

# St Stephen

**Lutheran Church, ELCA**



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

**December 24, 2017**

**Christmas Eve**

**7:00pm**

Rev. Pedro Suarez, Bishop  
Rev. Dr. Sidney Nelson, Interim Pastor

*Welcome to our community of faith on this Eve of Christmas. On this beautiful evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh--in Christ's body and blood--so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world. This is a new beginning in the story of God with us. After this evening, we hope you will continue the story with us here or in another community of faith. Keep the pages turning...*

## **~WE GATHER~**

### **MUSICAL PRELUDE**

### **WELCOME AND INVOCATION**

P: In the name of the father, and of the son, (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

### **A CHRISTMAS LITANY:**

*When the time had come*

P: We were heavy with sorrow,

**C: but joy interrupted.**

P: We were deep in the night,

**C: but a star appeared.**

P: We were silent with sadness,

**C: but the heavens rang. And the splendor shone around them when the time had fully come.**

P: We were hardened by conflict,

**C: but love intervened.**

P: We were frightened by shadows,

**C: but light took them away.**

P: We were haunted by fears,

**C: but a child brought us hope. And she laid him in a manger when the time had fully come.**

P: We were dismal and defeated,

**C: but faith set us on fire.**

P: We were weary and complaining,

**C: but our hearts discovered praise.**

P: We were doubtful and confused,

**C: but a door to life was opened. And the guiding star went before them when the time had fully come.**

P: We were arrogant and angry,

**C: but his innocence disarmed us.**

P: We were cruel, crude, and clumsy,

**C: but his grace made all things new.**

P: We were selfish, narrow, greedy,

**C: but his joy we had to share. And they offered him their treasured gifts when the time had fully come.**

P: We were sheep, who had lost their way,

**C: but the shepherd knew our names.**

P: We were strangers without a country,

**C: but our kingdom came to us.**

P: We were children far from home,

**C: but God sent his Son to guide. And the Word was flesh among us when the time had fully come.**

~ written by Kenneth I. Morse, from "In Straw and Story," p.80, Brethren Press, copyright 1977.

### **THE GREETING**

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

**C: And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray together:

**C: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

P: You may be seated.

## -We listen to the Word of God-

### FIRST READING:

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup> For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L: This is the word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM 96

<sup>1</sup> O sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> **Sing to the LORD, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.**

<sup>3</sup> Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous works among all the peoples.

<sup>4</sup> **For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;  
he is to be revered above all gods.**

<sup>5</sup> For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
but the LORD made the heavens.

<sup>6</sup> **Honor and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**

<sup>7</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>8</sup> **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts.**

<sup>9</sup> Worship the LORD in holy splendor;  
tremble before him, all the earth.

<sup>10</sup> **Say among the nations, "The LORD is king!  
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.  
He will judge the peoples with equity."**

<sup>11</sup> Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

<sup>12</sup> **let the field exult, and everything in it.  
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy**

<sup>13</sup> before the LORD; for he is coming,  
for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with his truth.

## SECOND READING:

**Titus 2:11-14**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup> He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. **Amen.**

L: This is the word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

P: Please stand as you are able for the Gospel Acclamation.

## THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah"

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics: Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. The second staff contains: - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. The third staff contains: lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

Music: Caribbean traditional

P: The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

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

**GOSPEL:**

**Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ!**

P: You may be seated.

**SERMON**

**Bishop Rev. Pedro Suarez**

**~WE RESPOND~**

P: Please stand as you are able for the Sermon Song.

**SERMON SONG:**

**“Mary did you know”**

**ELW 270**

**Verse 1**

**Mary did you know  
That your baby boy  
Would one day walk on water  
Mary did you know  
That your baby boy  
Would save our sons and daughters  
Did you know  
That your baby boy  
Has come to make you new  
This Child that you delivered  
Will soon deliver you**

**The blind will see  
The deaf will hear  
The dead will live again  
The lame will leap  
The dumb will speak  
The praises of the Lamb**

**Verse 2**

**Mary did you know  
That your baby boy  
Would give sight to the blind man  
Mary did you know  
That your baby boy  
Would calm a storm with His hand  
Did you know  
That your baby boy  
Has walked where angels trod  
And when you kiss your little baby  
You've kissed the face of God**

**Verse 3**

**Oh Mary did you know  
That your baby boy  
Is Lord of all creation  
Mary did you know  
That your baby boy  
Will one day rule the nations  
Did you know  
That your baby boy  
Is heaven's perfect Lamb  
And the sleeping Child you're holding  
Is the great I Am**



## NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

A: Rejoicing in the good news of Christ's birth and dwelling in hope, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

*After each petition of the prayer is said:*

A: Let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: Hear the prayers of your people, glorious God, for the sake of the one who took on our nature and form to redeem the whole world, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us share with one another the peace of the Lord.

