ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



AUGUST 3, 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

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

Today's texts offer instruction and encouragement for all who are occasionally overwhelmed by the "unhappy business" of life. Jesus urges us to take care and be on guard against all kinds of greed. We who have died with Christ in holy baptism have also been raised with him and are encouraged to elevate our thinking, seeking the "things that are above." To that end we seek the sustenance of the Lord's supper and the encouragement of God's word.

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.

Pastor In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation Amen.

P Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P Merciful God,
- You free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. Amen.
- P You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of + Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.
- C Amen.

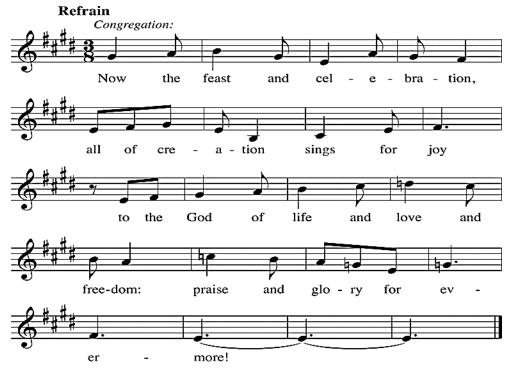


Test: Reginald Heber, 1783-1826, alt. Music: NICAEA, John B. Dykes, 1823-1876

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE



Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.





Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

Benevolent God, you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives. Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and to treasure what is precious in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



FIRST READING: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

The teacher of wisdom who wrote Ecclesiastes sees that working for mere accumulation of wealth turns life into an empty game, a "vanity of vanities." Nevertheless, he asserts in the next verse, it is good to find enjoyment in one's work because such enjoyment is a gift from God.

² Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

¹² I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³ I applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to humans to be busy with. ¹⁴ I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun, and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

^{2:18} I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to my successor, ¹⁹ and who knows whether he will be wise or foolish? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰ So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹ because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. ²² What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? ²³ For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 49:1-12 We sing the psalm responsively.



Leader ¹ Hear this, [|] all you peoples; give ear, all you who dwell [|] in the world,

- C ² you of high de- | gree and low, rich and | poor together.
- L ³ My mouth shall | speak of wisdom, and my heart shall meditate on | understanding.
- C ⁴ I will incline my ear | to a proverb and set forth my riddle up- | on the harp.
- L ⁵ Why should I be afraid in ¹ evil days, when the wickedness of those at my ¹ heels surrounds me,
- C 6 the wickedness of those who put their trust in 1 their own prowess, and boast of 1 their great riches?
- L ⁷ One can never re- | deem another, or give to God the ransom for an- | other's life;
- C 8 for the ransom of a life | is so great that there would never be e- | nough to pay it,
- L ⁹ in order to live forev- | er and ever and never | see the grave.
- C ¹⁰ For we see that the wise die also; like the dull and stu- | pid they perish and leave their wealth to those who come | after them.

- L ¹¹ Their graves shall be their homes forever, their dwelling places from generation to | generation, though they had named lands af- | ter themselves.
- C ¹² Even though honored, they cannot | live forever; they are like the | beasts that perish.

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: Colossians 3:1-11

Life in Christ includes a radical reorientation of our values. Just as the newly baptized shed their old clothes and put on new garments, so Christians are called to let go of greed and take hold of a life shaped by God's love in Christ.

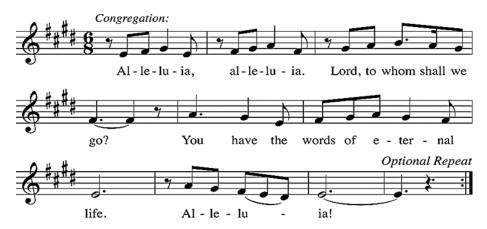
¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, ³ for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. ⁷ These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. ⁸ But now you must get rid of all such things: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹ In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, enslaved and free, but Christ is all and in all!

- R The Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

GOSPEL: Luke 12:13-21

In God's reign, the "rich will be sent away empty." Jesus uses a parable to warn against identifying the worth of one's life with the value of one's possessions rather than one's relationship with God.

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

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus,] "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." ¹⁴ But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵ And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." ¹⁶ Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷ And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸ Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' ²⁰ But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹ So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

- 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 1004 Faith Begins by letting Go



- 1 Faith be gins by let ting go, giv ing up what had seemed sure,
- 2 Faith en-dures by hold-ing on, keep-ing mem-'ry's roots a live
- 3 Faith ma-tures by reach-ing out, stretch-ing minds, en larg ing hearts,



tak - ing risks and press-ing on, though the way feels less se - cure: so that hope may bear its fruit; prom - ise - fed, our souls will thrive, shar-ing strug - gles, liv - ing prayer, bind - ing up the bro - ken parts;



pil - grim - age both right and odd, not through mer - it we pos - sess till we find the com-mon-place trust-ing all our life to God. but by God's great faith - ful - ness. ripe with wit - ness to God's grace.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944 Music: RATISBON, J. G. Werner, *Choralbuch*, 1815 Text © 1996 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

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: Hear us, O God.

Congregational response: Your mercy is great.

PEACE

- P 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.



