

Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> 2026

The Third Sunday in Lent



**Mailing Address:**

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489 Agnes  
Suite 112, Box 117  
Bastrop, TX 78602**

**Physical Address:**

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## 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 Lord’s Supper is celebrated at this congregation by baptized believers in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor.

For further study, see Matthew 5:23; 10:32; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

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### SERVANTS DURING WORSHIP THIS MORNING:

Pastor – Rev. E.B. Holschuh  
Musician – Mark McClain  
Lay Reader – Carole Holschuh  
Assisting Elder – Alex Monroe  
Usher – Calvin Monroe  
Acolyte – Madeline Robb

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

### ***We Worship the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Spirit and Truth of His Gospel***

Though the Lord had brought them out of Egypt, “*all the congregation of the people of Israel*” grumbled against Him because “*there was no water for the people to drink*” (Ex. 17:1). Despite their quarreling, the Lord graciously provided for them. He did not strike the people for their sins, but by the hand of Moses He struck the rock instead and brought forth water for the people. In the same way, living water flows from the pierced side of Christ at “*about the sixth hour*” (John 4:6; 19:14), when He is lifted up on the cross for the sins of the world. He is “*the gift of God*” (John 4:10), the well from which the Holy Spirit is poured out and becomes in His people “*a spring of water welling up to eternal life*” (John 4:14). By this grace in which we stand, being at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, we “*worship the Father in spirit and truth*” (John 4:23). “*We rejoice in hope of the glory of God*” because “*God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us*” (Rom. 5:2, 5).

### **DIVINE SERVICE SETTING FOUR**

<b>Prelude</b>		Selected Music
<b>Welcome and Greeting</b>		Pastor
<b>Announcements</b>		
<b>Opening Hymn</b>	<i>“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”</i>	LSB 770
<i>(stand)</i>		

### **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.

*Psalm 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 84:1-4*

**P** How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O Lord of hosts!

**C** **My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.**

**P** **Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,  
where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my  
King and my God.**

**C** **Blessèd are those who dwell in your house,  
ever singing your praise!**

*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.*



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

## 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.

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; 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)*

## Old Testament Reading

Exodus 17:1-7

<sup>1</sup>All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup>Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" <sup>3</sup>But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" <sup>4</sup>So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." <sup>5</sup>And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. <sup>6</sup>Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup>And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the

quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

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

**C Thanks be to God.**

### Epistle Reading

Romans 5:1-8

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup>Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup>and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup>and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup>For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup>For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— <sup>8</sup>but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

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

**C Thanks be to God.**

*(stand)*

### Holy Gospel Reading

John 4:5-26

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

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

<sup>5</sup>[Jesus] came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Jacob’s well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

<sup>7</sup>There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “**Give me a drink.**” <sup>8</sup>(For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) <sup>9</sup>The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) <sup>10</sup>Jesus answered her, “**If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living**

**water.**” <sup>11</sup>The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? <sup>12</sup>Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.” <sup>13</sup>Jesus said to her, “**Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,** <sup>14</sup>**but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**” <sup>15</sup>The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, “**Go, call your husband, and come here.**” <sup>17</sup>The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “**You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’;** <sup>18</sup>**for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.**” <sup>19</sup>The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup>Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to her, “**Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.** <sup>22</sup>**You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.** <sup>23</sup>**But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.** <sup>24</sup>**God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.**” <sup>25</sup>The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” <sup>26</sup>Jesus said to her, “**I who speak to you am he.**”

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

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

*(sit)*

**Hymn of the Day**

*“May God Bestow on Us His Grace”*

LSB 824

**Sermon**

*“Are you saved?”*

*Romans 5:1-8*

*(stand)*

## Nicene Creed

**☩ I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and  
the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and  
glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**

## Passing of the Peace

*(sit)*

## Prayer of the Church

**P** Lord, in Your mercy  
**C** hear our prayer.

## Offering

Usher

*(stand)*

## SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

### 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 meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who overcame the assaults of the devil and gave His life as a ransom for many that with cleansed hearts we might be prepared joyfully to celebrate the paschal feast in sincerity and truth. 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:

