

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



September 13, 2026

10 a.m.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

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

Rita Ford, 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.

“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.

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.

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

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

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 pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

C Amen.

P Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

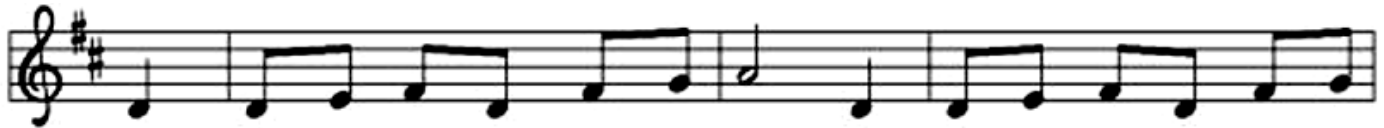
Silence for reflection.

P Compassionate God,

C we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

P Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

C Amen.



1 All crea-tures, wor-ship God most high! Sound ev-'ry voice in earth and
 2 Sing, broth-er wind; with clouds and rain you grow the gifts of fruit and
 3 Sing, broth-er fire, so mirth-ful, strong; drive far the shad-ows, join the
 4 All who for love of God for-give, all who in pain or sor-row



sky: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Sing, broth-er sun, in splen-dor
 grain: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Dear sis-ter wa-ter, use-ful,
 throng: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Dear moth-er earth, so rich in
 grieve: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Christ bears your bur-dens and your



bright; sing, sis-ter moon and stars of night:
 clear, make mu-sic for your Lord to hear: Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-
 care, praise God in col-ors bright and rare:
 fears; still make your song a-mid the tears:



lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

5 And you, most gentle sister death,
 waiting to hush our final breath:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
 fair is the night that leads us home.
 Alleluia.

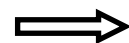
6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
 and worship God with humble heart:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
 Alleluia.

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



Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
 al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of
 God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,
 glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
 al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was
 slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.
 Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

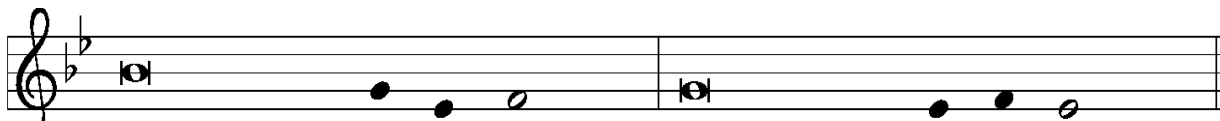
After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13 *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader ¹ Bless the Lord, | O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's | holy name.

C ² Bless the Lord, | O my soul,
and forget not | all God's benefits—

L ³ who forgives | all your sins
and heals all | your diseases;

C ⁴ who redeems your life | from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy;

L ⁵ who satisfies your desires | with good things
so that your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.

C ⁶ O Lord, you provide | vindication
and justice for all who | are oppressed.

L ⁷ You made known your | ways to Moses
and your works to the chil- | dren of Israel.

C ⁸ Lord, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;

L ⁹ you will not al- | ways accuse us,
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.

C ¹⁰ You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,
nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.

L ¹¹ For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.

C ¹² As far as the east is | from the west,
so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.

L ¹³ As a father has compassion | for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O Lord.

