

APRIL 2025

THE LIGHT



A NEWSLETTER OF EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH, BASTROP, TEXAS

From the Pastor's Desk

An Ode to Deacon Bud

The question of just exactly when the Lord began framing me for pastoral service is a tough one to answer, as I can't think of a specific time when finding out more about Him and church became a priority for me. But if I had to pin down one event that may have been the catalyst for a relationship with Christ and The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS), it would have to be a day in January 1985 when God placed a beautiful sailor in my path in Japan during my first tour in the Navy. Before the year was out we were married.

My wife was born into an LCMS family and though we were young and really not yet equipped for marriage, we were married in Japan on an Air Force base by a Lutheran chaplain. When I met her, I had absolutely no idea what "Lutheran" meant.

I was raised in a family that talked about and believed in God (mostly through Alcoholics Anonymous—my father fought addiction his entire life; we children had all been baptized in the Presbyterian Church, an institution we affiliated with, yet visited very rarely). I don't recall meeting a pastor until I was married by one.

When our first daughter was born in 1989, having her baptized was very important to my wife. We were stationed in Maryland and had started to attend church regularly. By the time our second daughter was baptized in 1991, I had considerably more questions than answers.

During a second assignment in Maryland, we found a congregation that was nearer to our base quarters. It was there in 1998 that I began to serve as an usher under the guidance of our deacon, a kindly old uncle of a guy named Bud Bell.

Deacon Bud was a big, burly retired steel worker who ran a horseshoes tournament behind a crab shack on Wednesday nights that attracted some of the more hardened characters I have seen in my day. I was so impressed by his ability to witness to them in THEIR language (when he needed to, Bud swore like a sailor—especially when breaking up fights). He collected \$5 per head and half of everything went to the church, half of what was left went to the crab shack for refreshments, and the last portion went out as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Our Pastor



REV. E.B. HOLSCHUH
pastor@epiphanybastrop.org
Voicemail/Text: 512-798-3682

Services

@Bastrop SDA Church
3300 East State Highway 21

Sunday School 10:00 am
Fellowship 11:00 am
Divine Service 11:30 am

Church Council

Jeremy Clifton, President
512-309-5133
augustana@gmail.com

Dave Layland, Head Elder
512-332-2144
david@thelaylands.net

Tom Rosser, Treasurer
512-567-1306
rosser.tom@gmail.com

Esther Monroe, Secretary
847-848-5126
monroe.esther@gmail.com

Pastor's Note Continued

prize money. He started every tournament with a prayer. Some of the things I heard about the guys who came each week made my heart sink.

Deacon Bud may have been the most influential “church” person God placed in my life (aside from my wife). He was real to me. Not pious or churchy, but a wellspring of faith.

In 2008, I was a vicar waist-deep in seminary studies when I wrote a letter to Deacon Bud, c/o First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Odenton, MD. An excerpt:

I am writing you because, though you may not have been aware of it, you played a part in my decision to become a pastor. While briefly a member at First Evangelical, I served as an usher. There were a couple of mornings that I opened up the church and you and I sat on the front steps and talked over a cup of coffee from the 7-Eleven across the street. You told me about your job, your marriage, and how you became a deacon. You seemed to me to be very real spiritually at a time when I was just starting to involve myself more in church.

But what really impacted me was how you related to others, especially to those guys in the horseshoe pits behind the crab shack (I've forgotten the name of the place). I was even more amazed—but not really surprised—when I saw some of those guys in church on Sunday. I believe that God planted the seed in me during that time. You were a very positive influence on me (you may not remember, but I had a lot of questions) and I just wanted to say thank you.

I never heard back.

While he may not have been alive when I mailed that letter, Deacon Bud will continue to live on in my heart...until we meet again.

