

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.

January 3, 2021

Epiphany of Our Lord

10:15am

Festival Holy Communion

Introduction to the Epiphany of Our lord

The feast of Epiphany ("manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.



Gathering

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

Prelude

Welcome

During this time the CDC and the Bishop's Office recommend against congregational singing. In the building, the ensemble will sing verses 1, 2, and 3. The words and music are here for your meditation, please do not sing out loud.



1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing star be - hold;
 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
 5 In the heav'n - ly coun - try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
 there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
 so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
 and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
 thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;



so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
 so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
 all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.
 where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
 there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The presiding minister and assembly greet each other.

P: May the grace and truth and light of Christ, born of Mary, worshipped by the magi, be with you all.

C: And also with you.

KYRIE

The presiding minister leads the following Kyrie.

God our Father, you sent your Son full of grace and truth: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Jesus our Savior, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger: Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit of Love, your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Angels We Have Heard on High

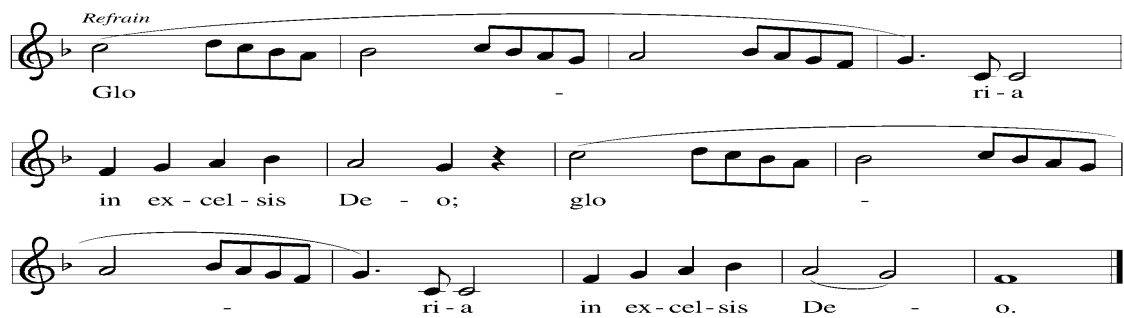
ELW#289



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.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

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

P: O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The assembly sits.



Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

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

PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14

¹Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

⁶**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁰**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

¹²**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

A reading from Ephesians.

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ^{4a}a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

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, verse 1 only is sung by a leader

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION AND PROCESSION

We Three Kings

WOV #646

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

P: **✠** The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

As the gospel procession returns the ensemble sings We Three Kings, (Verse 5).

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
 heav'n sings alleluia: alleluia the earth replies.

Refrain

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
 westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

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

The ensemble sings all verses of the following hymn on behalf of the assembly.

HYMN OF THE DAY

The First Noel

ELW # 300



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing
 3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .
 4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
 in . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
 wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
 Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
 rev - 'rent - ly . . up - on . . their knee, and of - fered

they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

Refrain

night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
place where Je - sus lay.
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional
Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Joining our voices with the song of the angels and the gifts of the magi, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

After each petition of the prayer is said:

A: O God, shining with grace, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: That God will receive these prayers, for the sake of the divine infant before whom we reverently kneel, we pray, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The assembly is seated.



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.

OFFERING SONG:

What Child Is This

ELW# 296



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

The assembly stands

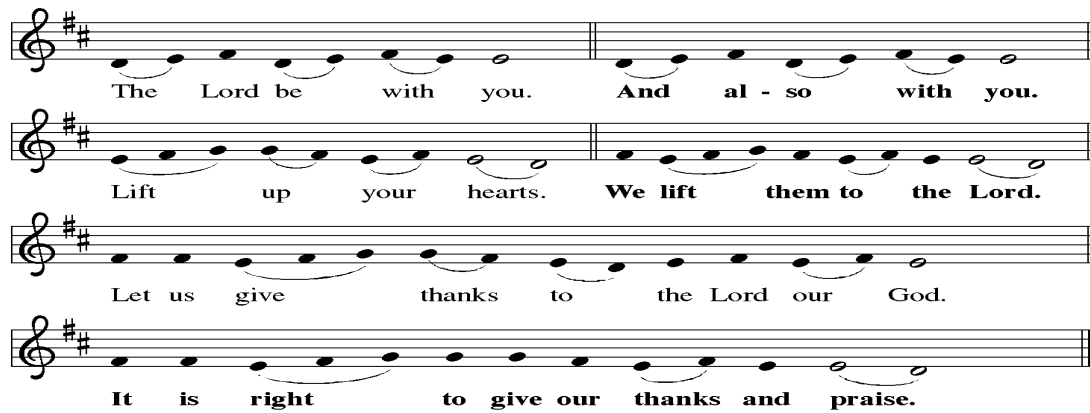
OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. Holy God, your beauty shines forth from the manger and your love flows from the cross. As you gather us around these signs of your love come among us, warm us to extend your care among the hungry and all in need. We ask this through Christ the Lord.

C: Amen.