**☩ 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 covenant 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

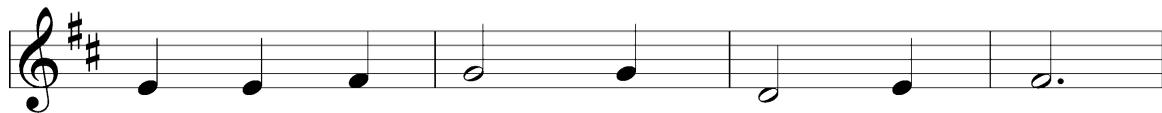
John 1:29



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**     *“Glorious Things of You Are Spoken”*

LSB 648

*(stand)*

# Nunc Dimittis

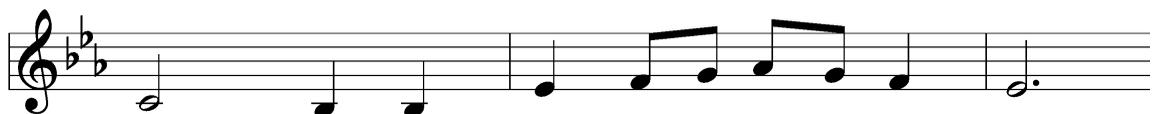
Luke 2:29-32



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**      *“Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness”*

LSB 849

**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.*



## CATECHISM CORNER | *Bite-sized teachings from Luther's Small Catechism*

Written in 1529 in Q&A format, the Small Catechism explores the Six Chief Parts of Christian Doctrine: the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Confession, and the Sacrament of the Altar.

### TABLE OF DUTIES

#### *Husbands*

Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers not be hindered. 1 Peter 3:7.

Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Colossians 3:19.

## SERMON NOTES: Romans 5:1-8

### *“Are you saved?”*

1. Faith may be defined or described as consisting of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_—a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.
2. When Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac, he was willing to \_\_\_\_\_ because he knew God could give \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Abraham’s \_\_\_\_\_ was in a \_\_\_\_\_ that was not yet fulfilled; our \_\_\_\_\_ is in the promise that has been fulfilled.
4. Paul addresses the \_\_\_\_\_ with the promise of a great \_\_\_\_\_ on the basis of what Christ has done in the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Anxiety regarding doubts, strength of faith and certainty of salvation are signs of \_\_\_\_\_—however \_\_\_\_\_ it may be—not signs of \_\_\_\_\_, since the unbeliever has no concern or anxiety about doubts, faith, or salvation.
6. We Lutherans take to heart Paul’s words in Ephesians 2, verse 8: “For by \_\_\_\_\_ you have been \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_ . And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”

## 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 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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**Offering:** Should you wish to make your regular tithe or offering online, you may do so at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZKYH/home> or scan this QR code.



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**10am Adult Sunday School:** Join us for *Symbols of Our Savior*, a 5-week Lent video study that will explore how God uses simple, even surprising symbols to reveal the depth of Christ's saving work.

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**Join us Wednesday** for our 3rd **Midweek Gathering** at the Three Oaks location at 6:30pm (light supper, Lent video study).

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**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to help with the dedication service on Saturday, May 2. Contact Linda Hanson or Terri Rosser.

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**Land Dedication Service May 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Please RSVP to Linda Hanson or Terri Rosser.

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**Holy Week Schedule:** Maundy Thursday (4/2) and Good Friday (4/3) services at 7pm at Three Oaks; Easter Sunday (4/5) at SDA - 10am brunch (no Sunday school), 11:30am service.

**Lutheran Radio:** 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 KLBJ (590 AM or 99.7 FM) at 7am 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), [Twitter](https://twitter.com), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com).

