

Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup> 2025

Second Sunday after the Epiphany



**Mailing Address:**

**Epiphany Lutheran Church  
489 Agnes  
Suite 112, Box 117  
Bastrop, TX 78602**

**Physical Address:**

**Epiphany Lutheran Church  
(on the SDA campus)  
3300 TX-21  
Bastrop, TX 78602**

**Rev. E. B. Holschuh – Pastor  
(512) 798-3682 (Voicemail/Text)  
[pastor@epiphanybastrop.org](mailto:pastor@epiphanybastrop.org)**

**Church Phone – (512) 907-0717  
[church@epiphanybastrop.org](mailto:church@epiphanybastrop.org)  
[epiphanybastrop.org/](http://epiphanybastrop.org/)  
[facebook.com/epiphanybastrop](https://facebook.com/epiphanybastrop)**

## **WELCOME TO EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH!**

“How lovely is Your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts!” (Psalm 84:1) We are thankful that God has brought you here with us this morning to hear His Word and receive His gifts! You’ll find everything you need for the worship service in this bulletin and in *Lutheran Service Book*, our hymnal. If you have any questions about our worship service, our congregation, or what we believe, please ask our pastor or any of our members.

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### **OUR COMMUNION POLICY:**

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod believes the biblical teaching that in communion we receive the true body and blood of Jesus Christ with the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins. If you are a baptized Christian who has been instructed in the biblical teaching of communion, and if you agree with our confession of faith, please feel free to commune with us. If you have any questions, please speak with our pastor.

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### **SERVANTS DURING WORSHIP THIS MORNING:**

Pastor – Rev. E. B. Holschuh  
Musician – Gina Sanders  
Lay Reader – Alison Parker  
Assisting Elder – Dave Sager  
Usher – Alex Monroe  
Acolyte – Calvin Monroe

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### **AS WE PREPARE FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING:**

#### ***The Divine Glory Is Manifested in the Signs of Christ***

When Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana, it was “*the first of his signs*” by which He “*manifested his glory*” (John 2:11). It pointed to His coming “*hour,*” when He was lifted up on the cross for the forgiveness of sins and the life of the world (John 2:4; 12:23–32). The glory of the cross is incomprehensible apart from the Word and Spirit of God, but disciples of Jesus recognize that glory in the signs of His Gospel, and so they believe in Him. Jesus does not wait for His disciples to discover Him on their own, but He seeks out the forsaken and the desolate and unites them to Himself. He adorns them with His own beautiful righteousness and delights in them “*as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride*” (Is. 62:4–5). Purified by the washing of water with His Word in Holy Baptism, His disciples confess that “*Jesus is Lord,*” and they return thanks to Him “*in the Holy Spirit*” (1 Cor. 12:3) as they drink the good wine that He pours out for them, which is the new testament in His blood.

**DIVINE SERVICE**  
**SETTING FOUR**

**Prelude**

Selected Music

**Welcome and Greeting**

Pastor

**Announcements**

**Opening Hymn**

*“The Only Son from Heaven”*

LSB 402

*(stand)*

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

*The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

*Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]*

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C who made heaven and earth.**

*Psalms 124:8*

**P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.** *Ps. 130:3-4*

**P** Since we are gathered to hear God’s Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

*[Luke 18:13]*

**C Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

*[John 20:19-23]*

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

### Introit

Psalm 36:5-9

- P** Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,  
your faithfulness to the clouds.
- C** **Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;  
your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save,  
O LORD.**
- P** How precious is your steadfast love, O God!  
The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
- C** **They feast on the abundance of your house,  
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.**
- P** For with you is the fountain of life;  
in your light do we see light.
- C** *Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.*

### Kyrie

Mark 10:47



- C** Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

### Gloria in Excelsis

Luke 2:14; John 1:29



- C** 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;  
2 To You, O sole - be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;  
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro- claimed at Je-sus' birth!  
 O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.  
 For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor-shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—  
 Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,  
 You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n-ly King.  
 Where You in pow'r are seat-ed At God's right hand on high—  
 In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

