



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.

November 8, 2020

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

10:15am

Holy Communion

Introduction to the Twentieth Third Sunday After Pentecost

Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids.

Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the lamb.



Gathering

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

Prelude

Welcome

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands and turns toward the baptismal font. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves to enter into this celebration, let us confess our sin before God and each other.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us.

**We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin.
We are truly sorry and humbly repent.**

**In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown,
things we have done and things we have failed to do.**

Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit,
so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. 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.

During this time the CDC and the Bishop's Office recommend against congregational singing. In the building, a leader will sing verses 1, 2, 5, & 6 on our behalf. The words and music are here for your meditation, please do not sing out loud.

GATHERING SONG:

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

ELW# 632



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
still be our guard while troubles last
and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Music: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1678–1727

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

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The presiding minister and assembly greet each other.

Beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

And also with you.

For now, the Canticle of Praise will not be sung, it is rather spoken in unison by the assembly.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: Glory to God

Glory to God is spoken, the presiding minister leading the assembly.

P: Glory to God in the highest,
C: and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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

O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The assembly sits.



Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

FIRST READING: Amos 5:18-24

A reading from Amos.

¹⁸Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD!
Why do you want the day of the LORD? It is darkness, not light; ¹⁹as if someone fled from a lion,
and was met by a bear; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was
bitten by a snake. ²⁰Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light, and gloom with no brightness

in it? ²¹I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

²²Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon.

²³Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

²⁴But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

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

PSALM 70

¹Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;

O LORD, make haste to help me.

²**Let those who seek my life be put to shame and confounded;**

let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.

³Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me
turn back because of their shame.

⁴**Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;**

let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great is the LORD!"

⁵But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quickly, O God.

You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, do not tarry.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

¹³We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

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 is sung by a leader

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 25:1-13

P: ✝ The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

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

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ ¹²But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The Rev. Cathy Lauterhahn

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

A leader sings vs. 1 & 2 of the following hymn on behalf of the assembly.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

ELW# 244



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'rings bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride-groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

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: Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for God's power to come upon the church, the world, and all in need,

After each petition of the prayer is said:

A: Be pleased, O God, to deliver us.

C: O Lord, make haste to help us.

P: Hear us when we call upon you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and 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.

Invitation to Offering

SETTING THE TABLE

The Offering Song is sung by a leader on behalf of the assembly.

OFFERING SONG:

In the Singing

ELW# 466



1 In the sing - ing, in the si - lence, in the hands ex - spect - ant, o - pen,
2 In the ques - tion, in the an - swer, in the mo - ment of ac - cept - ance,



in the bless - ing, in the break - ing, in your pres - ence at this ta - ble,
in the heart's cry, in the heal - ing, in the cir - cle of your peo - ple,



Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ, be the wine of grace;



Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ, be the bread of peace.

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931

Music: BREAD OF PEACE, Carlton R. Young, b. 1926

Text and music © 1996 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. God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.

Amen.

We are using a Eucharistic prayer ascribed to St. Hippolytus, a priest in Rome at the start of the third century. It was written before the "Holy, Holy" was regularly sung and therefore does not include that canticle. We use it now for its simpler form while we are not singing as an assembly.

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.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks:

We give you thanks, Father,

through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son,...

...through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father,

with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both 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. There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table.

The assembly is seated.

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:

Drawn to the Light

ELW# 593

1 Peo - ple who walk in dark - ness have sought a light in the
 2 How can we tell a heav - en from hell if ev - 'ry - one
 3 Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none! The Lamb is the

heart of the dark - est night. Just when we thought all would be
 dwells in the dark of night? Morn-ing dis - pels, gent - ly com -
 one who is shin - ing bright, bids us to come! Life has be -

lost, we were drawn to the light of God.
 pels, and we're drawn to the light of God.
 gun when we're drawn to the light of God.

Refrain

Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night, drawn to the
 light and the morn - ing. Glo - rious and bright, oh, what a
 sight to be drawn to the light of God.

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937
 Music: LA CROSSE, John C. Ylvisaker
 Text and music © 1990 John C. Ylvisaker.

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

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Sovereign God, in this meal you give us a foretaste of the great feast to come. Keep us faithful to you, that we, with all your saints, may at length celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Sending

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

Announcements

BLESSING

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

Almighty, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

Amen.

The Sending Song is sung by a leader on behalf of the assembly. The assembly turns to face the cross as it passes by.

The assembly turns toward the cross as it passes by.

SENDING SONG:

Blessed Assurance

ELW# 638



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915

Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

DISMISSAL

A: Led on by the saints before us, go in peace to serve the Lord.

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: Carol Chmelynski, Lisa Castaneda, Kelly Jacobson, Carol Jacobson, Randy Mottesheard, 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

✠ Belinda, Marjorie, Greg, Jason, Melissa, Carol, Jon, Carolyne, Jimmy, Camille, Wanda, Valerie, Janice, Letty Gonzalez.

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.

Thank you Pastor Cathy!

The Rev. Cathy Lauterhahn is presiding and preaching today while Pr. Bob is away with family this weekend. He returns tomorrow. We thank our friend Pr. Cathy for filling in once more for us. Please welcome her!

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.
- Offering plates will be placed on a stand as people enter and exit. Greeters will stand behind a table warmly welcoming worshippers from a distance.
- We continue to encourage electronic giving.



- Outside doors and bathroom doors will be propped open, so no one touches a doorknob or handle.
- 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.
- Following the Liturgy, the pastor will be present outside the outer doors to greet people, but will remain socially distanced with no physical contact.

Change for Change Tower: Discretionary Fund

As the holidays approach, during the months of November and December we will 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**



New video system on the way!

Thanks to a generous memorial gift from the Pettit family in memory of Jeanne's mother, Edith Reichenbach, new state of the art video monitors will be installed in the church this week. There will be one high definition flat screen at the front of the sanctuary and one in the rear to support worship and preaching going forward. This will allow viewing of screen no matter which direction the assembly is facing in worship. During this pandemic we will be relying less on paper and more on screens going forward.

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.