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

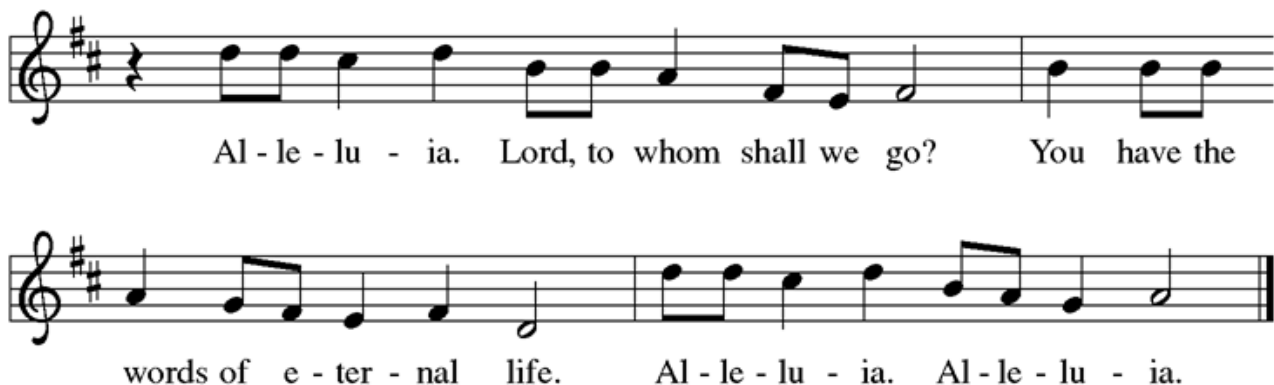
⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

P The holy gospel according to Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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.*

Quiet reflection.

The assembly stands.



1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray;
 2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for - giv - ing heart
 3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:
 4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls and bid re - sent - ment cease;



but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say.
 that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?
 how tri - fling oth - ers' debts to us; how great our debt to you!
 then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905–1987, alt.

Music: DETROIT, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

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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

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer prayers, confident that God hears us.

(A brief silence)

Move your church throughout the world away from vengeance and judgmentalism. Lead us to embody forgiveness that you've taught us through Jesus Christ. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. We pray for communities facing hunger and shelter challenges from climate change. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for the misuse of power entrusted to them. Hear our prayers for stability and peace in Ukraine, Sudan, and the Middle East. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. We pray for advocates who promote non-violent protest. St. Stephen, who else would welcome our prayers today? (Pause for people to speak petitions.) Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. We pray for our ushers and all who welcome others for your glory and praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A few at a time, each week, we pray for people within the St. Stephen worship community. We pray today for Gladys Kane, Patrick Kennell and Kirsten Ebbesen, Val Kibler, and for their extended families. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Grant the prayers we have offered, the ones we have forgotten to ask, and for whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

AMEN!

The peace of Christ be with you, always!

And also with you!

Let us share the peace of God with one another.



+ MEAL +

Stephen Saint
@Stephen-Saint



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Stephen. Code
5469.

OFFERING

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

ANTHEM *“Sing Out, Earth and Skies” -Haugen*

Come, O God of all the earth: Come to us, O Righteous One;
Come, and bring our love to birth; In the glory of your Son.

(refrain)

Sing out, earth and skies! Sing of the God who loves you!
Raise your joyful cries! Dance to the life around you!

Come, O God of wind and flame: Fill the earth with righteousness;
Teach us all to sing your name: May our lives your love confess. (refrain)

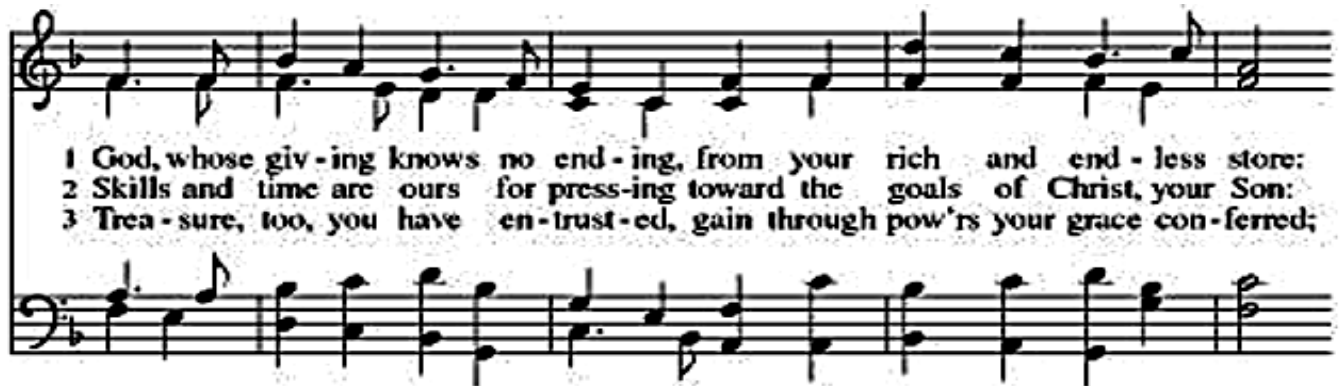
Come, O God of flashing light: Twinkling star and burning sun;
God of day and God of night: In your light we all are one. (refrain)

Come, O God of snow and rain: Shower down upon the earth;
Come, O God of joy and pain: God of sorrow, God of mirth. (refrain)

Come, O Justice, Come, O Peace: Come and shape our hearts anew;
Come and make oppression cease: Bring us all to life in you. (refrain)

OFFERING HYMN ELW 678 *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending* (vs.1-2)

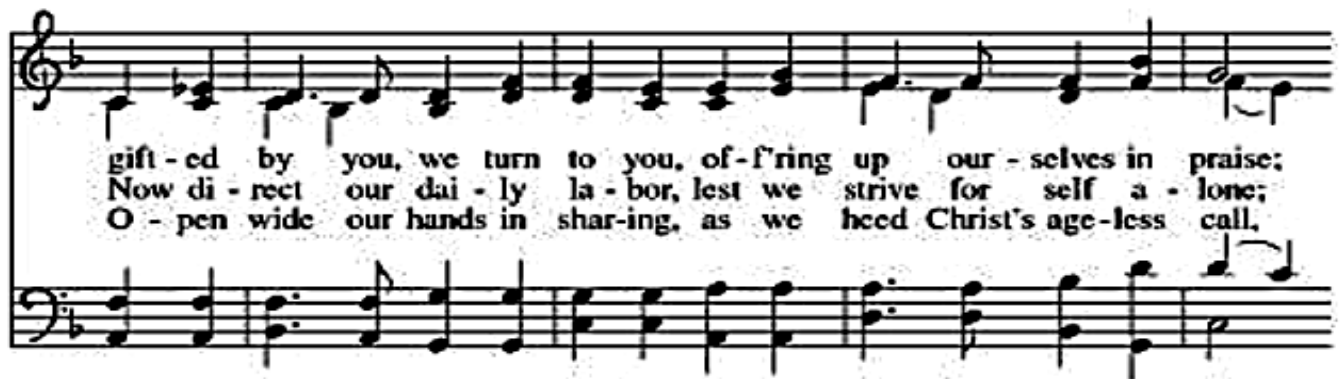
The assembly stands to sing the offering hymn as the collection and the gifts are brought forward.



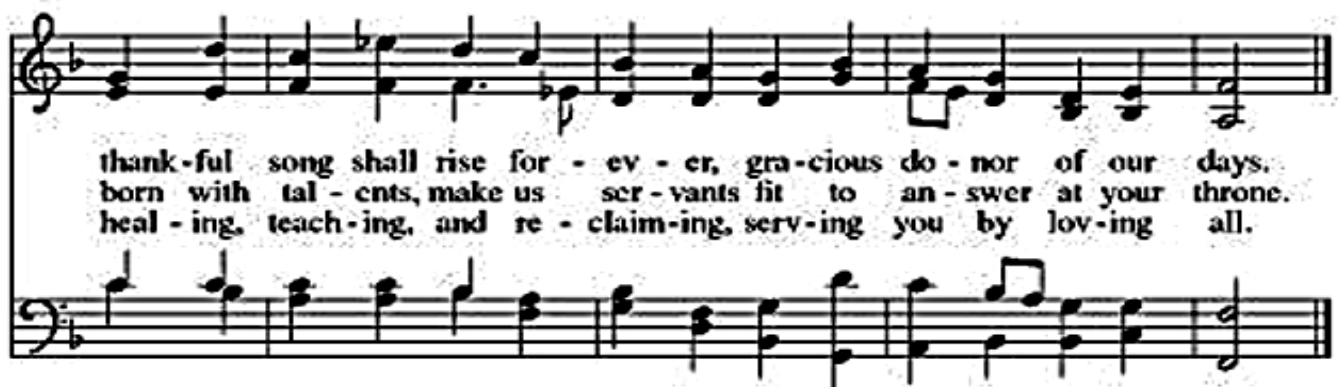
1 God, whose giv - ing knows no end - ing, from your rich and end - less store:
2 Skills and time are ours for press - ing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
3 Trea - sure, too, you have en - trust - ed, gain through pow'rs your grace con - ferred;



na - ture's won - der, Je - sus' wis - dom, cost - ly cross, grave's shat - tered door,
all at peace in health and free - dom, rac - es joined, the church made one.
ours to use for home and kin - dred, and to spread the gos - pel word.



gift - ed by you, we turn to you, of - f'ring up our - selves in praise;
Now di - rect our dai - ly la - bor, lest we strive for self a - lone;
O - pen wide our hands in shar - ing, as we heed Christ's age - less call,



thank - ful song shall rise for - ev - er, gra - cious do - nor of our days.
born with tal - ents, make us ser - vants fit to an - swer at your throne.
heal - ing, teach - ing, and re - claim - ing, serv - ing you by lov - ing all.

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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 musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san-na. 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 - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

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 Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

The assembly is seated.

LAMB OF GOD



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 the common cup (wine) and a pouring cup (wine or grape juice). If you prefer to receive the wine or juice in an individual glass, 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 HYMNS

ELW 482 *I Come with Joy*

ELW 491 *Come, Let Us Eat*

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

+ SENDING +

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

P The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus.

C Amen.

The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.

C Amen.

The God of grace ✠ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

SENDING HYMN **ELW 544** *Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing*



DISMISSAL

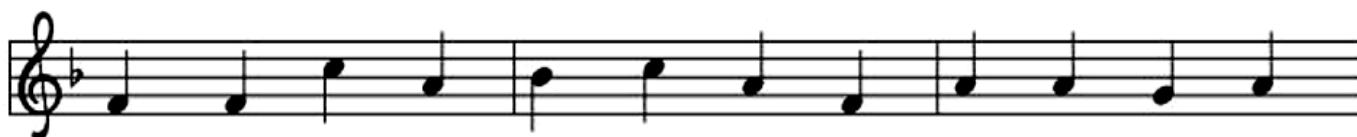
A We believe out loud that God's mission for us is:

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 out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

C **Thanks be to God!**

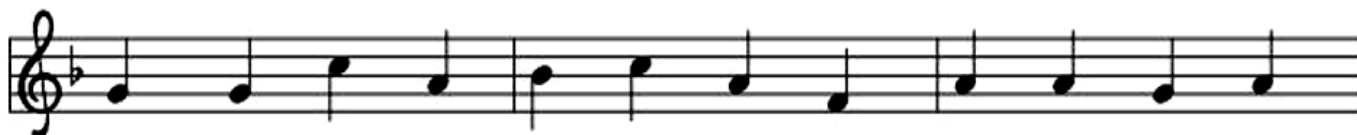
+ + +



1 Praise the Lord, rise up re - joic - ing, wor - ship, thanks, de -
 2 Scat - tered flock, one shep - herd shar - ing, lost and lone - ly,
 3 Sins for - giv - en, wrongs for - giv - ing, we go forth a -



vo - tion voic - ing: glo - ry be to God on high!
 one voice hear - ing, ears at - ten - tive to your word;
 lert and liv - ing in your Spir - it, strong and free.



Christ, your cross and pas - sion shar - ing, by this eu - cha -
 by your blood new life re - ceiv - ing, in your bod - y,
 Part - ners in your new cre - a - tion, seek - ing peace in



rist de - clar - ing yours the fi - nal vic - to - ry.
 firm be - liev - ing, we are yours, and you the Lord.
 ev - 'ry na - tion, may we faith - ful fol - l'wers be.

Text: Howard C. A. Gaunt, 1902–1983, alt.

Music: ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN, Johann Löhner, 1645–1705, adapt.

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Today's altar flowers are dedicated
to the Glory of God

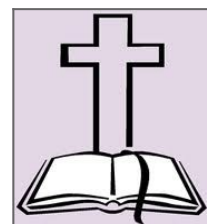
Next Sunday's Readings, Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost:

[Jonah 3:10—4:11](#)

[Psalms 145:1-8](#)

[Philippians 1:21-30](#)

[Matthew 20:1-16](#)



SERVING EVERY SUNDAY

Pastor Tom, presiding and preaching

Katharine Gossman, piano

Karl Barton, flute

Denise Bookwalter, announcements

Choir: Karl Barton, Melissa Barton, Mark Canning, Austin Cowan, Kirsten Ebbesen, Rita Ford, Alison Haney, Rudy Hehn, Susan Hehn, Colleen Holdcraft, Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Olivia James, Lawana Lamb-Daniels, Graham Reece, Jen Reece, Simone Schuster, Sylvia Smith, Dave Suhrweir, Cassandra White.

SERVING TODAY AND ONE WEEK FROM TODAY

Serving	Sept. 13	Sept. 20
Assisting Minister	Rob Schiffer	Colleen Holdcraft
Cup Minister	Kirsten Ebbesen	Jen Dritt
Cantor	Pastor Tom	Simone Schuster
Lector	Celia/Mark Greeley	Astrid Van der Mark
Acolyte		
Tech Team	Jacob Nallapu Mark Greeley	Caroline Collins Emery Oates
Ushers	Erik Robinson Colin Hackley	Bob Eshleman Colin Hackley
Altar Guild	Linda Eshleman Barbara Sullivan	Lawana Lamb-Daniels Sandy Lamb-Daniels
Counters	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy	Janet Barber Susan Warren

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

In treatment for cancer: Matthew Canning (son of Sue and Mark Canning); Kevin Vislocky (friend of Bob and Linda Eshleman); Scott Simmons (son of Sharon Simmons); Gordon Fleischer; Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; David McManus (friend of Audrey Post); Shannon Miller (friend of Barb O'Donnell).

Health and protection: For Frank "Rame" Meyers, in long-term care. 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, that they may be safe and secure without unnecessary deportations.

For prisoners: All those on Death Row.

Other concerns: Joann Stomberg (friend of Margaret Bowers), after the death of her husband; Jayden Schiffer (grandson of Rob and Donna Schiffer), experiencing unresolved and serious digestive problems; Pr. Trixie Richter (friend of Cheryl), on the unexpected death of her husband, Adrian; St. Philip Lutheran Church, Mt. Dora, as they grieve their pastor's loss; Cheryl Stuart and family, following the death of her friend Linda Bobbit; Charlie Cogswell, son of Judee Light, for continued healing; Haley Larsen (daughter of Rob Schiffer's cousin), experiencing serious gastrointestinal problems; Sharon Simmons and family, following the death of her sister, Sue Berent; Kevin Robinson (son of Erik Robinson), in need of encouragement; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Walt Steinvorth (friend of Rob Schiffer), suffering from pericarditis and vestibular neuritis and learning to cope with dizziness and severe equilibrium problems; Karen Elizabeth Olson.

Church concerns: St. Stephen Church Council; the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council; all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Bishops Pedro Suarez and Yehiel Curry; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA advocacy offices and ministry.

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.

Calendar for September 13 - 20

Sep.	13	Sun.	9:00 am	Bible study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
	16	Wed.	6:00 pm	Confirmation for adults
			7:00 pm	Choir rehearsal
	17	Thurs.	10:00 am	Bible study
	20	Sun.	9:00 am	Bible study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
			11:30 am	Church council meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWER CHART FOR 2026: 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 2026 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>. 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/newsletters>

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