# ~WE COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE~

## OFFERING

### MUSICAL OFFERING

#### OFFERING RECEPTION: "Angels We Have Heard on High" (Verses 1 & 2)

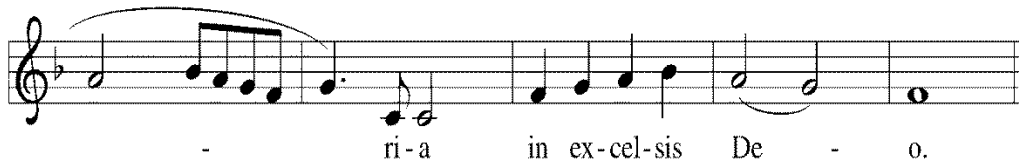
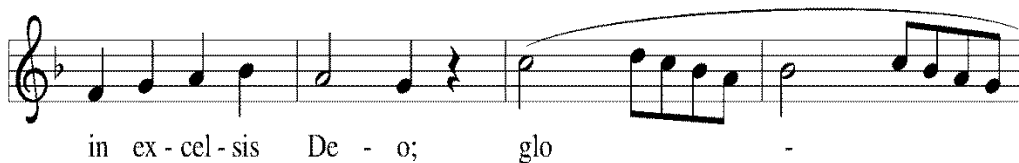
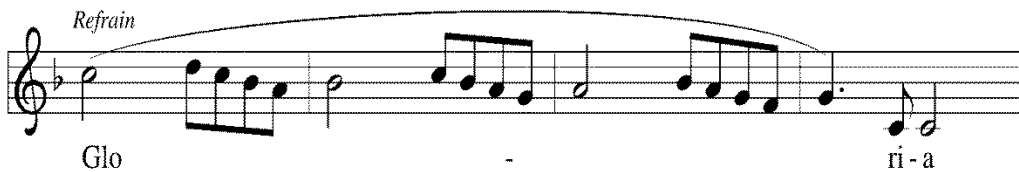
ELW 289



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



## OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



# THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

## The Dialogue

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

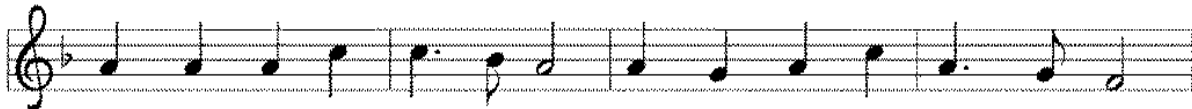
C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

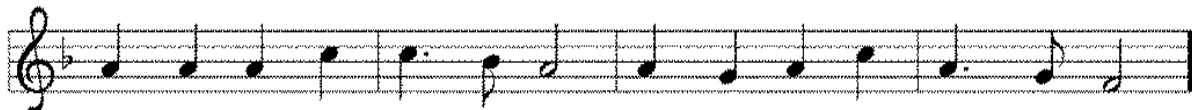
## Eucharist Song: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW 289

(Verse 3)



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

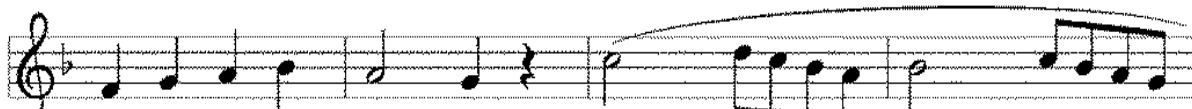


and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

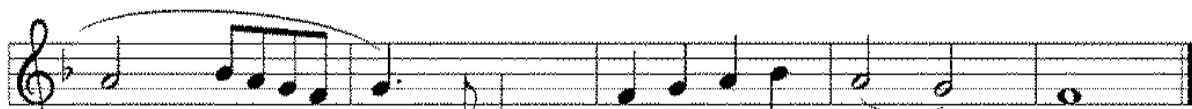
*Refrain*



Glo - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -



ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

## **Eucharist Prayer**

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:  
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,  
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

P: With this bread and cup, we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We  
look with hope for his coming.

**C: Come, Lord Jesus.**

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word  
take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on  
Earth.

**C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen... 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 of Communion**

*We believe Jesus Christ is present in the bread and wine by his Word of Promise. All baptized Christians are invited to participate in the celebration of God's forgiving love, strengthening faith, and grace-filled hope. Those who are not baptized and children not yet communing may come forward for a blessing (please cross your arms on your chest if you desire a blessing).*

P: Welcome to the Lord's table.

### **Reception of Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

*Communion distribution is continuous. Please come forward by the center aisle and receive the bread in your hands as you hear the words "The body of Christ, given for you" to which you may respond, "Amen." You may then dip the bread into the cup as you hear the words "The blood of Christ, shed for you," to which you may respond, "Amen." Note that the communion wine is alcohol-free. Please indicate if you need gluten-free elements.*

### **Communion Songs:**

**"What a Feast of Love"**

**ELW 487**

**"Joy to the World"**

**ELW 267**

### ***Instrumental Music***

***Cesar Vidaud***

### **Candle Lighting**

*When all have communed, please remain seated while the candles are lit. The ushers will light their candles, and in turn, will share the light with the congregation. When an usher comes to your pew, the person on the end lights their candle from the usher's candle, and each person in the pew lights their candle in turn. Please **tip the unlit** candle into the lit candle. This will keep wax from dripping. (The wax is hot and will burn your skin, and it is hard to get out of fabric when cooled.)*

