



CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA

"Helping others receive grace, purpose and direction by proclaiming Christ's love."

17 East 27th Street
Scottsbluff, NE
(308) 632-8023
calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org

Sunday Morning Worship
10:00 a.m.
February 12, 2023

Sixth Sunday After Epiphany Confirmation Sunday

A Warm Welcome to all as we gather as God's people to worship our Lord. We pray our worship together would strengthen your faith and increase your desire to know and serve the One who loves us with an everlasting love as made known to us in Jesus Christ.

*Visitors, if you are worshipping with us today,
we are glad to have you with us. Please join us again soon!*

(In preparation for our worship together, you are invited to take a moment of silence to offer your own prayers of worship and praise.)

KEY: ELW and any page number = Worship hymnal (cranberry),
OSB = Other Song Book (red), W&P = Worship & Praise (purple).

* Indicates please stand if able. Congregational responses are printed in **BOLD** type.

Prelude Music

**“Sing out, earth and skies”
“Father Welcomes”**

**W&P #126
BOB #52**

Welcome and Announcements

‡WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS‡

Welcome Song:

“Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus”

**ELW #802
vv. 1&4**

**1. Let us ever walk with Jesus,
follow his example pure,
through a world that would deceive us
and to sin our spirits lure.
Onward in his footsteps treading,
trav'lers here, our home above,
full of faith and hope and love,
let us do our Savior's bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide;
I shall follow where you guide.**

**4. Let us also live with Jesus.
He has risen from the dead
that to life we may awaken.
Jesus, you are now our head,
we are your own living members;
where you live, there we shall be
in your presence constantly,
living there with you forever.
Jesus, let me faithful be;
life eternal grant to me.**

***Thanksgiving for Baptism**

(All may make the sign of the † cross, the sign marked at baptism, as we begin)

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

In the waters of baptism, we have passed over from death to life with Jesus Christ, and we are a new creation. For this saving mystery, and for this water, let us bless God, † who was, who is, and who is to come.

(Water is poured into the font as the congregation gives thanks.)

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace and love.

To you be given honor and praise through † Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Chorus

**Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my path.**

**1. When I feel afraid,
And I think I've lost my way,
Still You're there right beside me,
Nothing will I fear
As long as You are near.
Please be near me to the end. *Chorus***

**2. I will not forget
Your love for me, and yet
My heart forever is wandering.
Jesus, be my guide
And hold me to Your side,
I will love You to the end. *Chorus***

***Greeting**

The grace of our risen Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

***Prayer of the Day**

O God,

the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Installation of the 2023 Planning Council

‡GOD'S WORD SPEAKS TO US‡

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

¹⁵See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 119:1-8

¹Happy are they whose way is blameless,
who follow the teaching of the LORD!

²**Happy are they who observe your decrees
and seek you with all their hearts,**

³who never do any wrong,
but always walk in your ways.

⁴**You laid down your commandments,
that we should fully keep them.**

⁵Oh, that my ways were made so direct
that I might keep your statutes!

⁶**Then I should not be put to shame,
when I regard all your commandments.**

⁷I will thank you with a true heart,
when I have learned your righteous judgments.

⁸**I will keep your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me.**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

¹And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? ⁴For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human? ⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. ⁹For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation:**

"Emmanuel"

W&P #36

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us;
His name is called Emmanuel. Repeat**

***Gospel: Matthew 5:21-37**

Response after the announcement of the gospel:
Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹"You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' ²²But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. ²³So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

³¹"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' ³²But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' ³⁴But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

Response after the gospel reading:
Praise to you, O Christ.

Kid's Sermon:

Angie Hinze

Sermon:

Pastor Brett

(Silence for Reflection and Meditation.)

‡WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD‡

***Song of the Day:**

"Day by Day"

ELW #790

**Day by day, your mercies, Lord, attend me,
bringing comfort to my anxious soul.
Day by day, the blessings, Lord, you send me
draw me nearer to my heav'nly goal.
Love divine, beyond all mortal measure,
brings to naught the burdens of my quest;
Savior, lead me to the home I treasure,
where at last I'll find eternal rest.**

**Day by day, I know you will provide me
strength to serve and wisdom to obey;
I will seek your loving will to guide me
o'er the paths I struggle day by day.
I will fear no evil of the morrow,
I will trust in your enduring grace.
Savior, help me bear life's pain and sorrow
till in glory I behold your face.**

**Oh, what joy to know that you are near me
when my burdens grow too great to bear;
oh, what joy to know that you will hear me
when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer.
Day by day, no matter what betide me,
you will hold me ever in your hand.
Savior, with your presence here to guide me,
I will reach at last the promised land.**

‡Affirmation of Baptism‡

Dear friends, we give thanks to God for the gift of baptism and for these Confirmands, one with us in the body of Christ, who are making public affirmation of their baptism this day.

