

# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

## BAPTISM OF OUR LORD SUNDAY



JANUARY 12, 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

*Today's festival rejoices in God's blessings. We recall and celebrate our adoption as God's children, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promised company of almighty God when we "pass through the waters . . . the rivers . . . fire." On this day the heavens open again for this assembly, and we receive the gift of God's Beloved, Jesus, in bread and wine.*

## 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, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

**C** Amen.

**P** Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

*Silence for reflection.*

**P** Merciful God,

**C** you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways.

**P** God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In ✠ Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

**C** Amen.

*The assembly is seated.*

GATHERING HYMN

310

*Songs of Thankfulness and Praise*

1 Songs of thank-ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to thee we raise;  
2 Man - i - fest at Jor - dan's stream, proph-et, priest, and king su - preme;  
3 Man - i - fest in mak - ing whole weak-ened bod - y, faint-ing soul;  
4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord, pres - ent in thy ho - ly word;

man - i - fest - ed by the star to the sa - ges from a - far,  
and at Ca - na wed - ding guest in thy God-head man - i - fest;  
man - i - fest in val - iant fight, quell-ing all the dev - il's might;  
grace to im - i - tate thee now and be pure, as pure art thou;

branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem in thy birth at Beth - le - hem;  
man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, chang-ing wa - ter in - to wine;  
man - i - fest in gra - cious will, ev - er bring-ing good from ill;  
that we might be - come like thee at thy great e - piph - a - ny,

an - thems be to thee ad-dressed,  
an - thems be to thee ad-dressed, God in flesh made man - i - fest.  
an - thems be to thee ad-dressed,  
and may praise thee, ev - er blest,

Text: Christopher Wren, 1607–1685, alt.  
Music: SAILBURG, Jakob Hintze, 1622–1702; arr. Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685–1750

## 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 410 *All Glory to God on High (verse 1)*

The musical score is written in a single system with five staves. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with notes and rests corresponding to the lyrics. The lyrics are arranged in four lines, with the first line of lyrics starting under the first staff and the last line of lyrics starting under the fifth staff. The lyrics are: 1 All glo - ry be to God on high, who has the world be - 2 O Fa - ther, for your lord - ship true we give you praise and 3 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's 4 O Ho - ly Spir - it, per - fect gift, who brings us con - so - friend - ed; to us no harm shall now come nigh, the hon - or; we wor - ship you; we trust in you; we au - thor, re - deem - er of your wan - d'ring ones, and la - tion; to men and wom - en saved by Christ as - strife at last is end - ed. God shows good-will to give you thanks for - ev - er. Your will is per - fect, source of all true plea - sure; O Lamb of God, O sure your in - spi - ra - tion. Through sick - ness, need, and one and all, and peace when trou - bled sin - ners call. Thank and your might re - lent - less - ly con - firms the right; your Lord di - vine, con - form our lives to your de - sign, and bit - ter death, grant us your warm, life - giv - ing breath; our God for grace and mer - cy! lord - ship is our bless - ing. on us all have mer - cy. lives are in your keep - ing. A - men.

Text: Nikolaus Decius, 1485–1550; tr. composite  
Music: ALLEIN GOTT IN DER HÖH, plainsong; adapt. Nikolaus Decius  
Text st. 1 © 2006 Augsburg Fortress; sts. 2–4 © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY



**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, 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



### FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:1-7

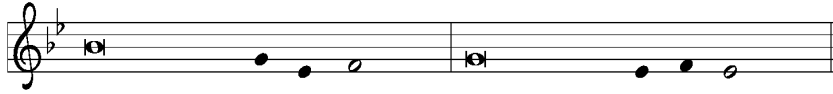
*Near the end of Israel's exile in Babylon, God promises to bring the people home. They need no longer be afraid, because the one who formed, created, and called them by name now redeems them from all their enemies. God declares them precious and honored, and God loves them.*

<sup>1</sup> But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. <sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. <sup>3</sup> For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you. <sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. <sup>5</sup> Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; <sup>6</sup> I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth— <sup>7</sup> everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**PSALM: Psalm 29**    *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader <sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the <sup>1</sup> Lord, you gods,  
ascribe to the Lord glo- <sup>1</sup> ry and strength.

