

Weekly E-Messenger from St. Stephen

1 message

Church Office <sslcpompano@134516074.mailchimpapp.com>
Reply-To: sslcpompano@gmail.com
To: secretary@ststephenlutheran.net

Wed, Mar 26, 2025 at 1:24 PM

Here's your E-Messenger!



2500 NE 14th Street Causeway Pompano Beach, FL 33062
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March 26, 2025 Lent, Week 4

Sunday: Joshua 5: 9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:n16-21; Luke `5: 1-3, 11b-32

Change for Change Tower

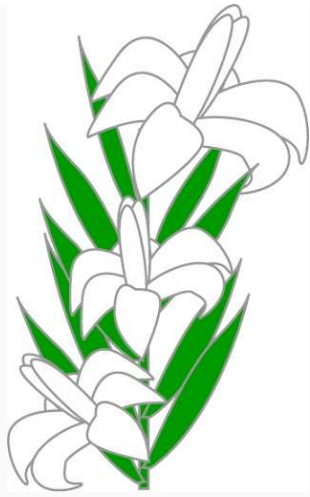
Our Change for Change Tower focuses on a local service organization each month.

The March Tower for Change: Blessing Bags

About Blessing Bags..

Blessing Bags are small bags that we put together containing things like waters, a washcloth, granola bars, protein bars, etc. that can be freely given to folks who are living on he street or are currently homeless and hungry. It's one small way be can assist those in need. Blessing bags are available in the narthex of the church.





Easter Lilies and plants. . .

If you would like to donate an Easter lily or plant to decorate our church for Easter, please call or call/email the church office. Plants are \$10.00 each. Plants may be given in honor of someone or in memory of someone.



Flower Chart 2025 . . .

There is a new Flower Chart on the bulletin board in the narthex. If you wish to donate flowers on a particular Sunday, please provide that information on the flower chart. The offering is \$35.00.

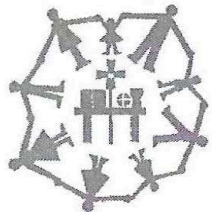
This week.

Sunday	March 30 <i>Lent IV</i>	9:00, Choir	Luther Room
		10:15am, Worship	Sanctuary
		7pm, AA	Fellowship Hall
Monday	March 31	6:30pm, AA	Fellowship Hall
Tuesday	April 1	9:00 Holy Grill	Church grounds
		12:00 Midweek Lenten Service	Sanctuary
		5:00pm Holy Grill	Church grounds
Wednesday	April 2	7pm Church council Meeting	Luther Room
		7pm, AA	Fellowship Hall
Thursday	April 3		
Friday	April 4		
Saturday	April 5	9-12 Threads of Love	Fellowship Hall
		9:00, Choir	Luther Room
		10:15am Worship	Sanctuary
Sunday	April 6 <i>Lent V</i>	7pm, AA	Fellowship Hall



Holy Grill needs:

Please consider bringing the following items needed for our Wednesday clothing ministry. We are currently in need of towels, washcloths (used but clean are most welcome), travel size bug-spray, sunscreen, and men's clothing: especially underwear, shorts, summer shirts, sandals, sneakers, especially size 10 and work boots. We also need women's sneakers, and size small and medium size women's bra's, underwear, bathing suits and shorts. We also are being asked for back packs lately, so if anyone has lightly used backpacks and pocketbooks that might enjoy another life outside the closet, they would be welcome also!



OUR SUNDAY WORSHIP

Serving this week, March 30, 2025 (The Lent IV)

Presiding Minister: The Rev. Dr. Sidney Nelson

Assisting Minister: Natalie Prego

Crucifer: Eric Castaneda

Chalice Minister: Rosie Fennelli

Lector: Kathy Hopkins

Musician: Cesar Vidaud

Sound: Chris Belanger

Camera: Zachary Smith

Greeters/Ushers: Monica Kellington, Rosie Fennelli, John Holmes, Ida Solomita, Pat Engle

Serving next week, April 6 30, 2025 (Lent V)