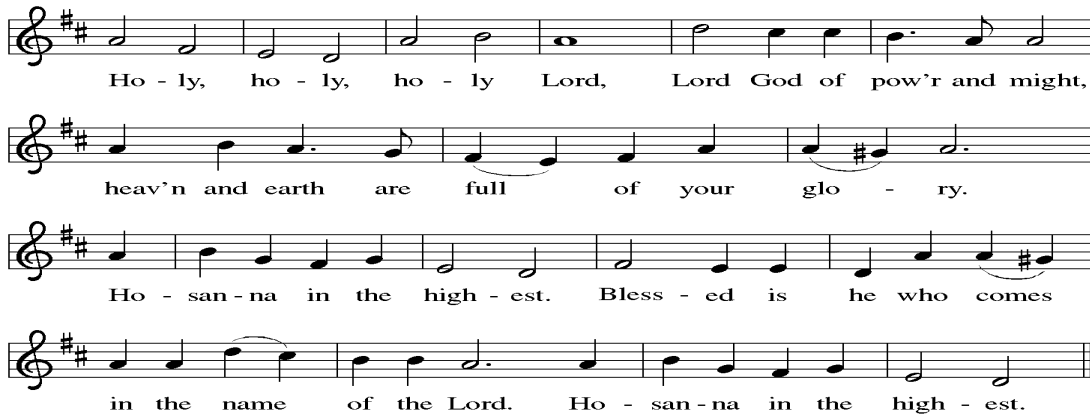
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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, Lord God of pow'r 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.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks:

You are holy, O God of majesty, ...

...Great is the mystery of faith.

Dying you destroyed our death,

rising you restored our life.

Lord Jesus, come in glory.

... all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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. Love has come: God's love for all people. Come and eat, for Christ invites you.

The assembly is seated.

P: The body of Christ, given for you. *Response: Amen.*

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

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.

Communion Song:

Shine, Jesus, Shine

ELW# 671

Refrain

Shine, Je - sus, shine, fill this land with the Fa-ther's glo - ry;
blaze, Spir - it, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, riv - er, flow, flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy;
send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

1 Lord, the light of your love is shin - ing, in the midst of the
 2 As we gaze on your king - ly bright-ness, so our fac - es dis -
 dark - ness, shin - ing; Je - sus, light of the world, shine up - on us,
 play your like - ness, ev - er chang - ing from glo - ry to glo - ry,
 set us free by the truth you now bring us.
 mir - rored here, may our lives tell your sto - ry.

Refrain

Shine on me, shine on me:
 Shine on me, shine on me:

Text: Graham Kendrick, b. 1950
 Music: Graham Kendrick
 Text and music © 1987 Make Way Music, admin. Music Services in the Western Hemisphere

SHINE, JESUS, SHINE
 99 10 10 3 3 and refrain

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray.

God of wonder, in Jesus we behold the light of the world come near. As you have come among us now, send us out in joy, hastening to share the good news of your love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit dwelling among us now and forever.

C: Amen.



Sending

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

Announcements

BLESSING

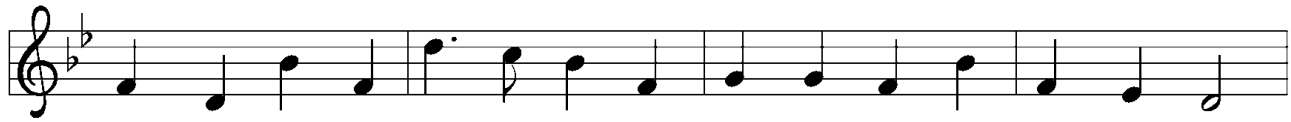
P: May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child.

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

Almighty God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Verses 1, 3 and 4 of the Sending Song is sung by the ensemble on behalf of the assembly. The assembly turns to face the cross as it passes by.



- 1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
- 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
- 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
- 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
 seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.
 ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

Refrain



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4
 Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Share the joy of Christ.

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: George, Carol Chmelynski, Lisa Castaneda, Kelly Jacobson, Carol Jacobson, 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

✠ Carol, Valerie, Jason, Melissa, Jon, Carolyne, James, Camille, Greg, and Wanda ✠ Shauna Widman, Claire Sprague, Mulvihill's family at the death of Catherine Mulvihill.

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 everyone to use face masks when in the building. If you forget your face covering, we have extras for you, but no one can enter the building without a face covering and they must be worn at all times 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. Initially, following CDC guidelines, **all** congregational singing will be limited to an individual or ensemble who will sing on behalf of the assembly. For now, only the verbal greeting of Peace will be exchanged in the liturgy. Sharing the peace for now should be nothing more than exchanging a simple bow to those on your right and left. 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 side isles, 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 flat outstretched hands.

Change for Change Tower: Discretionary Fund

Until the end of the Christmas season, we 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**



Please take some time to pray about your gift to Christ and his church in 2021, and then return the commitment card to the marked box on Sunday morning, drop it in the office mail box, or send via the mail to St. Stephen between now and the Baptism of our Lord, January 10.

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.