**C** <sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the Lord the glory <sup>1</sup> due God's name;  
worship the Lord in the beau- <sup>1</sup> ty of holiness.

L <sup>3</sup> The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of <sup>1</sup> glory thunders;  
the Lord is upon the <sup>1</sup> mighty waters.

**C** <sup>4</sup> The voice of the Lord is a pow- <sup>1</sup> erful voice;  
the voice of the Lord is a <sup>1</sup> voice of splendor.

L <sup>5</sup> The voice of the Lord breaks the <sup>1</sup> cedar trees;  
the Lord breaks the ce- <sup>1</sup> dars of Lebanon;

**C** <sup>6</sup> the Lord makes Lebanon skip <sup>1</sup> like a calf,  
and Mount Hermon like a <sup>1</sup> young wild ox.

L <sup>7</sup> The voice <sup>1</sup> of the Lord  
bursts forth in <sup>1</sup> lightning flashes.

**C** <sup>8</sup> The voice of the Lord <sup>1</sup> shakes the wilderness;  
the Lord shakes the wilder- <sup>1</sup> ness of Kadesh.

L <sup>9</sup> The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the <sup>1</sup> forests bare.  
And in the temple of the Lord all are <sup>1</sup> crying, "Glory!"

**C** <sup>10</sup> The Lord sits enthroned a- <sup>1</sup> bove the flood;  
the Lord sits enthroned as king for- <sup>1</sup> evermore.

L <sup>11</sup> O Lord, give strength <sup>1</sup> to your people;  
give them, O Lord, the bless- <sup>1</sup> ings of peace.

*Spoken after the psalm is sung:*

**Amen.**

## SECOND READING: Acts 8:14-17

*Peter and John are sent to support the new Christians in Samaria, a group that was recently baptized after hearing the good news of Christ through the preaching of Philip. Here the Samaritans receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands.*

<sup>14</sup>Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. <sup>15</sup>The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit <sup>16</sup>(for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). <sup>17</sup>Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

*The assembly stands.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



## GOSPEL: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

*The reading opens with questions about the identity of the Messiah. John the Baptist insists that he is not the Messiah; instead he points ahead to one who is coming. And whether the voice of God was heard by all or only by Jesus, God settles the matter: Jesus is God's beloved Son.*

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

C Glory to you, O Lord.



<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

P        The gospel of the Lord.

C        Praise to you, O Christ.

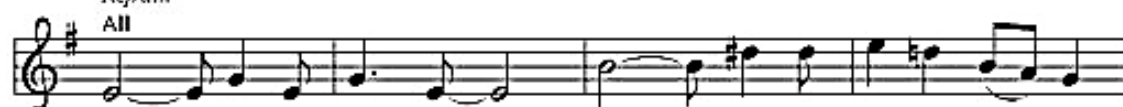
*The assembly is seated.*

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


*The assembly stands.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**     459     *Wade in the Water*

*Refrain*  
All




Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,




wade in the wa - ter, God's a-goin'-a trou-ble the wa - ter.

Leader All



1 See that host all dressed in white,  
2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a-goin'-a trou-ble the  
3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?  
4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,

Leader



wa - ter. the lead - er looks like the Is - rael - ite.  
looks like the band that . . Mo - ses led.  
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com - ing on me.  
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream.

All *Refrain*



God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Text: African American spiritual  
Music: WADE IN THE WATER, African American spiritual

## **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.*

## OFFERING HYMN

*Let the Vineyards be Fruitful Lord*

*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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. 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 five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: 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.

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.

