

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY



FEBRUARY 2, 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

The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Leader: May the peace of the Lord embrace us. All: May the

5 love of the Lord light our way. Leader: We come to you

10 lost and broken. All: Your brilliance illuminates our flaws.

16 Leader: You know how our prayers ever fade. All: Yet always you

22 open your arms to us.

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 Send us your silence, Lord, that we may reflect on the ways we have kept you at arms length.

Silence for reflection.

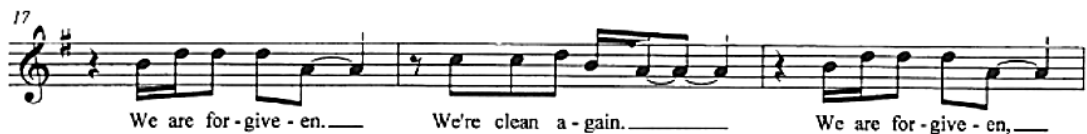
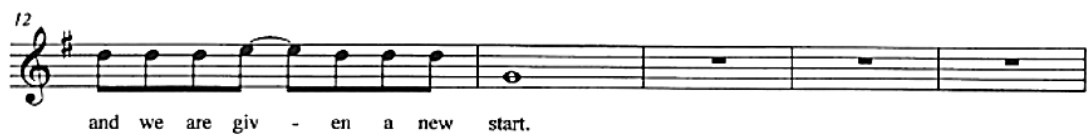
P Please accept our confession of sin, Lord, and bathe us in your forgiveness.

C Forgive us, Dear Lord. We fail to thank you for your gifts to us. We neglect those who are in need, those who could teach us of your love.

And we have such a dim view of ourselves compared with your vision of us. You have given us wings and urged us to fly. But we keep our feet on the ground and our backs turned to you. Forgive us, mighty God.

P Through the gift we can never hope to deserve, the gift of Jesus Christ, God melts away our sin. In the warmth of God's loving gaze - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - we are forgiven.

C We are forgiven!



1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple
 2 Lo! The hosts of e - vil round us scorn the Christ, as -
 3 Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
 4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your pow'r; crown your an - cient chur - ch's sto - ry;
 sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us
 your con - trol; shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
 we de - plore; let the gift of your sal - va - tion

bring its bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days,
 lest we miss your king - dom's goal, lest we miss your king - dom's goal.
 serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore,

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878-1969

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

3

If God were an ea - gle, he'd
If God were the wind, she'd run
If God were a moun - tain, a
God's more than a moun - tain, an

7

swoop through the trees. He'd flex all his fea - thers to
rings 'round the clouds. She'd swirl 'round the world just ca -
tow - er of stone, it would reach to the hea - vens, al -
ea - gle, the wind. God stretch - es be - yond where our

11

catch the least breeze. And peo - ple would shout,
ress - ing the crowds. And peo - ple would sigh,
might - ty, a lone. And peo - ple would cry,
hymns of praise end. Al - might - y and yet

15

"Oh, what beau - ty in flight!" If God were an ea - gle, so
"Oh, what gen - tle - ness there!" If God were the wind, whis - pering
"Oh, what strength we can feel!" If God were a moun - tain, a
del - i - cate and light, God came in the form of a

19

re - gal, so right. If God were an ea - gle, so
in eve - ry - where. If God were the wind, whis - pering
pow - er so real. If God were a moun - tain, a
ba - by one night, and that is the rea - son our

re - gal, so right.
in eve - ry - where.
pow - er so real.
hearts burn so bright.

PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1:4-10

God calls Jeremiah to be a prophet and consecrates him in the womb. Jeremiah's task is to preach God's word amid the difficult political realities of his time, before the Babylonian exile. He is to make God known not only to Judah, but also to the nations.

⁴Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, ⁵“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

⁶Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” ⁷But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. ⁸Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.”

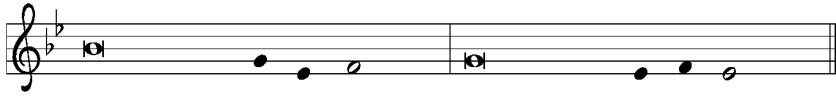
⁹Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me, “Now I have put my words in your mouth. ¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.”

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 36:5-10

We sing the psalm responsively.



Leader ¹ In you, O Lord, have I [|] taken refuge;
let me never be [|] put to shame.

C ² In your righteousness, deliver me and [|] set me free;
incline your ear to [|] me and save me.

L ³ Be my strong rock, a castle to [|] keep me safe;
you are my crag [|] and my stronghold.