Leader: I present Jacey Cochran, Joshua Miller and Max Judy who desire to make public affirmation of their baptism.

P: Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you for Jacey, Josh & Max whom you have made your own by water and the word in baptism. You have called them to yourself, enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished them in the community of faith. Uphold your servants as they affirm the gifts and promises of baptism and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. We ask this in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

Renunciation of Evil

P: As you affirm your baptism, I ask you to reject sin, profess your faith in Christ, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Response: **I renounce them.**

P: Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Response: I renounce them.

P: Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: I renounce them.

Profession of Faith

P: Do you turn to Christ as your Lord and Savior?

Response: In faith, I turn to Christ.

P: With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

P: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Commitment by Confirmands

P: You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism: to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

Confirmands: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

Recitation of Confirmation Verses

P: People of God, do you promise to support Jacey, Josh & Max praying for them in their life in Christ?

C: We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Will the parents and sponsors of our Confirmands, please come forward at this time.

Prayer of Blessing

P: Let us pray. We give thanks, O God that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, wash us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in Jacey, Josh & Max the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C: Amen.

Parental Blessing

In Christian love you presented your children for Holy Baptism. In their baptisms, sacred promises were made. As parents of these young men and women, it was part of your calling to see that those sacred promises were kept: to faithfully bring them to the services of God's house, to teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments. to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures and to provide for their instruction in the Christian faith." You have fulfilled those promises.

We now ask you to renew the covenants you made for the ongoing support of these young people's faith journeys. Do you intend to continue to worship, study and pray regularly with your youth?

If so, answer: ***"I do, and I ask God to help and guide me."***

Now parents and sponsors, I ask you to place your hand on your youth's head or shoulder and bless them: ***"May our blessing rest upon you as you enter a new stage in your walk of faith. God's blessing be upon you. May our Risen Lord sustain you, encourage you and guide you throughout your lives. May you always know the joy and strength that comes from being a child of God. Amen."***

Acclamation

P: Let us give thanks for these youth affirming their baptism as we carry out the life of this Christian community and its mission in the world.

C: As your sisters and brothers in the body of Christ, we rejoice with you as you affirm your baptism. Together let us give praise to God and bear God's creative and redeeming work to the entire world.

Confirmation Slide Show

***Prayers of the Church:**

W&P #27

(Sung Prayer Response)

**I cast all my cares upon you;
I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime that I don't know what to do,
I will cast all my cares upon you.**

***Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(You are invited to share the peace of Christ with one another)

Offering

Offertory: "Let the Walk of Faith Begin"

Choir

***Offertory Prayer**

Having offered ourselves and our gifts, let us pray... Liberating God,
you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power, and shape us as people of your justice and freedom. You magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior, Amen.

†HOLY COMMUNION†

Here our Lord gives to us His own Body and Blood for the forgiveness of all our sins.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

***Words of Institution**

(The Words of Institution are spoken by the pastor, ending with... "now and forever. Amen." The congregation responds by singing the refrain from "In the Singing")

“In the Singing”

ELW #466

**Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ,
be the wine of grace;
Jesus, Christ, Jesus Christ,
be the bread of peace.**

***The Lord’s Prayer**

**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.**

Invitation to Communion

Come and taste the joy of God!

Distribution of Communion:

Christ is truly present in the Lord’s Supper with gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

All are welcome and invited to receive Holy Communion.

(Communion will be served continuously at two stations in the front of the church.

WHITE GRAPE JUICE and GLUTEN FREE WAFERS are available. Just ask the server.

Children who are not yet communicants are invited to come forward for a blessing.)

