



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.

July 26, 2020

8th Sunday after Pentecost

10:15am

Holy Communion

Introduction to The Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!



Gathering

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

Prelude

Welcome

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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 steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

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.

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. 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: God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens ELW# 771



1 God, who stretched the span - gled heav - ens in - fi - nite in time and place,
2 We have ven - tured worlds un - dreamed of since the child-hood of our race;
3 As each far ho - ri - zon beck - ons, may it chal-lenge us a - new:



flung the suns in burn-ing ra - diance through the si - lent fields of space:
known the ec - sta - sy of wing-ing through un - trav-eled realms of space;
chil - dren of cre - a - tive pur - pose, serv - ing oth - ers, hon - 'ring you.



we, your chil - dren in your like-ness, share in - ven - tive pow'rs with you;
probed the se - crets of the at - om, yield-ing un - i - mag - ined pow'r,
May our dreams prove rich with prom-ise; each en-deav-or well be - gun;



great Cre - a - tor, still cre - at - ing, show us what we yet may do.
fac - ing us with life's de - struc - tion or our most tri - um - phant hour.
great Cre - a - tor, give us guid - ance till our goals and yours are one.

Text: Catherine Cameron, b. 1927

Music: HOLY MANNA, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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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



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.

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The assembly sits.



FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

A reading from 1 Kings.

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?" ¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 119:129-136

¹²⁹Your decrees are wonderful; therefore I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰**When your word is opened it gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments.

¹³²**Turn to me and be gracious to me, as you always do to those who love your name.**

¹³³Order my footsteps in your word; let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴**Rescue me from those who oppress me, and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵Let your face shine up- on your servant and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶**My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your teaching.**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

A reading from Romans.

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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 13:31-33, 44-52

P: ✝ The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

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

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of

every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The Rev. Cathy Lauderhahn

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

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus, Priceless Treasure

ELW# 775



1 Je - sus, price-less trea - sure, source of pur - est plea - sure,
2 In thine arm I rest me; foes who would mo - lest me
3 Hence, all fears and sad - ness, for the Lord of glad - ness,



tru - est friend to me: ah, how long I've pant - ed, and my heart has
can-not reach me here. Though the earth be shak - ing, ev - 'ry heart be
Je - sus, en - ters in. God, who dear-ly loves us, from all tri - al



faint - ed, thirst - ing, Lord, for thee! Thine I am, O spot - less Lamb;
quak - ing, Je - sus calms my fear. Light-nings flash and thun - ders crash;
saves us, gives sweet peace with-in. I have borne this world - ly scorn;



no - thing in this world can hide thee, naught I ask be - side thee.
yet, though sin and hell as - sail me, Je - sus will not fail me.
still in thee lies pur - est plea - sure: Je - sus, price-less trea - sure!

Text: Johann Franck, 1618–1677; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: JESU, MEINE FREUDE, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

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: Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

After each petition of the prayer is said:

Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus 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 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your ta - ble.
- 2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good plea - sure.
- 3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be - fore you.



We do not wor - ship as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.
 What once was com - mon, dail - y food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.
 Lord, by your grace now come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer, b. 1957

Music: BARBARA ALLEN, English folk tune

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The assembly stands.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer 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:

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,...
...to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, 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. Friends of Jesus, come to the table. Receive nourishment for your journey.

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.



Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra,
 1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
 2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour - ish.
 3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
 4 Though he giv - eth or he tak - eth, God his chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth;



stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - geln ej i kän - da näs - tet.
 nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
 From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
 un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
 his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958

Music: TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA, Swedish folk tune

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

Let us pray.

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through 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 God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you, now and forever. **Amen.**

The assembly turns toward the cross as it passes by.

Refrain - All

We've come this far by faith, lean-ing on the Lord;
 trust-ing in his ho-ly word, he's nev-er failed us yet.
 Oh, can't turn a-round, we've come this far by
 faith. We've come this far by faith.

Leader

1 Just re-mem-ber the good things God has
 2 Don't be dis-cour-aged with trou-ble in your
 done, things that seemed im-pos-si-ble; oh,
 life; he'll bear your . . . bur-dens, and

Refrain

praise him for the vic-t'ries he has won. Oh!
 move . . . all the dis-cord and strife. Oh!

Text: Albert A. Goodson, 1933–2003

Music: THIS FAR BY FAITH, Albert A. Goodson

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DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

IN OUR PRAYERS...

In our prayers today are these members of our homebound and others of our parish family in need of healing: Harry Ambrose, Randy Mottesheard, Susanne Loggins, Pastor Bob, Marti Stroberg, Dolores Lauterberg, Jake Waldecki, Sera Butz, George Arce, Laurel Blake, Dorothy Johnson, James Loggins, Don Schutt, Normagene Richardson, Mildred Grady, Carol Chmelynski, Jimmy Fennelli, Roy and Barbara Kaptain, Katie Paff, Bob Reinhold, and Shelley Amato, and The Castaneda family.

Prayers for Friends of the Parish

✠ Belinda Barfield, Gene, Chris, Amanda, Annette, Madison, Mason, Betty, Chuck, Joanna, Susan, Betty, Pat, Bruce, Lisa, Eric Hecker, E. Kuckert, Carol, Greg, Jason, Melissa, Valerie, Kaylane, Marti, Arthur, Stacie, Jake, Harry.

In a facility or homebound:

Barbara Kaptain – The Atrium Assistant Living at Boca Raton.
1080 NW 15TH Room 215 Boca Raton, Fl. 33486
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.



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.



With unemployment at near record highs, more people are food insecure than ever. To help make a difference we are supporting FEEDING SOUTH FLORIDA. 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.

Through innovative direct-service programs and a network of nonprofit partner agencies, Feeding South Florida distributed nearly 62 million pounds (51.5 million meals) of food last fiscal year to over 706,000 individuals – 236,000 of whom are children and 100,000 are older adults.

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

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