Birthday

David Sager April 11



Epiphany has a podcast! It is available on popular podcast apps, or at peacebewithyou.podbean.com



OUR CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR IS ON OUR WEBSITE (EPIPHANYBASTROP.ORG); TO ADD AN EVENT, EMAIL SECRETARY@EPIPHANYBASTROP.ORG



Mailing Address:
489 Agnes St. - Ste. 112-117
Bastrop, TX 78602
Secretary: 512-907-0717

EPIPHANY
LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS

GIVE ONLINE BY SCANNING THIS QR CODE OR VISITING OUR WEBSITE



epiphanybastrop.org



church@epiphanybastrop.org



Epiphany Lutheran Church



[@epiphanybastrop](https://www.instagram.com/epiphanybastrop)

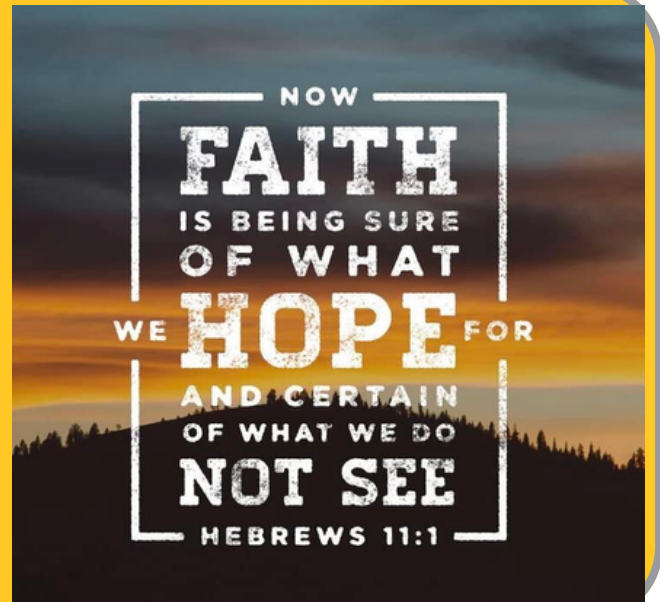
COMMUNITY NEWS

Zoom Bible Study


Thursdays @ 6pm
Continuing through May 15

Hebrews – Timeless Truths, a 13-week look at the entire (13 chapters) of the New Testament book of Hebrews. We'll look at the practical application of each chapter of Hebrews as we seek to understand more deeply the heart, will, intent and design of our Heavenly Father, the life, ministry and teachings of Jesus, and the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in our world today.

Register: bit.ly/ELC-Hebrews



How we got the BIBLE




New 5-week Video Study

JOIN US for a look at the origin and preservation of God's Word, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments!

Tuesday, April 29, at 6:30pm
3300 TX-21 in Bastrop

Register: bit.ly/ELC-HowBible



Twice monthly devotion and prayer gathering

MEETS TUESDAYS | 3:00 PM
Argent Court Assisted Living



JOIN US FOR
MAKE EVERY DAY COUNT



A media ministry extension of LCMS congregations, KFUO Radio shares worship services, Bible studies, podcasts, and sacred music for anyone, anytime, anywhere. Find these programs and more on-demand at kfuo.org or wherever you get your podcasts. Follow @kfuo radio on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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Epiphany 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.

COMMUNITY NEWS



Siberian Lutheran Mission Society

RESTORING THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN RUSSIA

Христос воскрес!

*An Easter message from Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin
of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church*

Brothers and Sisters,

Many people today live in constant stress and try to avoid unnecessary worries. Perhaps this is why fewer people come to church during Holy Week than on Easter.

Holy Week is, indeed, a particularly tense time of the church year. When we hear about the betrayal, suffering, and death of Christ, we understand that our earthly life consists of these three. Here, people, great and small, constantly betray each other; here we are faced with unimaginable, unceasing suffering that ends not in relief, but in death. How sad it would be if this earthly life were the only one we have!



And what a miracle that our Lord Jesus Christ came to redeem us with His cross and rose again to give us His eternal life. He became for us a salvific supper, a "medicine of immortality," by receiving which we will rise from the dead like Him, according to His promise (cf. John 6:54).