### Salutation and Collect of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

*2 Timothy 4:22*

**C** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

*(sit)*

<sup>1</sup>For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,  
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,  
and her salvation as a burning torch.  
<sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your righteousness,  
and all the kings your glory,  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the LORD will give.  
<sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.  
<sup>4</sup>You shall no more be termed Forsaken,  
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,  
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,  
and your land Married;  
for the LORD delights in you,  
and your land shall be married.  
<sup>5</sup>For as a young man marries a young woman,  
so shall your sons marry you,  
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,  
so shall your God rejoice over you.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup>You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. <sup>3</sup>Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. <sup>7</sup>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another the working of miracles, to another

prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*(stand)*

### Alleluia and Verse



**C** Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



**C** These things are writ - ten that you may be - lieve that



Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

*John 20:31*



**C** Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the second chapter.

**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup>Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. <sup>3</sup>When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” <sup>4</sup>And Jesus said to her, “**Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.**” <sup>5</sup>His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

<sup>6</sup>Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to the servants, “**Fill the jars with water.**” And they filled them up to the brim. <sup>8</sup>And he said to them, “**Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.**” So they took it. <sup>9</sup>When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom <sup>10</sup>and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.” <sup>11</sup>This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

*(sit)*

**Hymn of the Day**

*“Come, Join in Cana’s Feast”*

LSB 408

**Sermon**

*Gifts of Grace*

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

*(stand)*

**Apostles’ Creed**

**C** **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.**

### **Passing of the Peace**

*When Jesus himself appeared to the disciples after his resurrection, he greeted them by saying, "Peace be with you" (Luke 24:36; John 20:19, 26) – and so we do likewise.*

*(sit)*

### **Prayer of the Church**

**P** Lord, in Your mercy

**C** hear our prayer.

### **Offering**

Usher

*Please sign the attendance books as they are passed.*

*If you would like to transition to making your regular tithe or offering online, you may do so at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZKYH/home>*



## SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

*For those unfamiliar with our congregation's practice regarding the Lord's Supper, please refer to "Our Communion Policy" located at the beginning of the bulletin.*

*(stand)*

### **Preface**

**P** The Lord be with you.

*2 Timothy 4:22*

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** **We lift them to the Lord.**

*[Colossians 3:1]*

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

*[Psalm 136]*

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

## Sanctus

*Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9*



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho-san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

**P** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. By His death, He has redeemed us from bondage to sin and death, and by His resurrection, He has delivered us into new life in Him.

Grant us to keep the Feast in sincerity and truth, faithfully eating His body given into death and drinking His life's blood poured out for our salvation until we pass through death to the promised land of life eternal.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

**C** Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.

**The Words of Our Lord**

*Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24  
Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
- P** In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**Pax Domini**

*John 20:19*

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**C** Amen.

# Agnus Dei

John 1:29



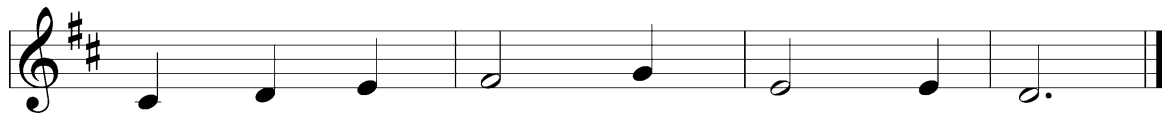
1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,



You take the sin of the world a - way;  
You take the sin of the world a - way;



O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,



Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.  
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

*(sit)*

**Distribution Hymn**    *“The Star Proclaims the King Is Here”*    LSB 399

*(stand)*

# Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29-32

**C** 1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -  
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All  
part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the  
glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the  
glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:  
Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;  
A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -  
For as in the be - gin - ning, Is  
to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your  
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -  
peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.  
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

## Post-Communion Collect

**P** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## Benedicamus and Benediction

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

*[Psalm 103:1]*

**C** Thanks be to God.

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

*Numbers 6:24-26*

**C** Amen.

*(sit)*

**Closing Hymn**

*“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed”*

LSB 398

**P** Go in Peace!

**C** Serve the Lord!

**Postlude**

Selected Music

*Initial and ongoing funding for Epiphany Lutheran Church has been received through a grant made possible by the Roy D. and Ingaborg G. Randolph Memorial Endowment Fund.*

## SERMON NOTES: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

### *Gifts of Grace*

1. Every \_\_\_\_\_ has a \_\_\_\_\_ gift, and the gifts differ in \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. Each \_\_\_\_\_ has been given an \_\_\_\_\_ from God to \_\_\_\_\_ others and to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord.
  3. Numerous inventories for discovering one's spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ exist, but the best place to start is by asking trusted \_\_\_\_\_ friends what gifts they \_\_\_\_\_ in us.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ never speaks of our using the \_\_\_\_\_ but always of the \_\_\_\_\_ using us.
  5. The \_\_\_\_\_ apportions gifts as He sees fit, for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.
  6. God intends that every \_\_\_\_\_, together with his or her \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, serve as an instrument of blessing for others.
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### PRAYERS AT EPIPHANY

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** Please share any prayer request on the Prayer Requests sheet as you enter on Sunday. You may also email a prayer request, as well as a request to become a part of Epiphany's prayer chain, to [secretary@epiphanybastrop.org](mailto:secretary@epiphanybastrop.org).

