

Sunday, September 13th 2026

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost



Mailing Address:

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

Physical Address:

**Epiphany Lutheran Church
124 Three Oaks Lane
Bastrop, TX 78602**

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

**church@epiphanybastrop.org
epiphanybastrop.org/
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.



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.

If you are not a member of a congregation in The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive Communion, we kindly request that you first speak with our pastor.

SERVANTS DURING WORSHIP THIS MORNING:

Pastor – Rev. E.B. Holschuh
Lay Reader – Deb Layland
Assisting Elder – Dave Layland
Usher – Jeremy Clifton
Acolyte – Madeline Robb

We are using the Church Music Solutions Church Organist Service, an iPad application that provides us with accompaniment for our worship service. **There is a brief introduction to the musical parts of the liturgy unless otherwise noted.**

AS WE PREPARE FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING:

Forgiving as the Lord Forgives Us

In settling His accounts with us, our Lord acts not with anger, but with compassion. He does not imprison us as we deserve, but He forgives all our debts and releases us (Matt. 18:23–27). Therefore, our Lord bids each of us to have “*mercy on your fellow servant*” and “*forgive your brother from your heart*” (Matt. 18:33, 35). By the Lord’s forgiveness of our sins, we are free to forgive those who sin against us, because He has been handed over to the jailers in our stead and He has paid our entire debt with His lifeblood. Whether we live or die, we “*are the Lord’s*” (Rom. 14:8). Since we all will “*stand before the judgment seat of God*,” we are not to despise our brother (Rom. 14:10), but gladly forgive him. By the grace of God, our brother also “*will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand*” (Rom. 14:4). Though we daily sin against each other, the Lord intends “*to bring it about that many people should be kept alive*” (Gen. 50:20). Jesus speaks kindly by His Gospel and promises: “*I will provide for you and your little ones*” (Gen. 50:21).

DIVINE SERVICE SETTING FOUR

Prelude

Selected Music

Welcome and Greeting

Pastor

Announcements

Opening Hymn

“Come Down, O Love Divine”

LSB 501

(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 143:1-2

P Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for mercy!

C **In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!**

P Enter not into judgment with your servant,
for no one living is righteous before you.

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 (no intro)

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.

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

(sit)

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading

Romans 14:1-12

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is

before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

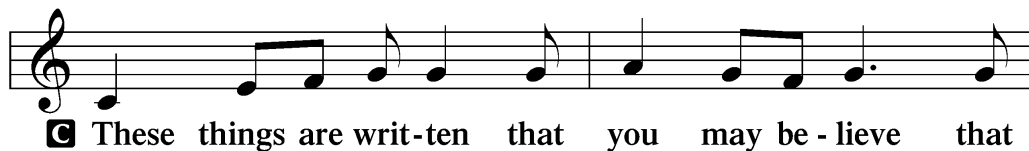
¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

(stand)

Alleluia and Verse



John 20:31



Matthew 18:21-35

C Glory to You, O Lord.

23“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ 27And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. 28But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ 29So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ 30He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. 31When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ 34And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. 35So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

C Praise to You, O Christ.

8

Sermon

Pleading the Fifth (“As we forgive those...”)

Matthew 18:21-35

(stand)

Apostles’ Creed

**☩ 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

(sit)

Prayer of the Church

☩ Lord, in Your mercy

☩ 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 good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, 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 (no intro)

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;



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:

Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

- 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 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