God wants everyone to be saved (1Tim. 2:4). And sometimes it even seems that our salvation is more important to God than to ourselves. So, Christ fights for us with death, saving us from spiritual laziness, pride, and unwillingness to follow His will — so that we would be in church not only on Easter (and Christmas), live a Christian life, and regularly commune with Him.

Today, we all have a great opportunity to start a new life. Those of you who are not yet baptized, ask the priest about this sacrament. For those who are baptized but have gone away from the Church, Easter is the perfect day to return to Christ. And we all need to renew the baptismal vows today.

Finally, share the Easter joy with your neighbors. Tell your friends and neighbors about God's love, which is stronger than death. And that for those who believe in Christ, all earthly griefs become temporary, and life will never end, because death no longer has power over us.

Blessed Easter to all of you! Christ is risen! Христос воскрес!

Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin

COMMUNITY NEWS

Will You Continue to Help Support the Lutheran Church in Siberia?

Your gifts are blessings to those who serve and worship in the parishes of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church and at the seminary in Novosibirsk. Generous donations from Missouri Synod Lutherans in the United States have always been indispensable to helping the Siberian Church and the seminary survive.

Challenges associated with spreading the Gospel in Siberia are great. Decades of atheism have numbed the minds of many in Russia to the concept of God's ever-present love in Christ. Some have been exposed to ministries that have taught the doctrine of law without the all-important understanding of the preeminent role of God's grace in man's salvation.



Despite the challenges of spreading the Gospel in Siberia, the Siberian Mission Society remains steadfast in its support of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church and its pastors, as well as the church's seminary in Novosibirsk.

You can help advance the work of the Siberian Mission Society in three specific ways:

1. *Use your dollars to support Siberian Lutheran pastors as they carry God's Word and Sacrament to the many people in their areas of service who need God's saving grace.*
2. *Invest in the day-to-day cost of operating the Novosibirsk Seminary.*
3. *Help ensure the seminary's long-term survival by contributing to the Save the Seminary Campaign.*

If you have questions about the Siberian Lutheran Mission Society, or the work of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church, please contact SLMS President, Rev. Daniel Johnson (DanielJohnson356@gmail.com), or Rev. Dr. Timothy Quill, Director of Fundraising (260 580-0812).

When you write a check to support the work of the Novosibirsk Seminary, please write Save the Seminary on your check.

THANK YOU!

"IF YOU ARE ONE OF THE MORE THAN 3,400 SUPPORTERS OF THIS IMPORTANT MINISTRY, THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS. THEY MATTER — TODAY AND IN THE YEARS TO COME.

THANK YOU!



THE SIBERIAN LUTHERAN MISSION SOCIETY
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COMMUNITY NEWS



Faith Lutheran High School of Central Texas seeks to engage young adults in a Christ-centered environment where faith and knowledge grow as one.
HOME OF THE FALCONS!

The Spring Thing!

FLHS is proud to present The Spring Thing! This will be a showcase of our students' work in the fine art department, including vocal, instrumental, and handbell pieces. Please join us Wednesday, May 7th, at 7pm.

Staff Positions Available

Faith Lutheran High School will have part time openings on its faculty for the 2025-2026 academic year! Interested individuals may submit resumes to Faith Lutheran High School, PO Box 138, Warda, TX 78960, call (979) 242-2889, or email them to kueckn@flhstx.org. If you have the time and talents, please consider applying and sharing your gifts with our students. Thank you!

Accreditation Visit

The FLHS had a very successful accreditation visit on March 30 to April 1. *FLHS has been recommended for accreditation in good standing, with no major deficiencies.* Praise the Lord for the wonderful blessings He continues to bestow on FLHS.

The visiting team was able to identify some major strengths of FLHS as noted below:

- Multi-congregational support, including nine association congregations, two LCMS feeder-schools and a community with a rich history in Lutheran education is evident.
- The relationships between parents/guardians and teachers are one of the greatest strengths of FLHS. Parents are viewed as partners in all aspects of the educational process.
- The teachers at FLHS do an outstanding job building relationships with students, making sure all students feel loved and cared for every day.
- The resounding voice of FLHS parents suggests that the proactive and ongoing communication of the administrator far exceeds experiences they have had in any other school settings.
- FLHS has an amazing, competent, caring and Christian teaching staff that follow Jesus's example daily.
- FLHS caters to individualized learning needs and goals through a wide variety of course offerings and learning platforms.
- Opportunities abound for students to get involved beyond the classroom and develop their God-given abilities.

