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Encouraging and strengthening faith in Jesus, and sharing the joy of God's love.

November 15, 2020

24th Sunday after Pentecost

10:15am

Holy Communion

Introduction to the Twentieth Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.



Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Prelude

Welcome

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands and turns toward the baptismal font. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God and each other. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

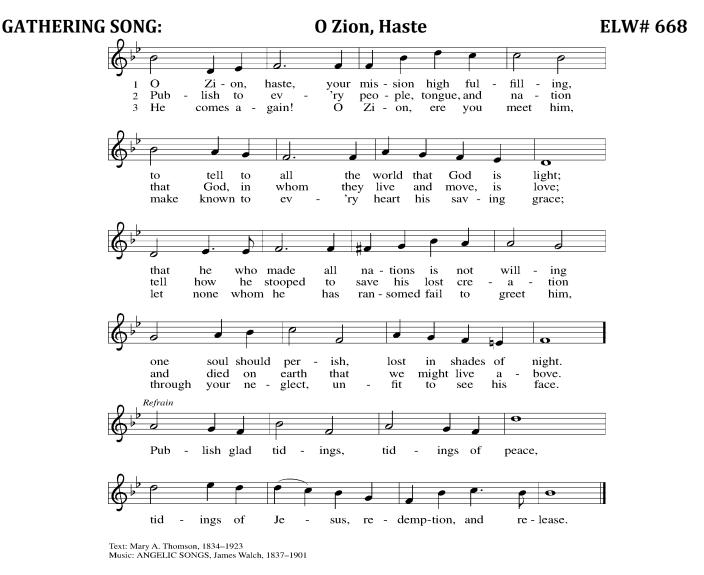
Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness.

Beloved, we are God's children, and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us. Through + Jesus you are forgiven, by Jesus you are welcome, in Jesus you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world. **Amen.**

During this time the CDC and the Bishop's Office recommend against congregational singing. In the building, a leader will sing on our behalf. The words and music are here for your meditation, please do not sing out loud.



APOSTOLIC GREETING

The presiding minister and assembly greet each other.

Beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace, mercy, and peace be with you all. **And also with you.**

For now, the Canticle of Praise will not be sung, it is rather spoken in unison by the assembly.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: Glory to God

Glory to God *is spoken, the presiding minister leading the assembly.* P: Glory to God in the highest, C: and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept, then the presiding minister leads the prayer.

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The assembly sits.



Word God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

A reading from Zephaniah.

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. ¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." ¹³Their wealth shall be plundered, and their

houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. ¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. ¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

L: The word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 90

¹Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

²Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.

³You turn us back to the dust and say, "Turn back, O children of earth."

⁴For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night;

⁵you sweep them away like a dream, they fade away suddenly like the grass:

⁶in the morning it is green and flourishes;

in the evening it is dried up and withered.

⁷For we are consumed by your anger; we are afraid because of your wrath.

⁸Our iniquities you have set before you,

and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

⁹When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

¹⁰The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty;

yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.

¹¹Who regards the power of your wrath? Who rightly fears your indignation? ¹²So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

L: The word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

After a brief silence, the assembly stands to welcome the gospel. The Gospel Acclamation is sung by a leader

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

P: + The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew. **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward. saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where

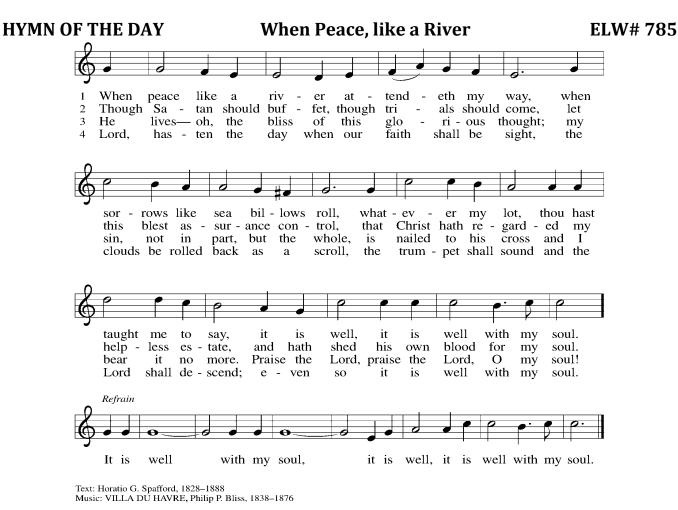
there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

P: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.
SERMON

The Rev. Robert Schaefer

A leader sings vs. 1 & 4 of the following hymn on behalf of the assembly.