OFFERING

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

OFFERING HYMN

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

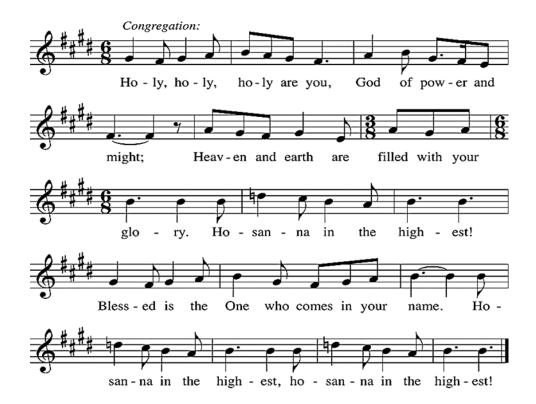


Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

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 reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. 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



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

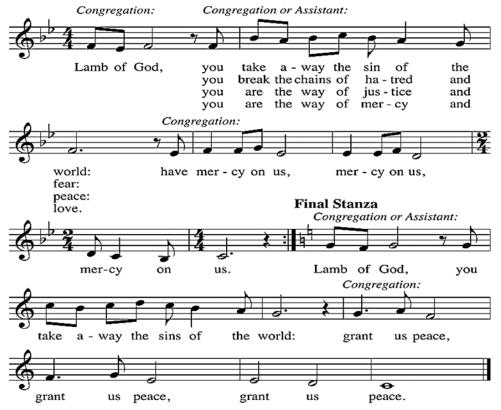
- P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.
- Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

The assembly is seated.

LAMB OF GOD



Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

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 a communion glass from one of the trays at the corners as you approach the rail. Leave the empty glass on the lower rail. Wheat-free wafers are available -- simply tell the pastor. If you do not wish to receive the meal, simply fold your arms over your chest to receive a blessing from the pastor.

COMMUNION HYMNS 608* Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling
650 In Christ There Is No East or West
*Requested hymn

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Mothering God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

+ SENDING +

BLESSING We receive the blessings of the triune God.

- P The love of God abound in you; the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts; and the life of the Spirit + bless you and give you peace.
- C Amen.

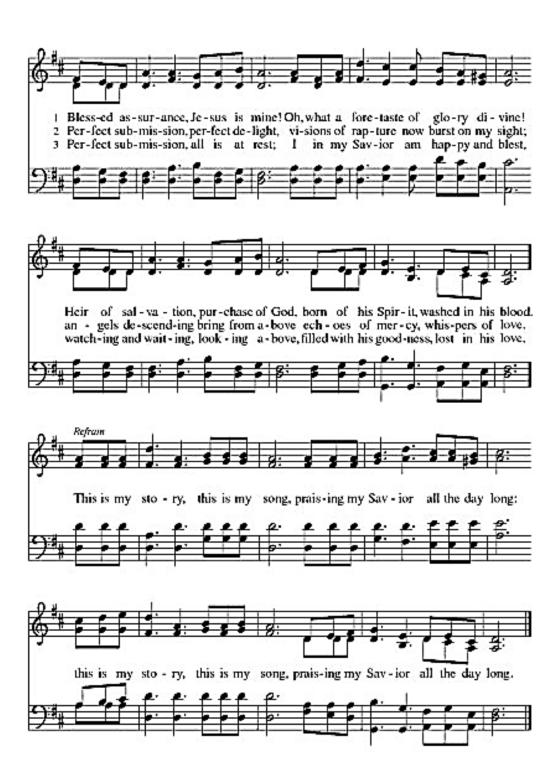
The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

SENDING HYMN 638* Blessed Assurance

*Requested hymn



Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915 Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

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. Live by the Spirit.
- C Thanks be to God.

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Calendar for August 03 - 10

Aug. 3 Sun. 9 am Book study

10 am Worship, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

11:30 am Congregational meeting

10 Sun. 9 am Book study

10 am Worship, Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Next Sunday's Readings, Ninth Sunday after Pentecost:

<u>Genesis 15:1-6</u> <u>Psalm 33:12-22</u> <u>Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16</u> Luke 12:32-40





Audrey Post dedicated today's altar flowers are Given to the glory of God.

SERVING EVERY SUNDAY

Pastor Tom, presiding and preaching

Katharine Gossman, piano

Karl Barton, flute

Denise Bookwalter, announcements

Choir: Jordi Banitt, 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		
Serving	August 3	August 10
Assisting Minister	Beth Alexander	Jennifer Dritt
Cup Minister	Audrey Post	Rita Ford
Cantor	Susan Hehn	
Lector	Karen Olson	Graham Reece
Acolyte	Ceilia Greeley or Graham Reece or Bastian Stover	
Tech Team	Colleen Holdcraft Jonas Holdcraft	Sandy Lamb-Daniels Audrey Post
Ushers		
Altar Guild	Rita Ford Anita Sawh	Linda Eshleman Barbara Sullivan
Counters	Patricia Handschy Rob Schiffer	Margaret Bowers Diane Hines Susan Warren

New concerns: Prayers for healing for Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins) as she is in the hospital with pneumonia

For the sick: Sallie Robinson (wife of Erik Robinson); 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; Jim Saxman (uncle of Rob Schiffer); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Craig Timm (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Gil Johnson (friend of Judi Duffy); David McManus (friend of Audrey Post); Shannon Miller (friend of Barb O'Donnell); Timothy Stewart (son of Pepper Stewart).

Health and protection: For those encountering fear & uncertainty around government cuts and the future of Medicaid. For immigrants and refugees who are working and raising families in the United States to be safe and secure without unnecessary deportations.

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; 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; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart).

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 Gaza and the Middle East.

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/sermons. Want to read the latest newsletters? Go to https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters. Want to browse a collection of St. Stephen songs? They're at https://ststephenlutherantally.com/songs-of-st-stephen.