

**Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost  
Reformation Sunday**



**Mailing Address:**

**Epiphany Lutheran Church  
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Bastrop, TX 78602**

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[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 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.

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### SERVANTS DURING WORSHIP THIS MORNING:

Pastor – Rev. E.B. Holschuh  
Lay Reader – Rosie Cabrera  
Assisting Elder – Ryan Robb  
Usher – Alex Monroe  
Acolyte – E.J. Clontz

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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:

### *In Divine and Holy Love, the Lord Jesus Sanctifies Us by the Gospel of His Cross*

The people of God are to be holy as He is holy. Therefore, we should fear, love and trust in Him above all things, and in such faith *“you shall love your neighbor as yourself”* (Lev. 19:18). Such faith toward God and love for the neighbor are the two great commandments upon which *“depend all the Law and the Prophets”* (Matt. 22:40). The Lord, our God Himself, has fulfilled His Law on our behalf — in His great love for us, with all His heart and soul and mind, and in a body of flesh and blood like ours. David’s Lord has become David’s Son, so that all our enemies might be put under His feet and that we might be exalted to the right hand of God in Him (Matt. 22:43–45). So His servants bear His cross in faith and love. For the sake of the Gospel, they suffer persecution for their work, bearing their burdens in gentleness, *“like a nursing mother taking care of her own children”* (1 Thess. 2:7). In like manner and with tender affection, they exhort and encourage *“like a father with his children”* (1 Thess. 2:11–12).

## DIVINE SERVICE SETTING FOUR

**Prelude**

Selected Music

**Welcome and Greeting**

Pastor

**Announcements**

**Opening Hymn**

*“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”*

LSB 656

*(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 9:1-2, 9-10

**P** I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart;  
I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.

**C I will be glad and exult in you;  
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.**

**P** The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed,  
a stronghold in times of trouble.

**C And those who know your name put their trust in you,  
for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.**

*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, You have commanded us to love You above all things and our neighbors as ourselves. Grant us the Spirit to think and do what is pleasing in Your sight, that our faith in You may never waver and our love for one another may not falter; 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

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

<sup>1</sup>And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. . . .

<sup>15</sup>“You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. <sup>16</sup>You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>“You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. <sup>18</sup>You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Epistle Reading

I Thessalonians 2:1-13

<sup>1</sup>For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. <sup>2</sup>But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. <sup>3</sup>For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, <sup>4</sup>but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup>For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor

with a pretext for greed—God is witness. <sup>6</sup>Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. <sup>7</sup>But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. <sup>8</sup>So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

<sup>9</sup>For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. <sup>10</sup>You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. <sup>11</sup>For you know how, like a father with his children, <sup>12</sup>we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

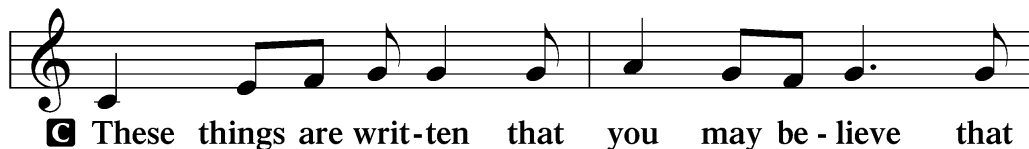
<sup>13</sup>And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*(stand)*

## Alleluia and Verse



*John 20:31*



## Holy Gospel Reading

Matthew 22:34-46

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.

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

<sup>34</sup>When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. <sup>35</sup>And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. <sup>36</sup>“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” <sup>37</sup>And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup>This is the great and first commandment. <sup>39</sup>And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. <sup>40</sup>On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

<sup>41</sup>Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, <sup>42</sup>saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” <sup>43</sup>He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

<sup>44</sup>“The Lord said to my Lord,

Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet’?