C ⁴ Deliver me, my God, from the hand [|] of the wicked,
from the clutches of the evildoer and [|] the oppressor.

L ⁵ For you are my hope, [|] O Lord God,
my confidence since [|] I was young.

C ⁶ I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's
womb you have [|] been my strength;
my praise shall be al- [|] ways of you.

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Christians in Corinth prided themselves on their spiritual gifts. Paul reminds them that God gives us many gifts through the Holy Spirit, but the purpose behind all of them is love, the kind of love that God showed us in Jesus Christ.

¹ If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong

or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹ For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰ but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

R The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL: Luke 4:21-30

People in Jesus' hometown are initially pleased when he says that God will free the oppressed. Their pleasure turns to rage when he reminds them that God's prophetic mission typically pushes beyond human boundaries so that mercy and healing are extended to those regarded as outsiders.

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

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

²¹ Then [Jesus] began to say to [all in the synagogue in Nazareth,] "Today this scripture has

been fulfilled in your hearing.”²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?”²³ He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’”²⁴ And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown.²⁵ But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land;²⁶ yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon.²⁷ There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”²⁸ When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage.²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff.³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

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.



1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un - seen, un -
 2 He comes when souls in si - lence lie and thoughts of day de -
 3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o - cean's fume and
 4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and
 5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be - lieved, o - beyed, a -



heard; as though with - in a heart of stone, or shriv - eled seed in
 part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a fall - ing star a -
 foam; yet small and still up - on the breeze, a wind that stirs the
 birth; to bear with - in our mor - tal frame a life, a death, a
 dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as yet un - seen, but



dark - ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred.
 cross the sky of night with - in the heart, of night with - in the heart.
 tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home.
 sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth.
 not un - known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926

Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918

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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 of grace,

Congregational response: hear 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 +

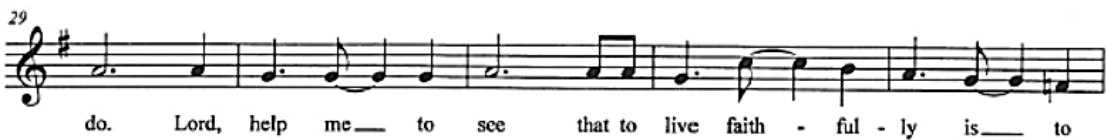
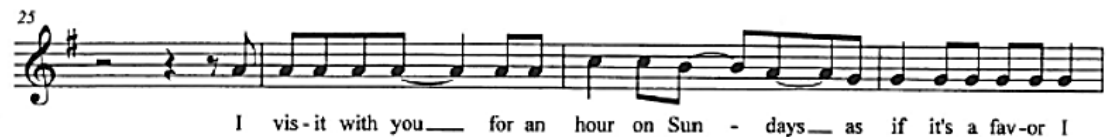
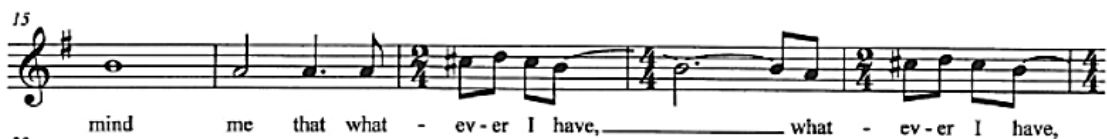
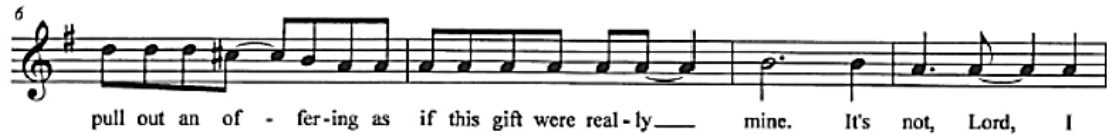
OFFERING

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.



34

turn my days o - ver to you be cause what - ev - er I have,


39 

43



yours. And now down the aisle comes a

48



gift like no oth - er. The bread and the wine make me free. The best gift of

52



yours is the son we a - dore. The on - ly gift I have is

me. Take me. What - ev - er I have, _____ what - ev - er I have, _

62 

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader: All:

May the peace of the Lord embrace us. May the

9 Leader:

love of the Lord light our way. We lift our song

14 All: Leader:

high! We praise the God who gave us life. Hear, Lord,

18 faster All:

as we sing! Sing our praise to God on high.

