

# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

## FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT



MARCH 9, 2025

10 A.M.

**St. Stephen Lutheran Church**

(850) 385-2728, Office

sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com, Email <http://www.ststephenlutherantally.com>

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

Katharine Gossman, Music Director

Lori Zengel, Office Manager

All Members, Ministers

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**Welcome, Everyone!**

**We are glad to have you with us this morning.** If you need assistance in finding anything, one of our ushers will be glad to help you.

**Restrooms are found** in the fellowship hall and office building to the right as you exit the sanctuary. Proceed up the stairs and through the glass door. Unisex bathrooms are available through the kitchen in the office area. Please do not leave children under 12 unattended.

**“Let the Little Children Come” Matthew 19:14** - In accordance with St. Stephen’s mission “to be a welcoming community . . .” we encourage all ages to worship on Sundays. We also believe that children learn to welcome others by how they have been welcomed. If you are a parent of a young child, know that this community supports your efforts to engage your child in worship and understands that it can be a stressful process. Having children in worship is a joy that we treasure, so please know that we welcome you and your children as they learn to become active members in Christ’s body. A nursery is available if parent or guardian desires. See usher for details.

**Please remember** to turn off your cell phone during the liturgy.

**All the hymns** for the worship service are in the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship book and numbered by hymn, not page.

**For safety** we no longer pass the offering plate. Financial gifts can be placed in the plate by the baptismal font.

**St. Stephen Lutheran Church (ELCA) is a Reconciling in Christ congregation that explicitly welcomes people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. St. Stephen is equally committed to anti-racism. We welcome people without regard to race, ethnicity, age, family status, economic status, or differing abilities.**

**All are invited to receive the sacrament. Lutherans believe that Jesus Christ is present in, with and under the consecrated bread and wine of Holy Communion. Those not wishing to commune are welcome to the altar to receive a blessing. To indicate this, please cross your arms over your chest. If you are not able to come forward, please inform the ushers and the meal will be brought to you.**

## INTRODUCTION

*These forty days called Lent are like no other. It is our opportune time to return to the God who rescues, to receive the gifts of God's grace, to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the wonder of God's love in Jesus, and to resist temptation at every turn. This is no small pilgrimage on which we have just embarked. It is a struggle Jesus knew. It is a struggle Jesus shares. The nearness of the Lord, in bread and wine, water and word, will uphold and sustain us.*

## PRELUDE

*The assembly stands.*



+ GATHERING +

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

*Silence for reflection.*

P Compassionate One,

C you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.

P Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In ✙ Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever.

C Amen.

1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this  
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing  
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me  
 wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
 fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me

with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,  
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es

feed me now and ev - er - more, ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
 shield me with your might - y arm, might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.  
 I will raise for - ev - er - more, ev - er - more. I will raise for - ev - er - more.

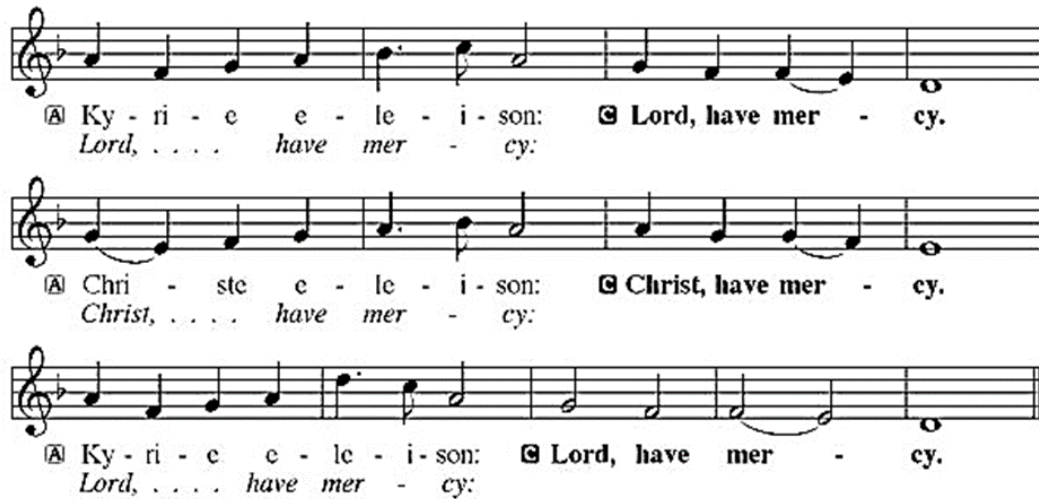
Text: William Williams, 1717-1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722-1796, alt.  
 Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873-1932

## GREETING

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** And also with you.