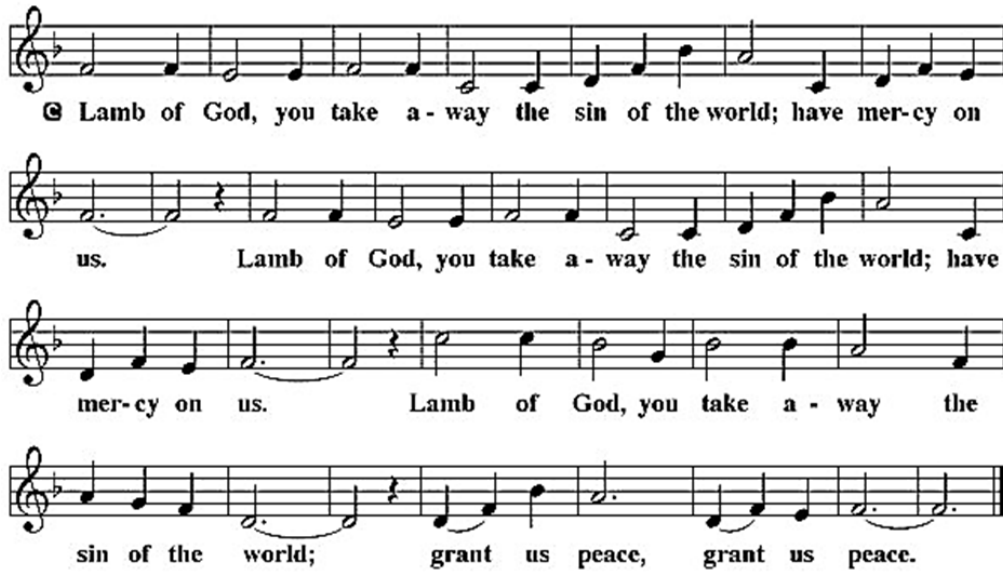
C        **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will  
            be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our  
            sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and  
            deliver us from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

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

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

*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 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 HYMNS	445	<i>Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters</i>
	407	<i>O Living Breath of God</i>

*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**

**453** *Baptized and Set Free*





1 We are peo - ple cre - at - ed, cho - sen by God.  
 2 We are fed and we're nour - ished, filled and re - freshed.  
 3 We are nour - ished by wa - ter, all liv - ing things,  
 4 Now with praise and thanks - giv - ing, we join the song.

Then we're washed, ev - er gent - ly, in mer - cy and love.  
 Then our hun - ger re - turns and a - gain we are blessed.  
 and by life that the Spir - it a - bun - dant - ly brings.  
 All are wel - come! We gath - er to sing loud and strong.

Sin has pow - er no more. Je - sus o - pened the door  
 For what - ev - er the need, God is great - er in - deed:  
 As we jour - ney toward home, may your pres - ence be known:  
 Not en - slaved, but set free! From now on, all will be

to a foun - tain bring - ing heal - ing, and whole - ness and more.  
 end - less o - cean, al - ways deep - er than all of our need.  
 pre - cious riv - er, ev - er - flow - ing, now car - ry us home.  
 one in Je - sus, one in wa - ter, bap - tized and set free!

Text: Cathy Skogen-Soldner, b. 1956  
 Music: BAPTIZED AND SET FREE, Cathy Skogen-Soldner  
 Text and music © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

## 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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Sundays and Seasons v.20220805.1416

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Patricia Handschy dedicates today's altar flowers  
in honor of those seeking baptism.

**Calendar for January 12 - 19**

Jan.	12	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			10 am	Worship, Baptism of Our Lord Sunday
	19	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, Second Sunday after Epiphany

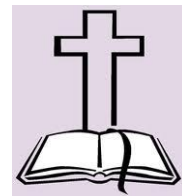
**Next Sunday's Readings, Second Sunday after Epiphany**

[Isaiah 62:1-5](#)

[Psalms 36:5-10](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:1-11](#)

[John 2:1-11](#)



**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	January 12	January 19
Assisting Minister	Kirsten Ebbesen	Jennifer Dritt
Cup Minister	Susan Warren	Colleen Holdcraft
Cantor	Pastor Tom	Rita Ford
Lector	Astrid van der mark	Judi Duffy
Acolyte	Ceilia Greeley or Graham Reece or Bastian Stover	
Tech Team	Mark Greeley Colin Hackley	Colleen Holdcraft Jonas Holdcraft
Ushers	Bob Eshleman Patrick Kennell	Bob Eshleman Patrick Kennell
Altar Guild	Lawana Lamb-Daniels Sandy Lamb-Daniels	
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 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>. 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>.