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**RightNow Media:** Every person in our Epiphany family has (and can share) free access to over 25,000 biblical video series for adults, youth, and kids—**RightNow Media** has a free app that’s available on all major streaming devices so you and your family can access content anywhere, anytime. Visit [app.rightnowmedia.org/join/elcb](http://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/elcb) or scan the QR code.



**ChristianBook Giveback Program:** Did you know that your purchases at Christianbook can help fund our congregation? Just visit [christianbook.com/apps/giveback](http://christianbook.com/apps/giveback) and enter the Giveback ID for Epiphany Lutheran Church: JQWHTN. After this one-time signup, we’ll be eligible to receive 4% cashback on your purchases.

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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).



Answers to Sermon Notes:  
1. Faith may be defined or described as consisting of **knowledge, assent, and confidence**—a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.  
2. When Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac, he was willing to **obey** because he knew God could give **life to the dead**.  
3. Abraham’s **faith** was in a **promise** that was not yet fulfilled; our **faith** is in the promise that has been fulfilled.  
4. Paul addresses the **present** with the promise of a great **future** on the basis of what Christ has done in the **past**.  
5. Anxiety regarding doubts, strength of faith and certainty of salvation are signs of **faith**—however **weak** it may be—not signs of **unbelief**, since the unbeliever has no concern or anxiety about doubts, faith, or salvation.  
6. We Lutherans take to heart Paul’s words in Ephesians 2, verse 8: “For by **grace** you have been **saved** through **faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”

## 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...

- J.P. and Aimee Cima and their children, Celeste, Isabella, and Isaac – missionaries in the Kingdom of Cambodia
  - Elaine Ottinger
  - Johnnie – Sandy Giro's Brother
  - Elaine – Sandy Giro's Sister-in-Law
  - Lisa Clontz – Fundraiser Location Change; Tenant for Houston House
  - Our Military
- 

### THIS WEEK AT EPIPHANY:

#### Sunday, March 8<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

#### Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>

- 6:30pm – Lent Midweek Gathering

#### Sunday, March 15<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
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## The Cross Between Curse and Peace

[Pastor's note: This past week our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *Spend the Year in Scripture Challenge* brought us through the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 27-28, which the average person might gloss over since it's, well...it's all just so 3,000 years ago! How relevant can this be to our world today? Read on...]

When modern Christians read the curses in Deuteronomy 27-28, they often recoil. The language is severe: disease, drought, defeat, exile. It can sound harsh, even vindictive. So what are we to make of it?

Let's consider the setting. Moses is speaking to Israel before they enter the Promised Land. The Lord had already rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Grace came first. The covenant relationship was already established. The blessings and curses weren't instructions for how to become God's people—but warnings about what would happen if His redeemed people rejected Him.

The curses reveal something we often prefer to soften: sin is not small. It's not merely a private misstep. It corrodes communities, fractures families, distorts worship, and eventually leads to exile—separation from the life-giving presence of God. Deuteronomy simply tells the truth about what rebellion against the Creator does to creation. Yet we don't read these chapters as an Israelite standing at Sinai. We read them standing at Calvary.

The Apostle Paul writes in Galatians 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us." Those covenant curses—culminating in shame, judgment, and being "hung on a tree"—find their fulfillment in Jesus. Deuteronomy 21:23 declares that a man hanged on a tree is cursed. In the passion account of John, we see Christ lifted up on the cross, bearing in His own body what we deserved.

The exile Israel feared, Jesus endured. The judgment we earned, he absorbed. The curse that stood against us fell upon him.

This means we don't live under the shadow of covenant curse. We don't interpret every hardship as a direct punishment from God. We live in a fallen world where suffering remains, but we don't stand condemned; however, Deuteronomy's warnings aren't meaningless—they teach us to take sin seriously. They remind us that turning from God leads only to death.

Yet more than a millennium after Moses read those blessings and curses, Paul would write in Romans 5:1–8 that since we have been justified by faith, we now have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The story which once warned of wrath ultimately finds its fulfillment in a Savior who reconciles sinners by His blood.