Handbell Choir Wins Top Rank at TAPPS

The handbell choir competed in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) music competition on Friday, March 28, 2025. The group earned the rating of "I" - Superior for their performance of "March of the Chimes" by Lynne Hollander. Also performed was "The Church's One Foundation" arranged by Sandra Tucker. The FLHS choir was critiqued on their technique, musicianship, stage presence, poise and overall visual uniformity.



COMMUNITY NEWS



FAITH LUTHERAN
HIGH SCHOOL OF CENTRAL TEXAS

Faith Lutheran High School of Central Texas seeks to engage young adults in a Christ-centered environment where faith and knowledge grow as one.
HOME OF THE FALCONS!

Track Season

Track Season is winding down, but not quite yet! We had 5 students participate in the TAPPS 1A Regional Meet on Friday, April 11! Our students did awesome that day, many with PR's. Kaylee ran well enough to qualify for state in the 800m and 1600m. The state track meet is Friday and Saturday, May 2 and 3rd. Good luck Kaylee!!

Youth Camps

Summer camps are back! We are excited to offer a variety of camps for youth this summer.

Ages are for grades NEXT school year.

May 27 to May 29 - Basketball - Grades K to 8 - \$25

June 2-3 - Archery - Grade 4 to 8 - \$20

June 9-11 - Volleyball - Grade 3 to 8 - \$25

June 16-18 - STEM Camp - Grades K to 6 - \$50

June 23-25 - Art Camp - Grades K to 6 - \$50

Please visit our website or Facebook page for more information! Don't wait --- Sign up today!!

Space is limited.

New Student Registration

Registration for 2025-2026 is underway. New students have already enrolled and we are looking to add more students to our family. You can receive registration materials by calling (979) 242-2889 or visiting our website at www.flhstx.org.

Scholarship Opportunities

Applications are now being accepted for an academic-based scholarship from the Amanda (Zoch) Knox Memorial Scholarship Fund. This fund will pay for the full tuition for an incoming 9th grade student of Faith Lutheran beginning in the Fall of 2025. Applications are available from Mrs. Kueck or from Cyndy Zoch (cyndy.zoch@gmail.com) and are due May 1, 2025.

FAITH LUTHERAN
HIGH SCHOOL OF CENTRAL TEXAS

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY, MAY 30TH | FRISCH AUF COUNTRY CLUB LA GRANGE, TX | SHOTGUN START 8AM LUNCH 12 NOON

4 Man Team Registration \$400

***Potential afternoon flight based on numbers**

PRIZES		SPONSORSHIPS	
1ST TEAM		Platinum	\$500
2ND TEAM		Gold	\$250
LONGEST DRIVE		Silver	\$100
CLOSEST TO PIN			
LONGEST PUTT			

Course sponsor recognition on banner, hole, and food & drink sponsor.
Banner, longest drive, putt, or closest to pin sponsor.
Hole sign

Register Now
Make checks payable/send to:
Faith Lutheran High School
P.O. Box 138
Warda, TX 78960

For More Information Contact:
Jonathan Kueck (979)-242-2889
Layne Schramm (979)-966-3527
kueckj@flhstx.org or layneschramm@hotmail.com

The Little Light

What's happening in children's Sunday School?

ENDURING FAITH



The Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum, by CPH, features a Christ-centered, three-year chronological survey of Bible history with a goal of helping our children grow deeper in their understanding of God's Word.

Unit 7 begins exploring the New Testament.

April 27 (Lesson 3) In today's lesson, "The Temple Testimonies," God fulfills His promise as Jesus is born in Bethlehem. Forty days later, in keeping with the law, the family travels to Jerusalem's temple for Mary's purification and Jesus' presentation. There, they encounter Simeon, a devout Jew whose song of praise lives on in the Church today. Likewise, Anna, the aging prophetess, rejoices at the coming of the Savior.