Distribution Song:

“One Bread, One Body”

ELW #496

Refrain: **One bread, one body,
one Lord of all.
One cup of blessings which we bless.
And we, though many,
throughout the earth,
we are one body in this one Lord.**

**1. Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
woman or man, no more. Refrain**

**2. Many the gifts, many the works,
one in the Lord, of all. *Refrain***

**3. Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,
gathered to one, for all. *Refrain***

***Post-Communion Blessing**

***Post-Communion Prayer**

Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table.
Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you. **Amen.**

‡WE DEPART TO SERVE‡

***Benediction**

The God who faithfully brings forth justice
and breaks the oppressor's rod

‡ bless, strengthen, and uphold you,
today and always.

Amen.

***Sending Song:**

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

ELW #836

**1. Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,
praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.**

**2. All thy works with joy surround thee,
earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,
stars and angels sing around thee,
center of unbroken praise.**

**Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird, and flowing fountain
call us to rejoice in thee.**

**3. Thou art giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living,
ocean-depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,
all who live in love are thine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine!**

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.
Thanks be to God.

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When a child is baptized, we, as the people of God, promise to support and pray for them in their new life in Christ. Your presence on this special day is one way you can fulfill the promise we as a church made to God. We rejoice that the following young people will be affirming the Baptismal promises made for them at their baptisms.

Jacey Cochran Josh Miller Max Judy

In Our Thoughts and Prayers†

Prayers for healing: **Linda Spomer** (healing/pain from broken back), **Lee Saip** (hospitalized due to an infection—Wes & Elnora’s son-in-law), **Marsha Bueide** (recovering), **Perry Crom** (health issues-nephew of Shirlye Schuldies), **Hollie** (recovering from surgery—friend of Nannie Walsh), **Willard Rusch** (injuries from a fall—Becca Pierce’s father), **Neal Blomenkamp** (recovering from heart surgery), **Kaitlyn Carr** (shoulder surgery—Dee Brady’s daughter), **Catherine Rahrs** (blood clots—Val Rahrs’ mother), **Joy Arnold** (cancer— friend of Deb Brown), **Paul Bueide** (recovering), **Kevin Feil** (sepsis & cancer—Lindsey Singer & Melissa Guerrero’s father), **Patty** (cancer—Jim Dorn’s sister-in-law).

Prayers for comfort and peace for: Family and friends of **Dave Fitzgibbon** (Myron & Brigitte Loseke’s son-in-law).

Prayers for comfort and safety: **Jeffery Christeleit** (deployed—Brian & Jodi Christeleit’s son and Jim & Sheila Miller’s grandson).



DJ Buckley, 2/12; Jim Miller, 2/13; Don Stahla, 2/13; Nick Singer, 2/14;
Rhyann Buckley, 2/16; Becca Pierce, 2/18; Audrey Harvey, 2/18

If we have missed your birthday, please let the office know. Thanks.



YOUR GIVING ONLINE

Scan the **QR code** to the right, go to our website: www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org and click on the **Give Online** button OR download the **Vanco Now App** on your smartphone. It’s safe and secure.



Coffee and Fellowship

We would like to invite people to stay after worship for a time of fellowship. The coffee pot will be on, but if you would like to provide treats, please sign up on the sheet outside the office.



FEBRUARY FOOD DONATIONS REQUESTED

FOOD PANTRY: Canned Meat

BACKPACKS: Granola Bars

Containers are located outside Fellowship Hall.

Thanks for your generosity.



JAM on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Our Wednesday evening youth group is for kids in kindergarten through 6th grade. We begin with dinner (taco salad/fruit/dessert) at 5:30 p.m. followed by storytelling, music, crafts, games, and lots of fun until 7 p.m. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Angie at the church.



CLCW FEBRUARY MISSION PROJECT:

Bake-less Bake Sale

Instead of spending the money to make baked items and asking people to purchase them, the women are asking for cash donations in the amount that you might normally spend to make or buy items at a bake sale. Money raised goes to our mission projects for the world, our nation, and our local community. Donations may be placed in the tan "Designated Giving" envelopes in the pews. Please be sure to mark on them CLCW Project on the envelope. Thank you for your support.



Lenten Meals

Lent is fast approaching if you would be interested in providing a Wednesday Lenten meal, please contact the church office or Bill Huelle.



SUNDAY, FEB. 12 (Following Worship)

A Fundraiser for the Cat/Pup Pack Program

If you are interested in bringing a crock pot of soup or a dessert, please talk to Angie or sign up outside the office. And don't forget to stay after worship on the 12th for some delicious

homemade soups and desserts! Riverstone Bank will be matching funds. Let's do our part to help feed the kids in the community.



WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Brett Vander Berg

This Sunday – February 12

USHERS: Monty & Shari Copsey

LAY READER: Angie Hinze

HEAD COMMUNION ASST: Barb Jensen

COMMUNION ASSTS: Rick & Lynn

Margheim

POWERPOINT: Matt Payne

ACOLYTES: Ben Moravec & Merrick Walsh

MEDIA: Chris Jensen

AUDIO: Trea Hess

ALTAR GUILD: Deb Brown, Vicki Howell,

Tracy Steele, Shari Copsey

PIANIST: Dee Brady

Next Sunday – February 19

USHERS: Kent & Dawn Holub

LAY READER: Marti Wegelin

HEAD COMMUNION ASST: Bill Huelle

COMMUNION ASSTS: Abby Newsom &
Marissa Wright

POWERPOINT: Angela Bonow

ACOLYTES: Micaela Hess & Max Judy

MEDIA: Maunette Loeks-Van Patten

AUDIO: Jack Martin

ALTAR GUILD: Andi Dorn, Shelly Koehler

ORGANIST: Rhonda Boettcher

COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP: *Please sign up!*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, February 12

Confirmation Sunday

9 a.m. – Confirmation Pictures

10 a.m. – Worship & Installation of
Council

11 a.m. – Soup Dinner

Monday, February 13

2 p.m. – Priscilla Circle @ Vicki
Schmidt's

6 p.m. – Council

Tuesday, February 14

12 p.m. – Women's Study

1 p.m. – Quilting

Wednesday, February 15

5:15 p.m. – Outreach

5:30 p.m. – JAM

7 p.m. – Choir Practice

Saturday, February 18

9 a.m. – Trustees

5:30 p.m. – Worship

Sunday, February 19

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship in
Fellowship Hall

FEBRUARY 12, 2023
SIXTH SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY



Jesus comes to bring reconciliation.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 5:21-37	Teachings of Jesus
Monday	Deuteronomy 30:15-20	Choose life, not death
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 3:1-9	Working together for God
Wednesday	2 Corinthians 5:11-21	The ministry of reconciliation
Thursday	Genesis 33:1-17	Jacob and Esau meet
Friday	Ephesians 4:25-32	Rules for the new life
Saturday	Psalms 119:1-8	The Law of the Lord
Sunday	Matthew 17:1-19	Transfiguration of Jesus

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Loving God, you have shown us the way to love and mercy; help us to share your love and power of reconciliation with all through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this food, a gift of life that sustains us during the good times and the difficult times through Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the love of God bless you with long life and happiness.



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For a larger printable 'Taking Faith Home' go to our website calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org

FEBRUARY 12, 2023
HYMN OF THE WEEK
Forgive our Sins As We Forgive



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What do you do when a personal relationship is not going well?
- How does your faith help you when you are struggling in a relationship?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 5:21-37

When Jesus is teaching here, he can sound like he is undermining the law and substituting other rules to live by. However, what he is doing is not rejecting the law, but intensifying its intended outcome. The law is to preserve life for one's neighbor, one's community, and oneself. The commandments give a baseline of how to care for one another, but Jesus says, "you can do more." We are not to stop caring for our neighbor until reconciliation and understanding between one another happens. Life without fear, intimidation, or destruction is the goal for all relationships. Jesus is particularly hard on men. The patriarchal system of his day made it easy for men to abandon a woman and take another. To that Jesus says, "No!" Jesus seeks personal and public relationships that are life-giving. Just as God's law is intended to be life-giving (Deuteronomy 30:16).

Discuss: Where in society or in your own relationships do you see a need for God's reconciling power?

Pray: Life-giving God, help us to treasure the gift of life and relationships so that we may seek ways not to harm people but to nurture one another through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve others in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you help restore a broken relationship?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Passing the peace is a Christian practice used in worship since the early church to experience the reconciling power of God in Christ. Historically, it is offered prior to Holy Communion in recognition of Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:23-24). However, sharing God's peace is meant for more than just a worship service. The peace of God, forgiveness, and acceptance of one another is part of our daily lives. Greet others daily with the peace of the Lord. As a reminder, before meals this week light a candle and say: The peace of the Lord be with you.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org