Please continue to pray for...

- Rev. James and Angela Sharp and their 4 children, Elias, Ambrose, Callida, and Magdalyn - missionaries in Uruguay
- The family of Adam McLean
- Scott Parker – Alison's brother

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?

The first step to becoming a member of our congregation is to speak with our pastor.

We believe, teach, and confess that we are all broken sinners in need of God's salvation, which He freely gives through His Word and Sacrament. Church is not a club for the sinless— it's a hospital for sinners!

You may become a member of Epiphany Lutheran Church by transferring your membership from a sister congregation of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) or you may receive instruction from the pastor and become a communicant member of Epiphany and the LCMS through Adult Instruction Class or through a profession of faith.

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Epiphany Lutheran Church has a podcast! Our ***Peace Be With You*** podcast is available on popular podcast apps, but you can always find it at [peacebewithyou.podbean.com](http://peacebewithyou.podbean.com) (or just scan the QR code).



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**Epiphany Events Calendar:** Our congregation calendar is on our website ([epiphanybastrop.org](http://epiphanybastrop.org)); to add an event, please email [secretary@epiphanybastrop.org](mailto:secretary@epiphanybastrop.org).

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**New Thursday 6pm Zoom study began on January 9:** Join us for ***Nurturing Your Faith: Forgiveness!*** As followers of Jesus, we are to practice forgiveness in our daily lives-both giving it and, when necessary, seeking it... Living a forgiving life, however, is not easy. Though God's forgiveness to us is unconditional, ours is often withheld or given with great reservation. In this four-session study, we'll look at practicing forgiveness, the conditions of forgiveness, the possibilities of forgiveness, and the seeking of forgiveness.

Register: [bit.ly/ELC-Forgiveness](https://bit.ly/ELC-Forgiveness)

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***Make Every Day Count*** devotional gathering at Argent Court Assisted Living in Bastrop will meet this month on Tuesday at 3pm on the 21st.

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**SISTERS OF THE LIGHT:** Calling all women to join us on Tuesday, January 28th, 6pm at our SDA campus for a light dinner and time of fellowship. Let's learn more about each other, what God is doing in our lives, and how we can support one another. Please RSVP to Carole Holschuh by V/M or text: (817) 614-3916.

***The First Annual Epiphany Lutheran Church Spend the Year in Scripture Challenge*** reading schedule through next Sunday:

- Day 20 - Mon 1/20: Exodus 10-12, Psalm 20
- Day 21 - Tue 1/21: Exodus 13-15, Psalm 21
- Day 22 - Wed 1/22: Exodus 16-18, Psalm 22
- Day 23 - Thu 1/23: Exodus 19-21, Psalm 23
- Day 24 - Fri 1/24: Exodus 22-24, Psalm 24
- Day 25 - Sat 1/25: Exodus 25-27, Psalm 25
- Day 26 - Sun 1/26: Exodus 28-29, Psalm 26



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**Lutheran Hour:** Next Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup> – “An Overture to the Greatest Story Ever Told” – Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Leopolds Sanchez. Like an overture that introduces a great musical work, John the Baptizer is the living voice sent by God to bear witness to Jesus’ lordship and salvation. (John 3:26-36)

Hear The Lutheran Hour each Sunday on station KBUK-FM 104.9 at 7:00 a.m. or on station KANJ-FM 91.5 at 12:30 p.m. or go to [lhm.org](http://lhm.org) for a link to listen to the Lutheran Hour live. You can also listen to The Lutheran Hour on the local Austin station KLBK (590 AM or 99.7 FM) at 7:00am on Sunday.

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**KFUO Radio**, the broadcast voice of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on **KFUO.org** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music. Find programs on demand at [kfu.org](http://kfu.org) and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: [@KFUORadio](https://www.facebook.com/KFUORadio) on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/KFUORadio), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/KFUORadio), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/KFUORadio).