Presiding Minister: The Rev. Dr. Sidney Nelson

Assisting Minister: Natalie Prego

Crucifer: Eric Castaneda

Chalice Minister: Rosie Fennelli

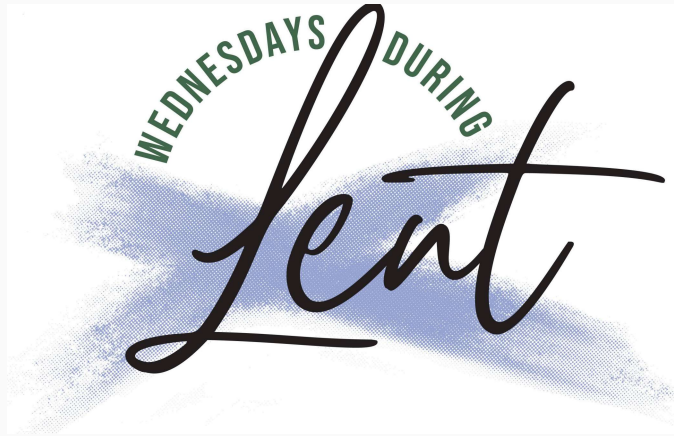
Lector: Erika Flanigan

Musician: Cesar Vidaud

Sound: Zachary Smith

Camera: Chris Belanger

Greeters/Ushers: Monica Kellington, Rosie Fennelli, John Holmes, Ida Solomita, Pat Engle



Wednesdays in Lent; 12 noon in the sanctuary

For six Wednesdays our theme is based upon the Lord's Prayer. Each week we will base our worship on a different petition that is part of the prayer or Lord Jesus taught us to pray.

April 2: Forgive us our sins

A service of confession and paying on of hands

April 9: The kingdom, the power, and the glory. . ."

Power of the kingdom in our hearts and in our church



April 13: Passion/Palm Sunday,

*10:15 Blessing and Distribution of Palm
Passion of St. Luke, Holy Communion*

April 17: Maundy Thursday

7:00pm, Washing of Feet and Holy Communion

April 18: Good Friday

*12:00 Stations of the Cross
7:00pm Good Friday Liturgy (English and Spanish)*

April 20: Easter Day

10:15 Festive Holy Communion



IN OUR PRAYERS

Prayer requests will be printed in the bulletin for three Sundays. You may renew names as many times as you wish. You may call the church office (954.942.4473), or e mail the office sslcpompano@gmail.com. Please renew your prayer requests every 3 weeks.

IN OUR PRAYERS...

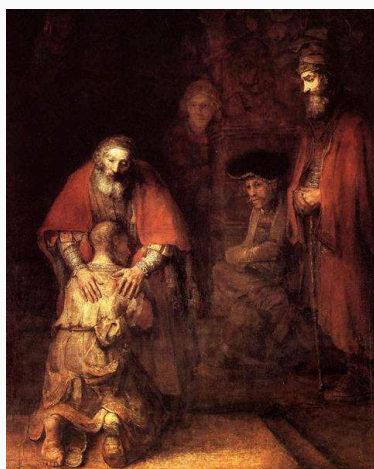
In our prayers today we remember the people of Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, the people of the Middle East, those affected by gun violence, for those unjustly deprived of liberty, the victims of violence, discrimination and abuse, those who are suffering due to flooding, extreme heat, extreme cold and other natural disasters; for harmony, peace and unity across our divided nation, those who are homebound and others in our parish family in need of healing; for relief from anxiety and depression, for courage, for continued health and strength, for patience, direction, guidance, food addiction, for positive thinking, for peace and healing, for help with memory, and strength, for guidance with decisions ✠Rita, Louise, ✠✠Doris, Dave Metz, Derrick ✠✠Carol, Jerry, Cheryl ✠✠✠Chris, Pat, Pastor Tom, Pastor Reggie, Linda, Dottie, Carol, Ron

Prayers for Friends of the Parish:

(Please renew your prayer requests every three weeks.)

