



# 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 27, 2020

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

10:15am

---

## Holy Communion

---

### Introduction to the Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

*Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy 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, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God and each other, asking the Lord to remember divine compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.

*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 has no pleasure in the death of anyone. Turn, then, and live. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG: Dearest Jesus, at Your Word ELW# 520**



1 Dear - est Je - sus, at your word we have come a -  
 2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est  
 3 Ra - diance of God's glo - ry bright, Light of Light from  
 4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and



gain to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred  
 dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks the night,  
 God pro - ceed - ing, Je - sus, send your bless - ed light;  
 ad - o - ra - tion! Grant us what we need the most:



and in glow - ing faith be near you as the prom - is -  
 fill - ing us with light un - cloud - ed. All good thoughts and  
 help our hear - ing, speak - ing, heed - ing, that our prayers and  
 all your gos - pel's con - so - la - tion while we here on



es here giv - en draw us whol - ly up to heav - en.  
 all good liv - ing come but by your gra - cious giv - ing.  
 songs may please you, as with grate - ful hearts we praise you.  
 earth a - wait you, till in heav'n with praise we greet you.

Text: Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619–1684, sts. 1–3; *Gesangbuch*, Berlin, 1707, st. 4; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, adapt.  
 Music: LIEBSE JESU, WIR SIND HIER, Johann R. Ahle, 1625–1673

**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.*

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

*The assembly sits.*



## Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

### FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

A reading from Ezekiel.

<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? <sup>3</sup>As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. <sup>4</sup>Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

<sup>25</sup>Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? <sup>26</sup>When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. <sup>27</sup>Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. <sup>28</sup>Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. <sup>29</sup>Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

<sup>30</sup>Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. <sup>31</sup>Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>32</sup>For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM 25:1-9

<sup>1</sup>To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

<sup>2</sup>**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

<sup>3</sup>Let none who look to you be put to shame;  
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

<sup>4</sup>**Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

<sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

**6Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

**7Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;**

remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

**8You are gracious and up-right, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

**9You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.**

## **SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13**

A reading from Philippians.

**1**If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, **2**make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3**Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. **4**Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. **5**Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

**6**who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, **7**but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, **8**he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

**9**Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, **10**so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11**and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**12**Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; **13**for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

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 21:23-32**

P: † The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

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

**23**When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this

authority?" <sup>24</sup>Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. <sup>25</sup>Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'" <sup>26</sup>But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." <sup>27</sup>So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

<sup>28</sup>"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' <sup>29</sup>He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup>The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

*The assembly is seated.*

**SERMON**

**The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer**

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

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service**

**ELW# 712**



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser-vice bore the weight of hu-man need,  
 2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun-gry cry for bread;  
 3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi-sion, till your love's re-veal-ing light  
 4 Called by wor-ship to your ser-vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up-on the cross, for-sak-en, worked your mer-cy's per-fect deed:  
 still the cap-tives long for free-dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.  
 in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up-on our quick-ened sight,  
 to the child, the youth, the a-ged, love in liv-ing deeds to show;



we, your ser-vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a-lone, but heart;  
 As you, Lord, in deep com-pas-sion healed the sick and freed the soul,  
 mak-ing known the needs and bur-dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,  
 hope and health, good-will and com-fort, coun-sel, aid, and peace we give,



con-se-crat-ing to your pur-pose ev-'ry gift which you im-part.  
 by your Spir-it send your pow-er to our world to make it whole.  
 stir-ring us to ar-dent ser-vice, your a-bun-dant life to share.  
 that your ser-vants, Lord, in free-dom may your mer-cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984  
 Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844  
 Text © Oxford University Press

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## 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;

C: graciously hear our prayer.

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



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:  
 2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,  
 3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.  
 teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.  
 gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!



*Refrain*  
 Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

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.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

*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,      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; . .

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.



1 O Mas - ter, let me walk with you in low - ly  
 2 Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear,  
 3 Teach me your pa - tience; share with me a clos - er,  
 4 In hope that sends a shin - ing ray far down the



paths of ser - vice true; tell me your se - cret;  
 win - ning word of love; teach me the way - ward  
 dear - er com - pa - ny, in work that keeps faith  
 fu - ture's broad - 'ning way, in peace that on - ly



help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.  
 feet to stay, and guide them in the home - ward way.  
 sweet and strong, in trust that tri - umphs o - ver wrong,  
 you can give; with you, O Mas - ter, let me live.

Text: Washington Gladden, 1836–1918, alt.  
 Music: MARYTON, H. Percy Smith, 1825–1898

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you provide the true bread from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we who have received the sacrament of his body and blood may abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the power of his endless life, now and forever.

**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.**



1 Voic - es raised to you we of - fer; tune them, God, for  
 2 All cre - a - tion joins to praise you; earth and sky your  
 3 Christ, the song of love in - car - nate, touch - ing earth with  
 4 Spir - it, flam - ing through cre - a - tion, kin - dle faith with -  
 5 How can an - y praise we of - fer mea - sure all the



songs of praise. Hearts and hands we bring in trib - ute  
 works dis - play. Art and mu - sic, gifts you lend us,  
 heav - en's grace, for your liv - ing, suf - f'ring, dy - ing,  
 in each heart. Lift our voic - es high in cho - rus;  
 thanks we owe? Take our hearts and hands and voic - es—



for your gifts through all our days. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 we re - turn to you to - day. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 for your ris - ing, hear our praise! Al - le - lu - ia!  
 through our hands your love im - part. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 gifts of love we can be - stow. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! God, cre - a - tor, source of life!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, re - deem - er, Lord of life!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Spir - it, help - er, breath of life!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923–2007

Music: SONG OF PRAISE, Carolyn Jennings, b. 1936

Text © 1997 GIA Publications, Inc. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com  
 800.442.3358 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music © 1996 Carolyn Jennings

## 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: Eric Castaneda, Kelly Jacobson, Carol 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**

✠ Eric Hecker, E. Kuckert, 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, Annie, Chantal Martel, Jane, Greg, Chipper, Camille, James, Carolyne, Jon.

### **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)**

*From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2010 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Fortress Liturgies Annual License #24029. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Hymns are covered by our license CCLI 2959830.*