APOSTLES CREED

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

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.

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for God's power to come upon the church, the world, and all in need,

After each petition of the prayer is said:

A: O God, in your mercy: **C: Hear us and help us.**

P: Hear us when we call upon you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. C: And also with you. *The assembly sits.*

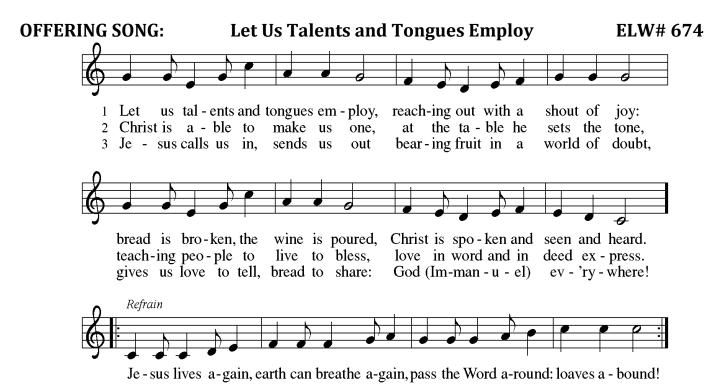


MEAL God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Invitation to Offering

SETTING THE TABLE

The Offering Song is sung by a leader on behalf of the assembly.



Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929 Music: LINSTEAD, Jamaican folk tune; adapt. Doreen Potter, 1925–1980 Text and music © 1975 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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The assembly stands.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. **Amen**.

We are using a Eucharistic prayer ascribed to St. Hippolytus, a priest in Rome at the start of the third century. It was written before the "Holy, Holy" was regularly sung and therefore does not include that canticle. We use it now for its simpler form while we are not singing as an assembly.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks:

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son,... ...through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus 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.

Communion

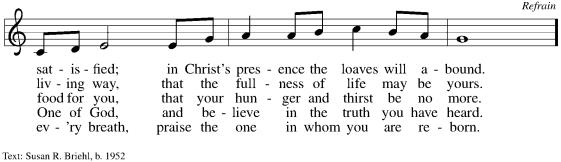
The bread is broken for the communion.

P: This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table. *The assembly is seated.*

Lamb of God and the communion song are sung by a leader on behalf of the assembly.

Lamb of God





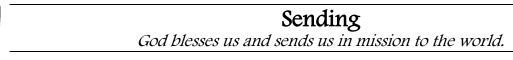
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, BREAK NOW THE BREAD; Argentine traditional, refrain; Marty Haugen, b. 1950, stanzas Text and music © 2001 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com 800.442.3358 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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The assembly stands and the assisting minister leads the prayer after communion.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way; for you are Lord, now and forever. **Amen.**



Announcements

BLESSING

All may make the sign of the cross as they receive God's blessing.

Almighty, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

The Sending Song (verses 1, 4 & 5) is sung by a leader on behalf of the assembly. The assembly turns to face the cross as it passes by.

The assembly turns toward the cross as it passes by.



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then		ring - ing								the war
thine										the leas
then	the	ho - ly	ho - l	y ho-	-ly c	cel - e	- bra	- tion	ju -	bi - lee
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Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926 Music: THINE, Carl F. Schalk, b. 1929 Text and music © 1983 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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DISMISSAL

A: Led on by the saints before us, go in peace to serve the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

In response to the amazing love, mercy and grace of God, St. Stephen Lutheran Church is a community that openly welcomes all who are seeking God's divine love and grace. All are welcome in this place regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation or gender identity, economic situation or life situation, marital or relationship status, or your doubts about faith and

church. Our unity is in Christ. Your family, children, friends, spouses and partners are welcome. Your diversity and uniqueness enriches and expands our community. We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

IN OUR PRAYERS...