<sup>45</sup>If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” <sup>46</sup>And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

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

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

*(sit)*

**Hymn of the Day**

*“Salvation unto Us Has Come”*

LSB 655 sts. 1-5

**Sermon**

*The LORD says to my Lord...*

Matthew 22:34-46

*(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

*(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 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

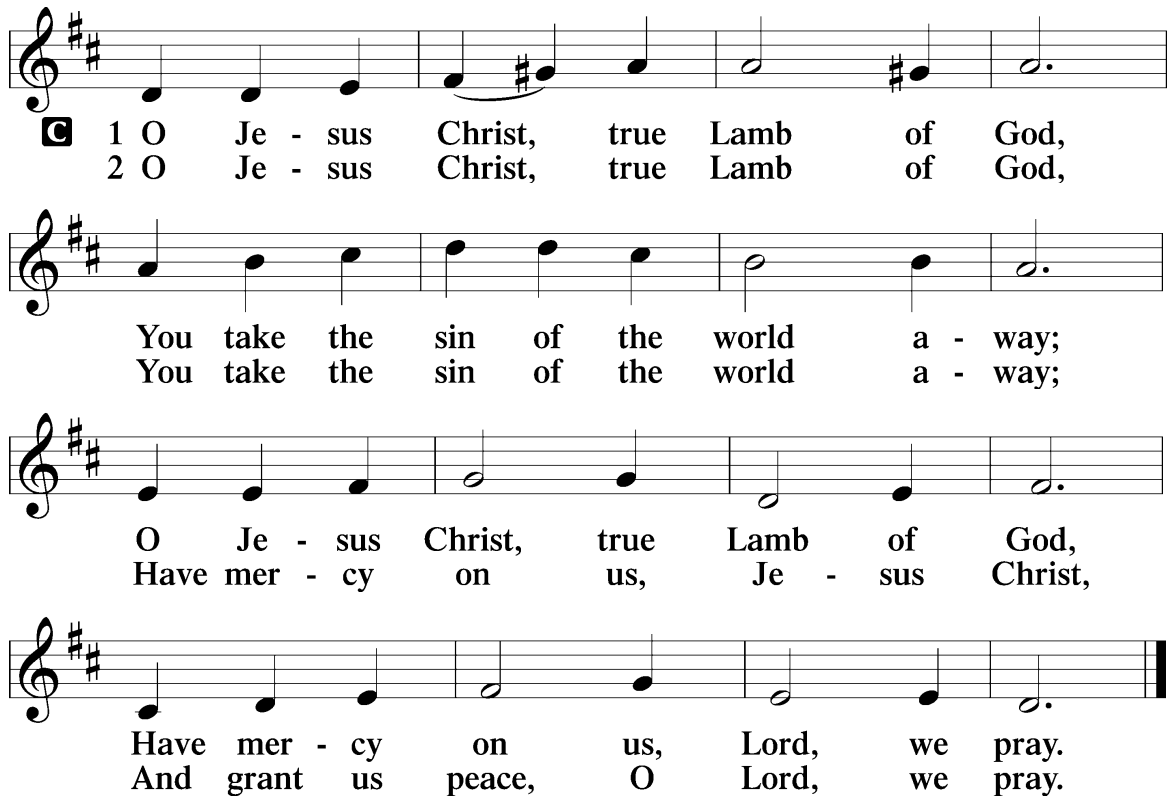
*John 20:19*

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



# Agnus Dei

John 1:29



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 Hymns

|                                               |         |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------|
| <i>“God’s Word Is Our Great Heritage”</i>     | LSB 582 |
| <i>“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Your Word”</i> | LSB 655 |
| <i>“Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing”</i>   | LSB 584 |

(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 the Gen - tiles Un -  
For as in the 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**

*“Salvation unto Us Has Come”*

LSB 555 sts. 6-10

**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 22:34-46

### *The LORD says to my Lord...*

1. "I am not a Christian because I do \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, but because Christ is born and given for \_\_\_\_\_." (Martin Luther)
2. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the Lord is one." "You shall love the LORD your God with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_." (The *Shema*, Deuteronomy 6:4-5)...
3. ...these are the \_\_\_\_\_ commandments \_\_\_\_\_ by Yahweh Himself.
4. God hasn't removed the Law—it's still \_\_\_\_\_ us and promises \_\_\_\_\_ to the unrepentant, it still shows us our sin, and, most importantly it's God's \_\_\_\_\_ for how we are to live our lives.
5. We love the whole whom we cannot reach through the part we can; the part of the human race given to each one \_\_\_\_\_ is the disciple's main way to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. No one can see \_\_\_\_\_ the Father and \_\_\_\_\_, so the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity has interacted with \_\_\_\_\_ since the beginning.