May 4 (Lesson 4) In today's lesson, "His Father's House," Jesus' parents travel to Jerusalem as they do each year for the Passover. Returning home, Mary and Joseph notice Jesus' absence, yet they assume He is among the others in their traveling group. When He doesn't appear, they return to Jerusalem, searching desperately for three days. They finally find Jesus in the temple, talking with the teachers, who are amazed at His understanding. Despite being in His "Father's house" (Luke 2:49), Jesus honors His earthly parents and returns to Nazareth with them.

May 11 (Lesson 5) "The Pointing Prophet" is the title of this week's lesson. John the Baptist lives in the wilderness, dressed in camel's hair and eating locusts and honey. John's message of repentance and preparation draws people to the banks of the Jordan, where they receive Baptism. As the prophet sent to point out the Messiah, John declares, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) as Jesus approaches. When John baptizes Jesus in the Jordan, the Spirit descends on Him as the voice of the Father proclaims, "This is My beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17).

May 18 (Lesson 6) The account of Jesus clearing the temple serves as today's lesson, "A Temple Cleansing." Merchants and money-changers fill the outer courts of the temple in preparation for the Passover. Jesus overturns the tables and drives out the animals in His zeal to restore the temple to its proper purpose. When the Jews question His authority, Jesus tells them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). Only after His resurrection do the disciples realize that Jesus was referring to His body as the new temple.

Prayers of the People

Have a Prayer Request? Please share any prayer requests on the Prayer Requests sheet as you enter for worship 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.

Please continue to pray for

- Kathy - treatments for illness
- David - poor surgery outcome
- Nellie - breathing issues
- Tonya - tumor
- Deebo and Norma
- Charles - cancer
- Clayton - cancer
- Fritz
- Rev. Timothy Dinger



The Evolution of the Church Building – Part 4

While the emperor Constantine (ca. 285-337) is often lauded for granting Christians freedom of worship and expanding their privileges, his story fills a dark page in the history of Christianity. Church buildings began with him. The story is astonishing.

By the time Constantine emerged on the scene, the atmosphere was ripe for Christians to escape their despised, minority status. The temptation to be accepted was just too great to resist, and Constantine's influence began in earnest.

In AD 312, Constantine became Caesar of the Western Empire. By 324, he became emperor of the entire Roman Empire. Shortly afterward, he began ordering the construction of church buildings. He did so to promote the popularity and acceptance of Christianity. If the Christians had their own sacred buildings—as did the Jews and the pagans—their faith would be regarded as legitimate.

It is important to understand Constantine's mind-set—for it explains why he was so enthusiastic about the establishment of church buildings. Constantine's thinking was dominated by superstition and pagan magic. Even after he became emperor, he allowed the old pagan institutions to remain as they were.

Following his conversion to Christianity, Constantine never abandoned sun worship. He kept the sun on his coins. And he set up a statue of the sun god that bore his own image in the Forum of Constantinople (his new capital). Constantine also built a statue of the mother-goddess Cybele (though he presented her in a posture of Christian prayer). Historians continue to debate whether or not Constantine was a genuine Christian. The fact that he is reported to have had his eldest son, his nephew, and his brother-in-law executed does not strengthen the case for his conversion.

In AD 321, Constantine decreed that Sunday would be a day of rest—a legal holiday. It appears that Constantine's intention in doing this was to honor the god Mithras, the Unconquered Sun. (He described Sunday as “the day of the sun.”) Further demonstrating Constantine's affinity with sun worship, excavations of St. Peter's in Rome uncovered a mosaic of Christ as the Unconquered Sun.

Almost to his dying day, Constantine “still functioned as the high priest of paganism.” In fact, he retained the pagan title *Pontifex Maximus*, which means chief of the pagan priests! (In the fifteenth century, this same title became the honorific title for the Roman Catholic pope.)