✠ ✠✠✠Alexandra, Serena, Robert, Aiden, Chandler, Becky, Braemen, Craig, Nettie, Ed, Barbara, Paula, Emilia, George, Jessica, Frank, Nick, Susane, Abby, Marge, Sharon, Mike, Isaiah, Theresa, Audrey, Gregory, ✠✠✠Alexandra, Greg, Evi, Malle, Tommie, Gregory, Nadine, Peggy, David, Pat, Eric, Karen, Shelley, Joseph, Michelle, Barbara, Frank, Brad, Mike, Isaiah,

✠ reflections



Less Grumbling, More Humbling

Grumbling! The crowd around Jesus—the “in” crowd, that is—was grumbling. Grumbling because Jesus welcomed those who traditionally had been set apart: tax collectors and sinners. Who are those who cause us to grumble? Whose seemingly undeserved handout or unearned status change filled our hearts with resentment this week? Jesus speaks to us today because we too often see life as a game with winners and losers, points and playbooks, offense and defense. Can we open our hearts and minds to hear today’s humbling good news? God’s love is freely shared with all: we cannot earn it, we cannot deserve it. When we attend worship, we do so out of thanksgiving and praise for God’s glory, hunger and thirst for God’s word and sacrament. We do not attend

worship to achieve some status within God's kingdom. When we help a neighbor, share with a stranger, assist the afflicted, or acknowledge the overlooked we do so because Christ first did the same for us. We respond to God's grace and mercy with our own feeble attempts to emulate God's perfect love. It is challenging, exhausting, never-ending, perspective-altering, radically humbling work. It's work that is impossible to do without the inspiration of Christ, the nourishment of wine and bread, and the strength of the saints who have gone before us and with whom we walk Christ's path today. Let us find those in our world who teach us about Christ's unending reconciliation, so that we can all celebrate and rejoice as the family of God.

Ideas

Consider the elder son. Walking in from the fields after a day's labor, he pauses on the margins of the festivities and refuses to go in. It seems no one thought to tell him his brother had returned. His father approaches, and their exchange is difficult. The elder son has remained faithful to his familial responsibilities, but now he voices a sense of injustice that his father has not acknowledged his work. How often do we benefit from invisible, or expected yet unacknowledged, labor? If we were to listen to that elder son standing outside the party, what might he say to us?

The parable of the prodigal son often activates our questions and sensibilities about fairness. The elder son represents a common understanding of fairness—the idea that what and how you contribute to a situation directly relates to what you receive. If I work hard, I'll be fairly compensated and successful. If I am lazy or irresponsible, I'll fail. If I honor and serve my father, I'll be rewarded with his love and approval. If I dishonor him, I'll be punished. But the father in the parable models a love that cannot be contained by fairness—a love that is not deserved or earned, but freely given only because of the loving heart of the father. How might this parable challenge our own sense of what is deserved or earned by people in our communities?

Henri Nouwen wrote *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming* (Random House, 1994) after reflecting on a famous painting of the parable by Rembrandt. The book explores the parable by interrogating the many characters and actions in the painting, including the shadowed servants in the background, the stoic judgement of the older son, and the gracious hands of the father drawing his lost son in close. For Nouwen, each character has something to teach about the very human struggle to accept the radical forgiveness and love of God, and he saw himself reflected in different ways in each one. Nouwen invites us to explore the parable from every point of view, through many mediums, to reach a profoundly deeper sense of what it means to return to the embrace of our Holy Parent.

We read the parable of the prodigal son during Lent, a penitential season, because of the wayward son's return and appeal to his father. We often see this as a story of great repentance, of a turning back from a life of sin, with our focus on the son's change of heart as an example for us. But it's unclear if the son's turn is done out of genuine self-reflection and remorse, or self-interest and desperation. And while the son gives a seemingly heartfelt speech upon his return, we may be forgiven for doubting his sincerity. The power of the scene may not be in the repentance of the son, but in the thrifless love of the father, who perhaps could care less about his son's sincerity, rejoicing that, for whatever reason, his son has returned to him alive. This is a vision of truly unconditional love.

*God of compassion,
you await the sinner's return
and spread a feast to welcome home the lost.
Save us from temptations that lead us away from you,
and draw us back by the constancy of your love,
that we may gladly share our inheritance with others.
We ask this through Christ, our liberator from sin,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.
Amen.*

THE JOURNEY OF LENT



Where have we been and where are we going.....