## KYRIE



Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    ☩ Lord, have mer - cy.  
Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:

Ⓐ Chri - ste e - le - i - son:    ☩ Christ, have mer - cy.  
Christ, . . . . have mer - cy:

Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    ☩ Lord, have mer - cy.  
Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:

## PRAYER OF THE DAY



**P** Let us pray.

O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

*The assembly is seated.*

## CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

### FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 26:1-11

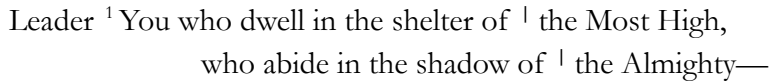
*The annual harvest festival, called the Feast of Weeks, provides the setting for this reading. This festival celebrates the first fruits of the produce of the land offered back to God in thanks. In this text, worshipers announce God's gracious acts on behalf of Israel.*

<sup>1</sup> When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, <sup>2</sup> you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. <sup>3</sup> You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us." <sup>4</sup> When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, <sup>5</sup> you shall make this response before the Lord your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. <sup>6</sup> When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, <sup>7</sup> we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. <sup>8</sup> The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; <sup>9</sup> and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup> So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me." You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. <sup>11</sup> Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

**C**      **Thanks be to God.**

*We sing the psalm responsively.*



L<sup>9</sup> Because you have made the <sup>1</sup> Lord your refuge,  
and the Most High your <sup>1</sup> habitation,

L <sup>11</sup> For God will give the angels charge <sup>1</sup> over you,  
to guard you in <sup>1</sup> all your ways.

L <sup>13</sup> You will tread upon the lion <sup>1</sup> cub and viper;  
you will trample down the lion <sup>1</sup> and the serpent.

L <sup>15</sup>They will call me, and I will <sup>1</sup> answer them;  
I will be with them in trouble; I will rescue and <sup>1</sup> honor them.

*Spoken after the psalm is sung:*

Amen.

## SECOND READING: Romans 10:8b-13

*Paul reminds the Christians at Rome of the foundation of their creed, the confession of faith in the risen Christ as Lord.*

<sup>8b</sup> “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); <sup>9</sup> because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. <sup>11</sup> The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. <sup>13</sup> For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

R      The Word of the Lord.

C      Thanks be to God.

*The assembly stands.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION





**GOSPEL: Luke 4:1-13**

*After being filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism, Jesus is led in the wilderness. Through his responses to the temptations of the devil, he defines what it means to be called “the Son of God.”*

P The holy gospel according to Luke, the fourth chapter.

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

<sup>1</sup> Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. <sup>3</sup> The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’”

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. <sup>6</sup> And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup> If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” <sup>8</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’”

<sup>9</sup> Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, <sup>10</sup> for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ <sup>11</sup> and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

<sup>12</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” <sup>13</sup> When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

P The gospel of the Lord.

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

*The assembly is seated.*


**SERMON** *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

*The assembly stands.*


**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**ACS 923**

*As Your Spirit in the Desert*




1 As your Spir - it in the des - ert led the Christ to  
2 As your fire and cloud - y pil - lar Is - rael's tribes to  
3 Though wild beasts may lurk in shad - ow, and dire thirst may  
4 Through the nar - row gate now draw us, past all em - pire's  
5 God of des - ert, God of prom - ise, you have bid us



dust and stone, so in - still our hearts with cour - age now to  
Ca - naan led, may your pres - ence be our com - fort, may your  
sear and sting, you have prom - ised liv - ing wa - ters wait - ing  
pull and strife, where be - yond our fear and cling - ing stands the  
jour - ney on through the days of dust and dark - ness to the



cross where Christ has gone. Let us cross in - to the  
man - na be our bread. Let us cross in - to the  
for us at the spring. Let us cross out of the  
thresh - old of new life. Let us cross out of the  
ris - ing of the dawn. Let us cross out of the



wil - der - ness so to walk where Christ has gone.  
wil - der - ness with God's man - na as our bread.  
wil - der - ness to the wa - ters of the spring.  
wil - der - ness to the thresh - old of new life.  
wil - der - ness to the ris - ing of the dawn.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953

Music: ROSEVILLE, Michael D. Costello, b. 1979

Text © 2012 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Music © 2015 Augsburg Fortress

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**A** Let us confess our faith.