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### 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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**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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**New 9am Adult Sunday School series starts on November 1!** What do you do when life feels louder than your faith? When pressure is constant, confidence is shaky, and you know God is calling you, but you don't feel ready for what He's asking? Join us for *Gideon: There Is a Champion in You*, a 6-week video study for anyone who has ever felt overwhelmed by chaos, trapped in insecurity, intimidated by opposition, or tempted to drift after success.

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A reminder that we have an **Online Epiphany Church Directory**. Go to [members.InstantChurchDirectory.com](http://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.

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**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.

**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](http://kfuo.org) and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: **@KFUOradio** on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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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.



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**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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**The Lutheran Witness Subscription:** Our congregation pays for each member household to receive a subscription to *The Lutheran Witness*, the monthly magazine of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, plus the *Texas Messenger* (monthly Texas District insert). Current subscriptions will be renewed next month for 2027. Each subscription costs \$32.00; if you would like to pay for your household’s subscription or aren’t a member and would like to purchase a subscription, please contact Margie Clifton ([margie.clifton@epiphanybastrop.org](mailto:margie.clifton@epiphanybastrop.org)) no later than Sunday, October 25.

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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...

- Francis Eschberger, Elaine Ottinger, Gert Schriener, and all the residents at Argent Court Assisted Living in Bastrop

Answers to Sermon Notes:  
1. "I am not a Christian because I do *this* or *that* but because Christ is born and given for *me*." (Martin Luther)  
2. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." "You shall love the LORD your God with all your *heart* and with all your *soul* and with all your *might*" (The *Shema*, Deuteronomy 6:4-5) ...  
3. "...these are the *only two* commandments *spoken* by Yahweh Himself.  
4. God hasn't removed the Law—it's still *convicts* us and promises *death* to the unrepentant, it still shows us our sin, and, most importantly it's God's *guide* for how we are to live our lives.  
5. We love the whole whom we cannot reach through the part we can; the part of the human race given to each one *daily* is the disciple's main way to

## THIS WEEK AT EPIPHANY:

### Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>

- 10:30am – Worship Service with Communion
- After the worship service – Join us for food, fellowship, and fun!

### Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>

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



## Hear, O Israel!

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (Deuteronomy 6:4–5)

These words are known as the *Shema*, from the Hebrew word meaning "Hear" or "Listen." For thousands of years, faithful Jews have recited these words morning and evening as a confession of faith and a reminder of their relationship with God. But the Shema is more than a call to listen. It is a call to live.

Moses spoke these words to the Israelites as they prepared to enter the Promised Land. They were about to encounter a culture filled with competing gods, temptations, and distractions. The Shema reminded them that there is only one true God, and that He deserves their undivided love and devotion.

Notice that God's command is not simply to believe in Him, but to love Him—with all our heart, soul, and might. In other words, with everything we are and everything we have. Faith isn't meant to occupy just one hour on Sunday morning. It is to shape our conversations, decisions, relationships, and daily routines.

Moses continues: “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (verse 7). Faith is passed along not only through formal instruction, but through everyday life—around the table at mealtimes, on the way to work or school, at bedtime, and in countless ordinary moments.

Centuries later, when Jesus was asked which commandment was the greatest, he began by quoting the Shema. He then added the command to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love for God and love for neighbor belong together. (Matthew 22:37-40)

Yet the Shema also exposes our failure. Who among us has loved God with an undivided heart? Our sinful nature continually turns toward other things. But where we have failed, Jesus has succeeded. He loved his heavenly Father perfectly, obeyed Him completely, and gave his life on the cross for sinners like us. Through faith in Christ, we are forgiven and made God's own children.

And now, as His redeemed people, we are called to hear His Word, treasure it in our hearts, and share it with the next generation.

The Shema begins with “Hear.” Before we can teach God's Word, we must first hear it ourselves. And having heard His gracious promises in Christ, we are free to love and serve Him in the ordinary moments of everyday life.

