to research all these options, compare costs and ease of giving, and then will make a decision.

NEW BUSINESS:

Revising Building Contract – issues with a recent rental made us go back and review our Building Rental Agreement. The Security Deposit needs to be increased.

Revising Youth Protection Policy – The last time the YPT was revised was 2011. This is overdue.

Quilt Donation – One of the Quilter’s groups that uses our building has donated a quilt to the church. Tag lists Horold W. Schmidt. Discussion on what to do with it. Possibilities include a Raffle, or a silent auction, and when to do it. If we can get other items donated, we may go the Silent Auction route. Otherwise, a raffle. Possibly looking at July or August.

REPORTS:

PRESIDENT – No written report. Bruce Stuart has arranged to have the parking lot striped. It may possibly happen on Monday, if the weather cooperates. Greg Holcomb advised that he and Bruce Hefner are the only two that consistently maintain the yard. He would like us to actively look for other members to add to their team.

VICE PRESIDENT – No written report.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Discipleship (Abby Harper) – No written report.
2. Outreach (Tim Lohr, Diedre London, Anita Smith) – See written report. Project Renewal Gas Card Drive resulted in \$460.00 in Gas cards. Meals on Wheels had 4 stops in May (and June), with 6 meals delivered.
3. Nurture (Riki DeLamar)– See written report.
4. Administration (Peggy Lawrence, Greg Holcomb, and Julia Mumford.) – See written report. Julia presented 3 Policies for us to review. She has indicated that once this is done, she will upload them to Google Drive so that they are accessible to everyone. The website is also outdated. It uses approximately 20 plug-ins that no longer have updates available and poses a security risk. She is going to refer to the ELCA Social Media Policy, and research new platforms. She would like to form a committee to identify what/who/functions that the website needs to meet. She has been working with Terri Lange the last couple of weeks, trying to gather information. Nelson indicated he would be willing to help.
5. Worship (Lane Carlisle) – No written report.

The July Council Meeting will be held after the Sunday Service on July 19th. Please mark your calendars and watch for a Zoom Sign-Up sheet for helping to provide Lunch.

Session closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rikita S DeLamar