**CHRIST FOR YOU this week on AM850 & KFUE.org:** We are continuing in Isaiah on Sharper Iron! Join us as we take a look at chapters 25-29 (weekdays at 8:00 a.m. CT). On Thy Strong Word, we’re beginning a study of the book of Job. You can tune in every weekday at 11:00 a.m. CT. Don’t forget to join us for Concord Matters (1/25 at 10 a.m. CT)! We’ll be continuing our discussion of confessional subscription with special guest Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison. Find your favorite programs on demand at [kfu.org](http://kfu.org) or on the KFUE Radio app!

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**RightNow Media:** We're excited to share that Epiphany Lutheran Church now has unlimited access to **RightNow Media**—the world's largest streaming library of video Bible study resources. This extensive library has **more than 20,000 videos** that can be used as part of a group study or for personal devotions, and many series include **free discussion guides and handouts**. In addition to series on books of the Bible, RightNow Media has videos for everyone in the family on a variety of topics like marriage, parenting, personal finances, mental health, and more. There's even a **library just for kids with over 2,000 safe, entertaining videos**. RightNow Media has a free app that's available on all major streaming devices so you and your family can access content anywhere, anytime. For FREE access to RightNow Media, visit [app.rightnowmedia.org/join/elcb](http://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/elcb) or scan the QR code.



**THIS WEEK AT EPIPHANY:**

**Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**

- 10:00am – Children’s Sunday School (Fellowship Area)
- 10:00am – Adult Sunday School (Sanctuary)
- 11:00am – Fellowship / Coffee Time
- 11:30am – Worship Service with Communion

**Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**

- 3:00pm – Devotional at Argent Court Assisted Living

**Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>**

- 6:00pm – Zoom Study “Nurturing Your Faith: Forgiveness!”

**Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>**

- 10:00am – Children’s Sunday School (Fellowship Area)
- 10:00am – Adult Sunday School (Sanctuary)
- 11:00am – Fellowship / Coffee Time
- 11:30am – Worship Service with Communion

Answers to Sermon Notes:  
 1. Every *believer* has a *spiritual* gift, and the gifts differ in *expression*  
 2. Each *believer* has been given an *ability* from God to *help* others and to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord.  
 3. Numerous inventories for discovering one's spiritual *gifts* exist, but the best place to start is by asking trusted *Christian* friends what gifts they *observe* in us.  
 4. *Scripture* never speaks of our using the *spirit* but always of the *spirit* using us.  
 5. The *spirit* apportions gifts as He sees fit, for the *unity* of the *church*.  
 6. God intends that every *person*, together with his or her *gifts* and *abilities*, serve as an instrument of blessing for others.



## An Uncommon Call to An Uncommon Life

Though the church is a universal body, the gifts and skills of each Christian are unique. We can achieve unity by appreciating different abilities in others and empathizing with each other's joys and sorrows.

Our Maker gives assignments to people, "each according to his own ability" (Matthew 25:15). As He calls, He equips. Look back over your life. What have you consistently done well? What have you loved to do? Stand at the intersection of your affections and successes and find your uniqueness.

You have an uncommon call to an uncommon life. "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all" (1 Corinthians 12:7). So much for the excuse "I don't have anything to offer." Did the apostle Paul say this has been "given to *some* of us..."? Or, "given to *a few* of us..."? No. "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to *each one* for the profit of all" (emphasis added). Enough of this self-deprecating "I can't do anything."

And enough of its arrogant opposite: "I have to do everything." No, you don't! You're not God's solution to society, but a solution in society. Imitate Paul, who said, "We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us" (2 Corinthians 10:13). Clarify your contribution.

Don't worry about skills you don't have. Don't covet strengths others do have. Just extract your uniqueness. "Stir up the gift of God which is in you" (2 Timothy 1:6). And do so to *make a big deal out of God*.

"For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever" (Romans 11:36). The breath you just took? God gave that. The blood that just pulsed through your heart? Credit God. The light by which you read and the brain with which you process? He gave both.

Everything comes from Him and exists for Him. We exist to exhibit God, to display His glory. We serve as canvases for His brush stroke, papers for His pen, soil for His seeds, glimpses of His image.

You are unique. God created you to show His glory. Do you sometimes feel that you have nothing to offer? Ask God to show you what He has equipped you to do.

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