**C** 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**

*Each petition ends: God, in your mercy,*

*Congregational response: receive our prayer.*

## **PEACE**

**A** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

*We greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

*The assembly is seated.*



+ MEAL +

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

## ANTHEM

## OFFERING HYMN

*The assembly stands to sing the offering hymn as the collection and the gifts are brought forward.*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were  
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we  
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,  
Lord, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and  
might, heav - en 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.*

P      In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread,  
and gave thanks; broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples,  
saying: Take and eat;  
this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

C      **Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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

C      **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P      All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

*The assembly is seated.*

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*As the ushers direct you, come to the altar using the side aisles and return to your seat via the central aisle. The assisting ministers offer both wine and grape juice from pouring cups; take one glass from the tray as you approach the rail. Leave the empty glass on the rail. Wheat-free wafers are available--simply tell the pastor.*

## COMMUNION HYMNS

**325**    *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*

**808**    *Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song*

*The assembly stands.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**A**      Let us pray.

Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C**      **Amen.**

**+ SENDING +**

**BLESSING**    *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

**P**      God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, ✝ bless you now and forever.

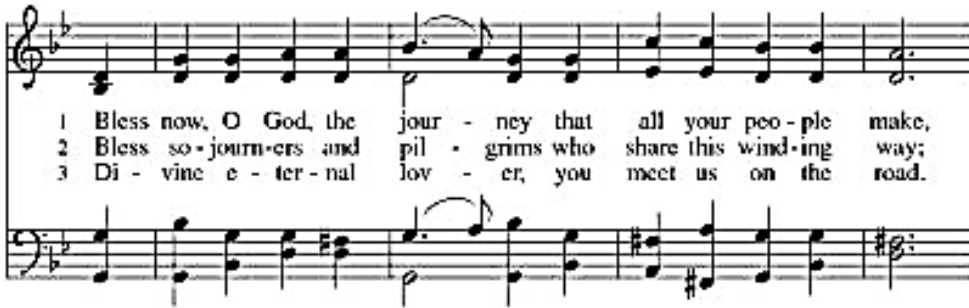
**C**      **Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

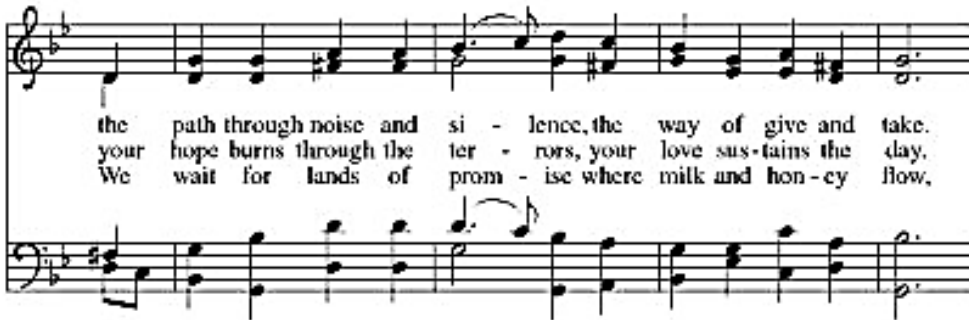
## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*The assembly stands.*





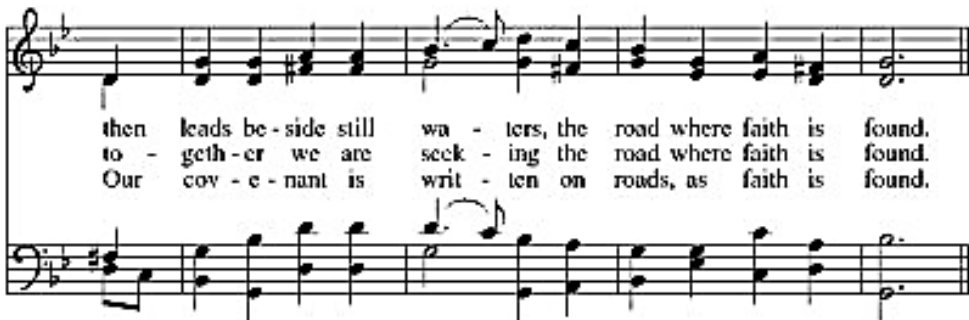
1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,  
 2 Bless so - journ - ers and pil - grims who share this wind - ing way;  
 3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.  
 your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus - tains the day,  
 We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,



The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun - tain round,  
 We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;  
 but wait - ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.



then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.  
 to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.  
 Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955-1993

Music: LLANGLOFFAN, Welsh tune, 19th cent.