## Candle Light Song: "Silent Night, Holy Night!"



*Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft.*  
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



*ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.*  
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



*Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher*  
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



*Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.*  
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

~WE ARE SENT FORTH~

## Christmas Benediction

P: May this eternal truth be always on our hearts: that the God who breathed this world into being, placed stars into the heavens, and designed a butterfly's wing is the God who entrusted his son to the care of ordinary people, became vulnerable that we might know how strong is the wonder of Love, a mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp, a mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore. And may almighty God, Father, Son, (†) and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **The Sending**

**A:** Go in the peace that this birth brings. Christ the Savior is born!

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**A:** Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere!

**C: We will go and tell! Amen!**



**WELCOME!** Christmas is the one of the three great celebrations of the Christian year. Whether tradition, duty, curiosity, or faith brought you here, you are most welcome. On behalf of the whole Saint Stephen family, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2018!

## **IN OUR PRAYERS**

**In our prayers** today are these members of our homebound and others of our parish family in need of healing: Rudy Koch, Laurel Blake, Jim Loggins, Barb Taylor, Diane Adler, Jean Rogers, Katie, Roy and Barbara Kaptain, Lisa Allen, Bob & Jane Reinhold, C.C., Trudy DiCarlo and Marie Koach.

**Prayers for Friends of the Church:** Barbara Gummo, Marjorie, Jerry, Cheryl, Robert, Craig, Henry Q., Damien S., Monique Rogers and her mom Betty, Myrka Alverist's family, Maggie Alverist, Ann Farrell, Normagene Richardson, Aiden Chase, Rita Stevenson, Mike, Barbara Greco, Dr. Willis Allen, Eleanor Knauf, Alessandra, Cheryl, Nick Caldwell Sr., Lucille Capece, Lexie Sachlis, George F., David Spall, Joan Coletti, Adam Rubino, Berna, Braemen Weiner, Chandler Weiner, Debbie Seckel, Elizabeth Kraus, Kenneth Smith, Mary Taylor, Cynthia, Richard H., Laurie Engelhardt, Diane Adler at the death of her mom Helene Harker, Katie's Paff grandma.

**Flowers this week sponsors:** The Lauterberg family in celebration of Christmas.

# Announcements

**COMMITMENT CARDS** for our Estimate of Giving can be placed in our offering plate (use envelope for confidentiality); bring to office; by mail; or by email [sslcpompano@gmail.com](mailto:sslcpompano@gmail.com)

**OFFERING ENVELOPES**, 2018 offering envelopes are available for pick up on the back table. If any other friends of the church who would like offering envelopes, please see Larry Jones or Carol Jacobson.

**ATTENDANCE CARDS**, are in our bulletin today for members and visitors. Please place in offering plate. Thank You.

**REGISTRATION FEE DEADLINE**, today is the deadline for the \$10 registration fee to guarantee your seat on the bus for Bishop's Installation on January 20. Please turn it in. Thank You.

## *Service Assistants for tonight*

	<u>December 24</u> <u>Christmas Eve</u> <u>7pm Service</u>	
<b>ASSISTING MINISTER</b>	Aura Suarez	
<b>ACOLYTE</b>	Aiyana Cartwright	
<b>USHERS</b>	Terry Shumway	Rosie Fennelli
<b>SOUND</b>	Sera Butz	

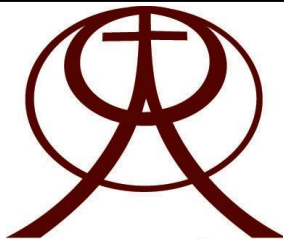




**YOU ARE INVITED**  
**Next Sunday, January 31st**  
**10:15 Worship Service**  
**11:30 Farewell and Godspeed Reception**

Next Sunday we will have a finger food reception following the 10:15am morning worship service. We will have a farewell to our “Pastor Pedro” who is now our new bishop of the Florida Bahamas Synod. We wish Godspeed to Bishop Pedro. We will also be wishing Godspeed up on Aura Suarez who is our ELCA Deacon. She will be joining Bishop Pedro in Tampa.





# St Stephen

**Lutheran Church, ELCA**

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

## **Sunday Schedule**

10:15 a.m. Worship

Holy Communion is celebrated weekly

## **Church Staff**

**Rev. Dr. Sidney Nelson** – Interim Pastor  
ststephenpastornelson@gmail.com  
561-235-0929

**Cesar Vidaud** – Director of Music

**Clarence (Teddy) Rowe** – Sexton

**Aidee Koach** – Administrative Assistant  
sslcpompano@gmail.com

## **Congregation Council**

**Larry Jones** - President  
councilpresident@ststephenlutheran.net

Christian Hecker – Vice-president

Eric Castaneda - Treasurer

Natalie Prego - Secretary

Lynda Smith

Patricia Engle

Harry Ambrose

Dennis Magarrell

Office hours: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 Mon- Fri

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