In our prayers today are these members of our homebound and others of our parish family in need of healing: Carol Chmelynski, Lisa Castaneda, Kelly Jacobson, Carol Jacobson, Randy Mottesheard, Marti Stroberg, Dolores Lauterberg, Laurel Blake, Dorothy Johnson, James Loggins, Don Schutt, Normagene Richardson, Mildred Grady, Rosie & Jimmy Fennelli, Pat Engle.

PRAYERS FOR FRIENDS OF THE PARISH

✤ Greg, Jason, Melissa, Carol, Jon, Carolyne, Jimmy, Camille, Wanda, Valerie, Janice, Letty Gonzalez, Gene, Chris, Amanda, Annette, Madison, Mason, Betty, Joanna, Susan, Betty, Chuck, Pat, Bruce, Denny, Bill, Carol, Eric Hecker, E. Kuckert, Rose Blair, The Chantal family, Belinda, Marjorie, Lique's grandma.

IN A FACILITY OR HOMEBOUND:

Evelyn Braun – 6152 Verde Trail Room 106 Boca Raton, Fl. 33433 Jim Loggins – John Knox Village – Woodlands 700 SW 4th St, Pompano Beach, FL 33060 Bud Danker – 3020 N. Ridge Road Apartment W-316 Ellicott City, MD 21043.

Welcome to in person worship!!! Please respect our guidelines:

We expect <u>everyone</u> to use face masks when in the building. If you forget your face covering, we have extras for you, but <u>no one</u> can enter the building without a face covering and they must be worn at <u>all</u> <u>times</u> except at the moment of communion. Face coverings and water bottles will be available near the entrance to the nave for those who need them.

There will be one communion station, single file, following the ushers' directions and the markings on the floor to maintain social distancing. At the time of holy communion, exit the pew via the <u>side isles</u>, and go to the rear of the church. As you round the corner to the central isle there will be another touchless sanitizing station. Please sanitize your hands and proceed down the center isle to receive the sacrament following the floor markers. The pastor distributing the host will try to avoid touching communicants' hands as much as possible. Communicants are reminded to come forward with <u>flat outstretched hands.</u>

Your generosity is a blessing— November/December Change for Change Tower: Discretionary Fund

For the past several months during the pandemic we have supported Feeding South Florida with our Change for Change Tower. This week we sent a check that brought the total support to approximately **\$1950**. St Stephen, that is absolutely amazing! In the midst of a global pandemic, you stepped up to help our south Florida neighbors in need with the precious gift of food at a time when many have been laid off or lost work and are food insecure. Jesus reminds us that what we have done to the least of his brothers and sisters, we have done to him. I thank God and I thank you for your generosity!!!

Now, as the holidays approach, during the months of November and December we will dedicate the Change for Change Tower to support a new ongoing Pastor's Discretionary Fund. During this difficult time, it will allow the pastor to help with emergency needs in the community and in the congregation. This would include such things as emergency fuel for a stranded motorist, food vouchers for the hungry on a day the Holy Grill is not serving, bus passes, emergency overnight accommodations, or other special emergency needs that might arise. Please give generously to get this fund going.

Bring your loose change and bills to church and let's fill up the Change for Change Tower. You may give on line by following the link on our homepage at: *www.ststephenlutheran.net*

Florida-Bahamas Synodwide Thanksgiving Worship

COVID-19 has certainly changed the ways we come together. One of the blessings of this pandemic is that we are finding new ways to come together, ways that often bring together people who are geographically dispersed. Here is a new way to worship at thanksgiving with all your siblings in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. You are warmly invited to gather with your brothers and sisters in Christ for a special Thanksgiving worship on Tuesday, November 17th at 7:00pm. This virtual worship service will be led by Bishop Pedro Suárez and members of the Office of the Bishop. After a long and difficult year, it is important to gather as a synod and reflect on our blessings, expressing our thankfulness and enjoying our community. To access the meeting, use this link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87292069105 No registration is required! All are invited to attend.

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