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## DISMISSAL

A We believe out loud that God's mission for us is:

**C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.**

A Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

**C Thanks be to God!**

+ + +

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### Calendar for March 09 - 16

March	9	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, First Sunday in Lent
			11:30 am	Worship & Music Committee meeting
	12	Wed.	7 pm	Choir practice
	16	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, First Second in Lent
			11:30 am	Council meeting

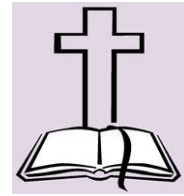
**Next Sunday's Readings, Second Sunday in Lent:**

[Deuteronomy 26:1-11](#)

[Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16](#)

[Romans 10:8b-13](#)

[Luke 4:1-13](#)



**SERVING EVERY SUNDAY**

Pastor Tom, presiding and preaching

Katharine Gossman, piano

Karl Barton, flute

Denise Bookwalter, announcements

Choir: Karl Barton, Melissa Barton, Mark Canning, Kirsten Ebbesen, Rita Ford, Rudy Hehn, Susan Hehn, Colleen Holdcraft, Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Olivia James, Sandy Ness, Simone Schuster, Dave Suhrweir, Cassandra White

**SERVING TODAY AND ONE WEEK FROM TODAY**

<b>Serving</b>	<b>March 9</b>	<b>March 16</b>
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Rob Schiffer	Audrey Post
<b>Cup Minister</b>	Audrey Post	Colleen Holdcraft
<b>Cantor</b>	Karl Barton	Rudy Hehn
<b>Lector</b>	Erik Robinson	Stephanie Leitch
<b>Acolyte</b>	Ceilia Greeley or Graham Reece or Bastian Stover	
<b>Tech Team</b>	Caroline Collins Sylvia Smith	Colleen Holdcraft Jonas Holdcraft
<b>Ushers</b>	Bob Eshleman Patrick Kennell	Jan Harrison Patrick Kennell
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Linda Eshleman Barbara Sullivan	Beth Alexander
<b>Counters</b>	Janet Barber Lorraine Sundberg	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy

## PRAYER REQUESTS

***New concerns:*** Margarete Deckert (mother of Caroline Collins), ongoing prayers for strength as she is recovering from illness; Donna Dickson Miller (friend of Audrey Post), facing health challenges; Gladys Kane for continued healing.

***For the sick:*** Sallie Robinson (wife of Erik Robinson); Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Laura McDuffie (sister of Rob Schiffer).

***In treatment for cancer:*** Ruth Hartung; Scott Simmons (son of Sharon Simmons). Gordon Fleischer; Stephanie Barber; Jim Saxman (uncle of Rob Schiffer); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Craig Timm (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Gil Johnson (friend of Judi Duffy); Amanda George (daughter-in-law of Rob Schiffer); David McManus (friend of Audrey Post); Shannon Miller (friend of Barb ODonnell); Becky Graves (friend of Ridy Hofer); Timothy Stewart (son of Pepper Stewart).

***Health and protection:*** For all affected by the coronavirus – especially those experiencing mental-health difficulties due to isolation, those struggling to recover from the disease, those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personnel, EMTs), the millions of unemployed people, etc.; for the unaccompanied children entering the U.S., including those “unaccounted for.”

***For prisoners:*** All those on Death Row.

***Other concerns:*** For Karen Olson; Kevin Robinson (son of Erik Robinson), in need of encouragement; Isaac (son of Terri Schmitt), for physical and emotional healing; Steve Michael (cousin of Rob Schiffer), in rehab after a serious accident.

***Church concerns:*** St. Stephen’s Church Council; the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council; all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

***World concerns:*** For all people suffering and/or recovering from hurricanes; migrants and asylum seekers; civil rights for people around the world; a ceasefire in Ethiopia and in Ukraine; peace in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**FLOWER CHART FOR 2025:** Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you would like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service by signing up for the 2025 Flower Chart located in the narthex. The cost is \$40, and you can place it in the offering plate.

**WEEKLY NEWSLETTER:** Want to read a sermon you missed? Visit [\*https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters\*](https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters). Want to read the latest newsletters? Go to [\*https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters\*](https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters). Want to browse a collection of St. Stephen songs? They're at [\*https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters\*](https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters).