

# St Stephen

a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, Pastor



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

September 13, 2020

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

10:15am

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## Holy Communion

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### Introduction to the Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

*In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.*



### Gathering

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

### Prelude

### Welcome

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*The assembly stands. 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, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.  
**Amen.**

As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our transgressions from us.  
Let us confess our sin and ask God to forgive us as we forgive those who sin against us.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.  
 Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,  
 so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways,  
 to the glory of your holy name.  
 Amen.

*The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness.*

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of + Jesus Christ. Bless the LORD, and forget not all God's benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

Amen.

**GATHERING SONG: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise ELW# 834**



1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,  
 2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,  
 3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;  
 4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light;



in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,  
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;  
 in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;  
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;



most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,  
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove  
 we blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,  
 all laud we would ren - der; oh, help us to see



al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise!  
 thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.  
 and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.  
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824–1908, alt.  
 Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional


**APOSTOLIC GREETING**

*The presiding minister and assembly greet each other.*


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

# CANTICLE OF PRAISE: Glory to God


*Refrain*




Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and



peace to God's peo - ple on earth.




1 Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,




we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you


*Refrain*




for your glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high -




est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



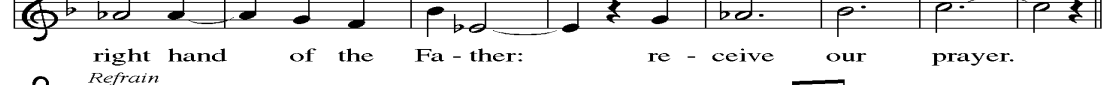
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

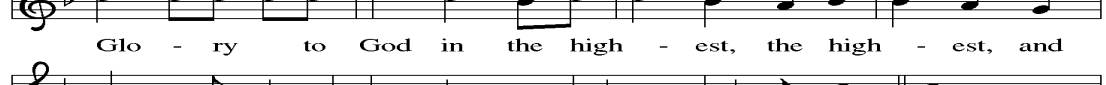


world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the




right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.


*Refrain*




Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and



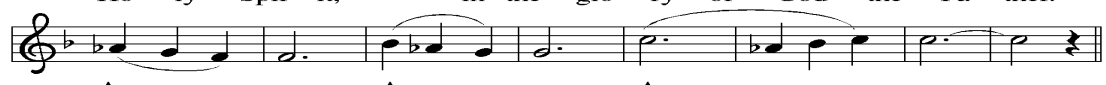
peace to God's peo - ple on earth. 3 For you a -




lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the




Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.

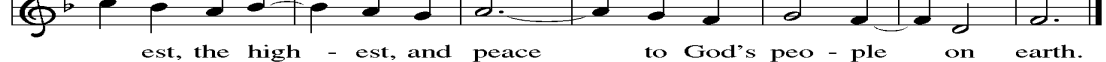


A - men. A - men. A - men.


*Final refrain*



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and peace to God's



peo - ple on earth. Glo - ry to God in the high -



est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*The assembly sits.*



## Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

### FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from Genesis.

<sup>15</sup>Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" <sup>16</sup>So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup>'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. <sup>21</sup>So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

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

### PSALM 103:1-13

<sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

<sup>2</sup>**Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—**

<sup>3</sup>who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

<sup>4</sup>**who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**

<sup>5</sup>who satisfies your desires with good things

so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

<sup>6</sup>**O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.**

<sup>7</sup>You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.

<sup>8</sup>**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,**

**slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

<sup>9</sup>you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.

<sup>10</sup>**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,**

**nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth,

so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

<sup>12</sup>**As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children,

so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

## SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

A reading from Romans.

<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

<sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

<sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If 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. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. <sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." <sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*After a brief silence, the assembly stands to welcome the gospel.*

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

### GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

P: ✠ The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

23“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. 24When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; 25and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. 26So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ 27And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. 28But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ 29Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ 30But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. 31When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. 32Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ 34And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. 35So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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

*The assembly is seated.*

## SERMON

The Rev. Robert Schaefer

*The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

### Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW# 359



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;  
 2 With grate-ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;  
 3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;  
 4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.  
 5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.  
 let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.  
 as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.  
 Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.  
 that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, alt.

Music: TWENTY-FOURTH, attr. Lucius Chapin, 1760–1842

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## 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: Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*After each petition of the prayer is said:*

A: O God, you are full of compassion;  
receive our prayer.

C:

P: All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

*The assembly sits.*



## MEAL

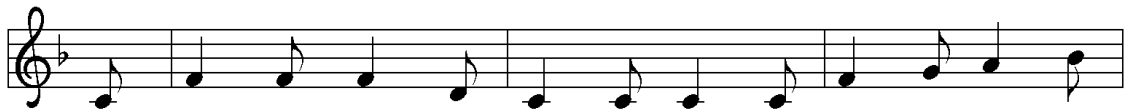
*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## SETTING THE TABLE

OFFERING SONG:

I Come with Joy

ELW# 482



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and  
 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are  
 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion  
 4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er  
 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in  
 fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in  
 ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and  
 near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -  
 done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.  
 Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.  
 strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.  
 live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.  
 love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: DOVE OF PEACE, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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*The assembly stands.*

## OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## 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.

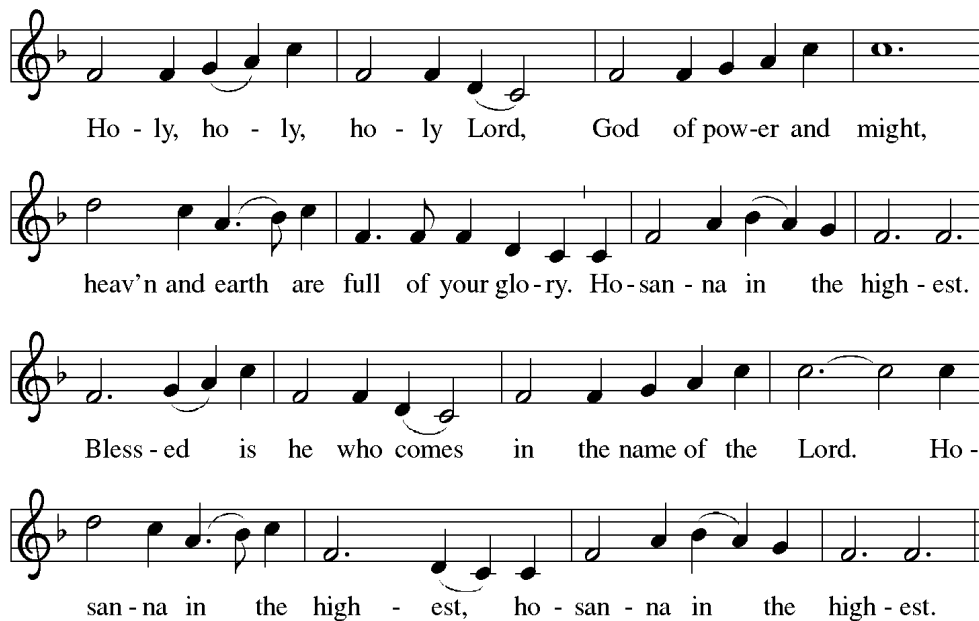
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:





Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,  
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.  
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The presiding minister continues to give thanks:*

We praise you eternal God, ...

...with thanksgiving we lift this bread and cup before you and proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

...all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, 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. Come to the banquet table where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

*The assembly is seated.*

**Lamb of God**



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;  
 O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .  
 ten pie-dad de no - so-tros, have . . mer-cy up - on us,  
 ten pie-dad de no - so-tros. have . . mer-cy up - on us.



Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;  
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so-tros,                      ten pie-dad de no - so-tros.  
have . . mer-cy up - on us,                      have . . mer-cy up - on us.



Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;  
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



da - nos tu paz,                      da - nos tu paz.  
grant us your peace,                      grant us your peace.

### Communion Song:

### When We Are Living

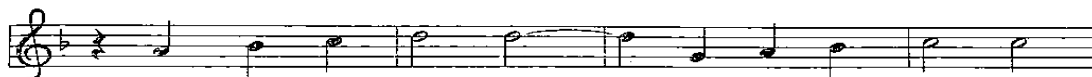
ELW# 639



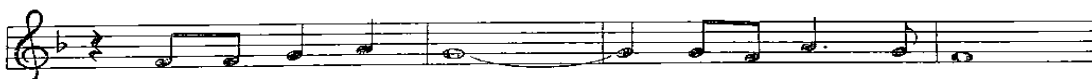
1	<i>Pues si vi - vi - mos,</i>	<i>pa - ra él vi - vi - mos,</i>
1	When we are liv - ing,	it is in Christ Je - sus,
2	'Mid times of sor - row	and in times of pain, . . .
3	A - cross this wide world,	we shall al - ways find . . .



<i>y si mo - ri - mos</i>	<i>pa - ra él mo - ri - mos.</i>
and when we're dy - ing,	it is in the Lord. . .
when sens - ing beau - ty	or in love's em - brace, . . .
those who are cry - ing	with no peace of mind; . . .



<i>Sea que vi - va - mos</i>	<i>o que mu - ra - mos,</i>
Both in our liv - ing	and in our dy - ing,
wheth - er we suf - fer,	or sing re - joic - ing,
and when we help them,	or when we feed them,



<i>so - mos del Se - ñor,</i>	<i>so - mos del Se - ñor.</i>
we be - long to God,	we be - long to God.
we be - long to God,	we be - long to God.
we be - long to God,	we be - long to God.

2 *En la tristeza y en el dolor,  
en la belleza y en el amor,  
sea que suframos o que gocemos,  
somos del Señor, somos del Señor.*

3 *En este mundo por doquier habrá  
gente que llora y sin consolar.  
Sea que ayudemos o que alimentemos,  
somos del Señor, somos del Señor.*

Text: st. 1, based on Romans 14:8; tr. Elise S. Eslinger, b. 1942;  
st. 2-3, Roberto Escamilla, b. 1931; tr. George Lockwood, b. 1946  
Music: Spanish traditional

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**



## Sending

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## 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.**

## SENDING SONG:

## Rise, Shine, You People!

ELW# 665



1 Rise, shine, you peo - ple! Christ the Lord has en - tered  
2 See how he sends the pow'rs of e - vil reel - ing;  
3 Come, cel - e - brate; your ban - ners high un - furl - ing,  
4 Tell how the Fa - ther sent the Son to save us.



our hu - man sto - ry; God in him is cen - tered. He comes to  
he brings us free - dom, light and life and heal - ing. All men and  
your songs and prayers a - gainst the dark - ness hurl - ing. To all the  
Tell of the Son, who life and free - dom gave us. Tell how the



us, by death and sin sur - round - ed, with grace un - bound - ed.  
wom - en, who by guilt are driv - en, now are for - giv - en.  
world go out and tell the sto - ry of Je - sus' glo - ry.  
Spir - it calls from ev - 'ry na - tion God's new cre - a - tion.

Text: Ronald A. Klug, b. 1939, alt.  
Music: WOJTKIEWIECZ, Dale Wood, 1934–2003  
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## DISMISSAL

**A:** Go in peace. Remember the poor. **C:** Thanks be to God.



## **RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION TODAY OUTSIDE!**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be given today by Pastor Bob in the church parking lot, in front of the main entrance from 12:00pm—12:30pm. It will be drive through. Please follow the ushers' directions on arrival and maintain social distancing. Please wear a mask except when receiving the sacrament.

### **IN OUR PRAYERS...**

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

### **PRAYERS FOR FRIENDS OF THE PARISH**

✠ Police officer Sancho and his family from Costa Rica, Aiden, Chandler, Becky, Cheryl, Robert, Jerry, Braemen, Craig, Taylor, Joe, Jan, Carol, Sharon, Susie, Belinda, Marjorie, Roy, Gene, Chris, Amanda, Annette, Madison, Mason, Betty, Joanna, Susan, Betty, Chuck, Pat, Bruce, Carol, Valerie, Jason, Melissa, Greg, Annie, Jose Alvarez, Chantal Martel, Jane.

### **IN A FACILITY OR HOMEBOUND:**

Evelyn Braun – 6152 Verde Trail Room 106 Boca Raton, Fl. 33433

Normagene Richardson – Woodlands at John Knox 700 SW 4th St, Pompano Beach, FL 33060  
Room: 2208 Phone: 954-247-5806

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.

### **Annual Blessing of the Animals: October 3**

Each year on the first Saturday in October we bless your pets on the front porch of the church in commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast day is October 4. This year due to the pandemic the day will be scaled back a bit, but none-the-less will go on! Mark your calendars: On Saturday, **October 3 from 10:30am to 12noon**, the Pastor will be present in front of the church to give your pet a blessing. We will not have vendors or food this year, but we will have some items to give away, and each pet (real or stuffed!) will get a certificate as well as a metal tag for their collar. We will maintain social distancing this year and we ask that you wear a mask. Spread the word—all are welcome. Set aside some time on October 3 to stop by the church with your pets for a blessing!



During the pandemic, St. Stephen congregation has taken on the mission to support Feeding South Florida. With unemployment at near record highs, more people are food insecure than ever. Feeding South Florida is the largest, most efficient food bank serving Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe Counties. More than 98% of all donations are put back into the community. Thank you so much for your generosity. Keep up the good work, we will continue to support this work throughout October.

**Send your loose change 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](http://www.ststephenlutheran.net)**

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