27

Sing out! Sing out for joy! Sing so loud we'll drown out war.

31

Sing of peace for - ev - er - more. Sing our praise to God. A - men.

35

Sing our praise to God. Sing our praise to God. A - men.

39

Sing our praise to God. A - men. A - men. A - men. A -

44

men. A - men. A - men. A - men! men!

COMMUNION BLESSING

P Bless this bread, Holy God--baked by our hand but sanctified by your Word. On a night 2,000 years ago, shortly before he died to give us everlasting life, your loving Son took such bread and gave thanks to you. He broke it, gave it to his disciples and said, "Take this and eat. This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Bless this wine, Holy God--poured by our hand but made precious by your Son's sacrifice. After supper that night, Jesus took a cup of wine, like this one, and gave you thanks. He gave it to his disciples, telling them, "Take this, all of you, and drink from it. This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for all people so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

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 The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

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 the pouring cup, take one 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 HYMN

Kneel me down now at your
soul with your ho - li -
sing of the peace I've
light shin - ing in my

6
feet. Kneel me down now at your feet. Kneel me down, kneel me down,
ness. Feed my soul with your ho - li - ness. Feed my soul, feed my soul,
found. Hear me sing of the peace I've found. Hear me sing, hear me sing,
heart. Keep this light shin - ing in my heart. Keep this light, keep this light,

10
— at the al - tar kneel me down, for bread and wine, the
— with the Prom - ise feed my soul, with
— of your true love hear me sing, of
— shine right through me, keep this light, through

14
loving sign from you, God, and your Son. 1, 2, 3.
Feed my
Hear me
Keep this

21
4.
— Through bread and wine, the lov - ing sign from you, God, and your Son.

25
— A - - - men.

COMMUNION HYMNS

648 *Beloved, God's Chosen*

661 *I Love to Tell the Story*

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray,

C Amen.

+ SENDING +

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

P The Spirit of the triune God ✠ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

SENDING HYMN

Arise!



A - rise, a - rise, — em -



brace the day! — The — world a - waits, what will you say — to



let the peo - ple know you're read - y to live — by the power of this — feast and to

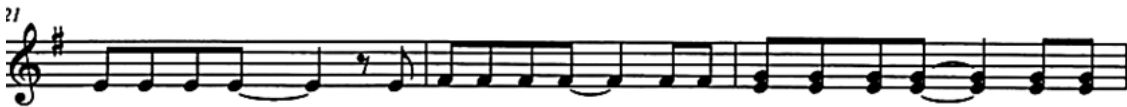


prac-tice the peace of our Lord?

A - rise! - - - A -



rise, a - rise, — you're not a - lone. — The song you — sing will fol-low you home — and



hum in your heart. — So if you be - gin — to for - get whose you are, — fix your



eye on a star and sing: Lord! —

A - rise! —

A - rise! —



— A - rise!

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 in hope.

C Thanks be to God!

+ + +

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*Arise! The St. Stephen Service
Music by Tom Buchanan Lyrics by Ron Hartung*



**This week's altar flowers are dedicated to the glory of God
And in celebration of Gladys Kane's 91st birthday!
From Cheryl and Steve**

Calendar for January 26 – February 2

Feb.	2	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
			11:30 am	Congregational meeting
	9	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

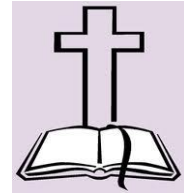
Next Sunday's Readings, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany:

[Isaiah 6:1-8 \[9-13\]](#)

[Psalms 138](#)

[1 Corinthians 15:1-11](#)

[Luke 5:1-11](#)



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

Serving	February 2	February 9
Assisting Minister	Colleen Holdcraft	Kirsten Ebbesen
Cup Minister	Audrey Post	Susan Warren
Cantor	Pr. Tom	Pr. Tom
Lector	Erik Robinson	Stephanie Leitch
Acolyte	Ceilia Greeley or Graham Reece or Bastian Stover	
Tech Team	Caroline Collins Sylvia Smith	Mark Greeley Colin Hackley
Ushers	Bob Eshleman Lawana Lamb-Daniels	
Altar Guild	Linda Eshleman Barbara Sullivan	Beth Alexander
Counters	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer	Janet Barber Susan Warren

PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: Margarete Deckert (mother of Caroline Collins), recovering from illness; Donna Dickson Miller (friend of Audrey Post), facing health challenges; Wayne McCully (friend of Audrey Post), undergoing dialysis for kidney failure; 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 O'Donnell); 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).