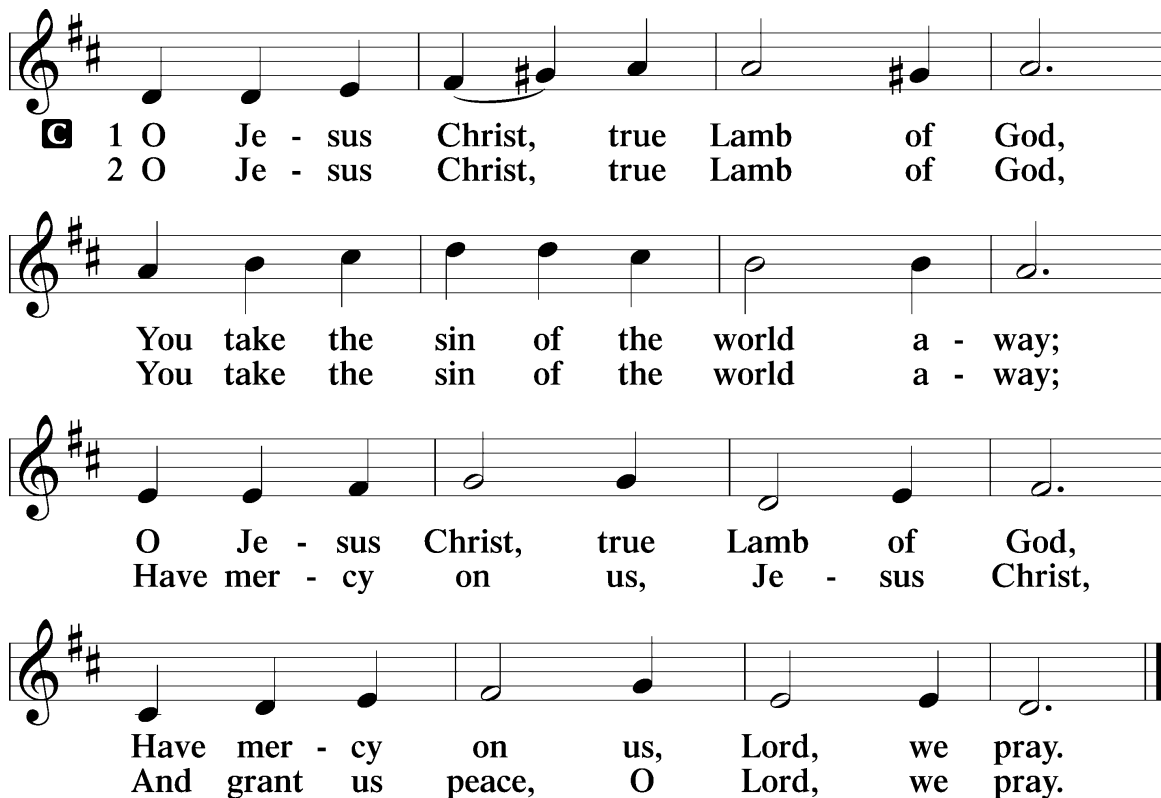
John 20:19

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

John 1:29



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

You take the sin of 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 Hymns

"Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death"
"Your Table I Approach"

LSB 697

LSB 628

(stand)

Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29-32

1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
2 All glo - ry to the 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

“Where Charity and Love Prevail”

LSB 845

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: Matthew 18:21-35
Pleading the Fifth (“As we forgive those...”)

1. The _____ is precisely where
_____ judgment and _____
mercy meet.
 2. People who don't _____ don't truly know what it
_____ to be _____.
 3. Jesus is telling _____ in verse 22 that the
_____ 's capacity to _____ is
limitless.
 4. Heaven and earth embrace when each of us, forgiven by
_____, truly forgives a _____ or a
_____.
 5. Christians who have received God's gracious _____ are
obligated to _____ fellow _____
unceasingly and unconditionally.
 6. When we _____ the _____
petition of the Lord's Prayer— *...forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us...*—do we really _____ it?
-

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.



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 (or just scan the QR code).



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

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.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHALLENGE! Last week we began a new 7-week 9am Sunday School series, *Sustaining Connections: Living Life in Community*—and we’re challenging all of our adult members to participate! Gathering around God’s Word is essential to the spiritual health of every Christian and of our congregation as a whole. Together we’ll explore what it means to be “discipleable”—willing to be taught, shaped, encouraged, challenged, and sent by Christ—and how the early Christians lived out their faith through God’s Word, fellowship, worship, prayer, generosity, and witness. We invite YOU to make these 7 sessions a priority—come and grow together with your Epiphany family! Then...

... join us for a **Reformation/Oktoberfest Rally Sunday on Oct. 25!** There will be no regular Sunday school that morning. After our 10:30am worship service, we’ll gather for food, fellowship, and fun—BBQ and potluck, quality time together, and maybe some cornhole, horseshoes, or other activities. Hopefully, the weather by then will be much more agreeable to humanoids. If you’d like to help in making the day especially memorable, please contact Fred or Carita Botha.

Another opportunity to get plugged into a Bible study—a **new Wednesday 6:30pm video study began last week.** Have you been feeling weighed down by worry? Or caught up in a web of self-critical thoughts? Learn to overcome common thought traps like anxiety, guilt, rejection, dissatisfaction, and more. Join us here at Three Oaks for *Tame Your Thoughts*, a 6-session video series from Max Lucado. No matter who you are or where you come from, progress is possible!

Want to carry Sunday’s message with you into the week? ***Seeing the Light*** is a weekly self-study and discussion guide designed to help you dig a little deeper into the Scripture and sermon, reflect on what God’s Word means for your daily life, and put your faith into practice. Pick up a copy as you come through the door each Sunday for yourself, to use with your family, or share with a friend. Don’t just hear the Word on Sunday—keep growing in it all week long!

A reminder that we have an **Online Epiphany Church Directory**. Go to members.InstantChurchDirectory.com and follow the prompts under “Sign In” to “Create a login now.” Please remember, you must confirm your email address before you can sign in. There’s also a free mobile app available—simply search for “Instant Church Directory” to get the download. You will need to use your email address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app. If you need help or have questions, contact Tom Rosser.

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 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.

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 kfuo.org and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: @KFUOradio on [Facebook](https://facebook.com/kfuoradio), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/kfuoradio), and [Instagram](https://instagram.com/kfuoradio).

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 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 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.

Answers to Sermon Notes:
1. The *cross* is precisely where *divine* judgment and *divine* mercy meet.
2. People who don't *forgive* don't truly know what it *means* to be *forgiven*.
3. Jesus is telling *Peter* in verse 22 that the *believer's* capacity to *forgive* is limitless.
4. Heaven and earth embrace when each of us, forgiven by *God*, truly forgives a *brother* or a *sister*.
5. Christians who have received God's gracious *forgiveness* are obligated to *forgive* fellow *believers* unceasingly and unconditionally.
6. When we *offer* the *fifth* petition of the Lord's Prayer, ... *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us*..., do we really *mean* it?

THIS WEEK AT EPIPHANY:

Sunday, September 13th

- 9:00am – Children’s Sunday School
- 9:00am – Adult Sunday School
- 10:00am – Fellowship / Coffee Time
- 10:30am – Worship Service with Communion

Wednesday, September 16th

- 7:00pm – Starting Point: *A Conversation About Faith*

Thursday, September 17th

- 3:00pm – Devotional at Argent Court

Sunday, September 20th

- 9:00am – Children’s Sunday School
 - 9:00am – Adult Sunday School
 - 10:00am – Fellowship / Coffee Time
 - 10:30am – Worship Service with Communion
-

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.

Please continue to pray for...

- Rev. Dr. Walter and Robyn Steele – missionaries in the Republic of the Philippines
- Francis Eschberger, Elaine Ottinger, Gert Schriner, and all the residents at Argent Court Assisted Living in Bastrop
- Carl Sneck
- Van Clifton – Jeremy’s Dad
- Kerrie Cabrera – Rosie’s Sister-in-Law



Who Chose Whom?

"If two unbelievers hear the same Gospel and one believes while the other does not, what explains the difference?"

Decision theology eventually tends to locate the difference in the person: one accepted, chose, surrendered, asked, opened his heart, or made the decision.

The Lutheran confession refuses to do that. If I believe, God gets 100% of the credit. If I reject Christ, I get 100% of the blame. Scripture does not resolve that tension by inserting a human decision—this is known as the doctrine of *monergistic* conversion: God alone converts the sinner.

You may sometimes hear Christians say, "Salvation is a free gift—you simply need to ask Jesus into your heart," or, "You need to make a decision for Christ." There is something wonderfully true here: salvation really is free. Jesus has done everything necessary to save us.

But if salvation is free provided that I make the right decision, then my decision has quietly become my contribution to salvation. Scripture gives us a different picture. Paul says that apart from Christ we are "dead in the trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). Dead people cannot decide to make themselves alive. God must give life.

That is why Paul writes, "By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). As Luther teaches us to confess in the Small Catechism: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel."

And this helps us understand why baptism is such a beautiful picture of grace—especially the baptism of an infant. A baby cannot "make a decision for Christ." A baby cannot invite Jesus into his heart or offer God a confession of faith produced by his own reason or strength. But Jesus can come to that baby. God

can give His promise. God can forgive sins. God can give the Holy Spirit. God can create faith.

That is why Scripture calls baptism "the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5) and says, "Baptism...now saves you" (1 Peter 3:21). Baptism shows us the direction in which salvation always moves: from God to us.

Christians certainly make decisions because they are Christians. We repent, confess Christ, pray, serve, and follow Him. But those decisions do not make us Christians.

Jesus says, "You did not choose me, but I chose you" (John 15:16). That is what makes grace truly grace. Jesus does the saving. The Holy Spirit gives the faith. And in Baptism God places His name and promise upon us.

From beginning to end, salvation is God's gift.