*Be with us, O Lord God, in these Lenten days,
as we journey back to our baptism.
You lead us into the desert of repentance,
that in this pilgrimage of prayer
we might learn to be your people once more.
In fasting and in service
you bring us back to your heart.
You open our eyes to see your presence in the world
and you free our hands to lead others
to the radiant splendor of your mercy.
Be with us in these journey days,
for without you we are lost and will perish.
For to you belong honor, power, and glory,
now and forever.
Amen.*



Fast from judging others;
Feast on Christ dwelling in them.
Fast from fear of illness;
Feast on the healing power of God.
Fast from words that pollute;
Feast on speech that purifies.
Fast from discontent;
Feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger;
Feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism;
Feast on hope.
Fast from negatives;

Feast on encouragement.
Fast from bitterness;
Feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern;
Feast on compassion.
Fast from suspicion;
Feast on truth.
Fast from gossip;
Feast on purposeful silence.
Fast from problems that overwhelm;
Feast on prayer that sustains.
Fast from anxiety;
Feast on faith.
Fast from judging others;
Feast on Christ dwelling in them.

We Are Surrounded by a Great Cloud of Witnesses. . . .

Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, +1980ñ Monday, March 24, 2025

Romero was deeply concerned with injustices evident toward the poor and powerless in El Salvador, and worked forthrightly against political repression. He was assassinated while presiding at the eucharist in a chapel near the cathedral in San Salvador.

Annunciation of Our LordñTuesday, March 25, 2025

Nine months before Christmas we celebrate the annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Son of God. The ancient church believed that this was also the date of the world's creation and of Jesus' death on the cross.

Hans Nielsen Hauge, renewer of the church, +1824ñ Saturday, March 29, 2025

Hauge was a layperson who wished to revitalize the church in Norway. As a result of a mystical experience, he felt called to preach. Many professionals in the church feared his motives and influence, and he was imprisoned for leading unauthorized gatherings.

John Donne, poet, +1631ñ Monday, March 31, 2025

After finishing his education at Oxford University, Donne seemed headed for a career in the English public service. But a series of circumstances led him into the ordained ministry. He is well known as a writer of both secular and sacred poetry.

Benedict the African, confessor, +1589ñ Friday, April 4, 2025

Born into slavery on the island of Sicily, Benedict lived as a hermit until the pope ordered all hermits to attach themselves to a monastery, at which time Benedict joined the Franciscans. Though illiterate, he was highly respected as a confessor and later superior of his community.

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We are here for you...

The office is normally open Monday through Friday from 10:00am—1:00pm. Please be in touch with me or the office for any pastoral care needs. **If you would like Holy Communion at home because you cannot get out to church, please contact the office and the pastor will be glad to come by.** The interim pastor's email address remains the same as it has been for the pastor: pastoratststephen@gmail.com. Pastor Sid's cell number is 561-463-8900. Don't forget to send prayer requests or call the office by **Thursday** each week if you have not already entered them on the Sunday Welcome Card. You may call the office at 954-942-4473, or email us at sslcpompano@gmail.com.

This week. . . . ■ ■

The Church Office is open Monday through Friday, 10:00am to 1:00 pm.



2500 NE 14 St Causeway, Pompano Beach, FL 33062 954-942-4473

St. Stephen Congregation Council 2025

Brooks Black (2026); fbrooksblack@aol.com; 954-242-2225

Erika Flanigan, President (2027); extendpediatrics@gmail.com; 954-895-5623

Lisa Goertzen (2025); lisagoertzen13@gmail.com 314-707-4078

Lynda Smith, Vice President (2027) enginej@bellsouth.net; 954-261-9579

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Kevin Krasovic, Treasurer Kevin.Krasovic@gmail.com; 786-234-9257

Natalie Prego, Secretary (2026) natalieprego@yahoo.com;

754-367-0261 / 561-488-8280

Rita Sharkey (2026) ftdrita@aol.com; 516 770-9146; 516 770-9146

Rev. Dr. Sidney K Nelson pastorsidnelson@gmail.com; Pr Sid's cell: 561-463-8900

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST



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.

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