

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT



APRIL 06, 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

Our God makes all things new. In the first reading God promises it. In the gospel Mary anticipates it, anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume in preparation for the day of his burial. In the second reading Paul recalls his transformation from the persecutor Saul into an apostle. In baptism, God's new person (you!) rises daily from the deadly mire of trespasses and sins.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

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

C Amen.

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

Silence for reflection.

P Compassionate One,

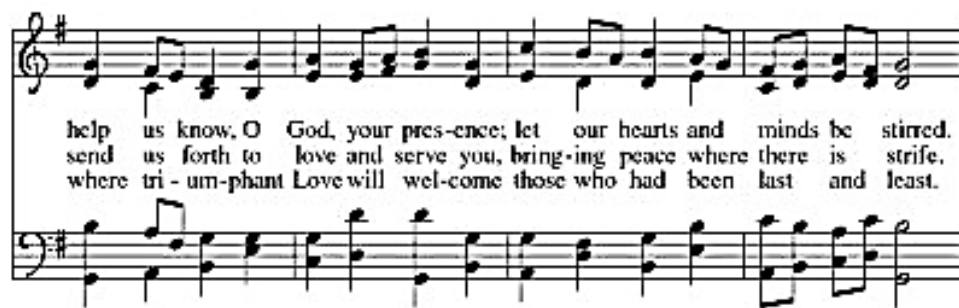
C you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though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

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

C Amen.



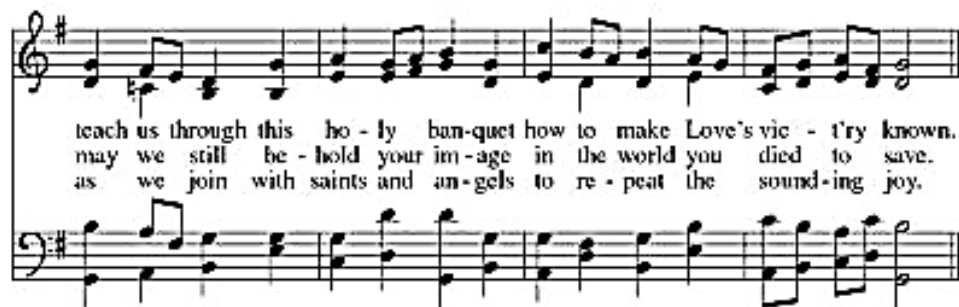
1 As we gath-er at your ta-ble, as we lis-ten to your word,
 2 Turn our wor-ship in-to wit-ness in the sac-ra-ment of life;
 3 Gra-cious Spir-it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
 send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife,
 where tri-um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa-cred sto-ry till we claim it as our own;
 Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for-give as you for-gave;
 There no more will en-vy blind us nor will pride our peace de-stroy,



teach us through this ho-ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic-t'ry known.
 may we still be-hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
 as we join with saints and an-gels to re-peat the sound-ing joy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

MUSIC: IN BABILONE, *Quod est Novum Hoffmann Boemundus ex Contradictis*, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen, 1855-1932

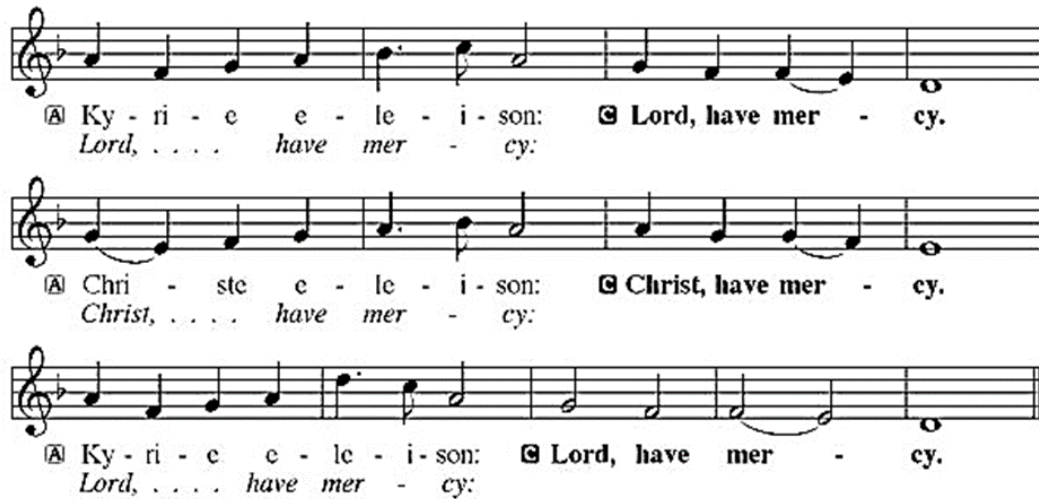
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GREETING

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

C And also with you.

KYRIE



Three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes, with English in bold and Latin in regular font.

Staff 1: **A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **G** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

Staff 2: **A** Chri - ste e - le - i - son: **G** Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:

Staff 3: **A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **G** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:16-21

The prophet declares that long ago, God performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage through the waters of the sea. Now, God is about to do a new thing, bringing the exiles out of Babylon and through the wilderness in a new Exodus.

¹⁶ Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, ¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: ¹⁸ Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. ¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ²⁰ The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, ²¹ the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 126 *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader ¹ When the Lord restored the for- | tunes of Zion,
then were we like | those who dream.

C ² **Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with | shouts of joy.**

Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great | things for them."

L ³The Lord has done great ¹ things for us,
 and we are ¹ glad indeed.

C ⁴**Restore our for- ¹ tunes, O Lord,**
 like the watercourses ¹ of the Negeb.

L ⁵Those who ¹ sowed with tears
 will reap with ¹ songs of joy.

C ⁶**Those who go out weeping, carry- ¹ ing the seed,**
 will come again with joy, shoulder- ¹ ing their sheaves

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:4b-14

Writing to Christians in Philippi, Paul admits that his heritage and reputation could give him more reason than most people to place confidence in his spiritual pedigree. But the overwhelming grace of God in Jesus calls Paul to a new set of values.

[Paul writes:] ^{4b} If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more:

⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and

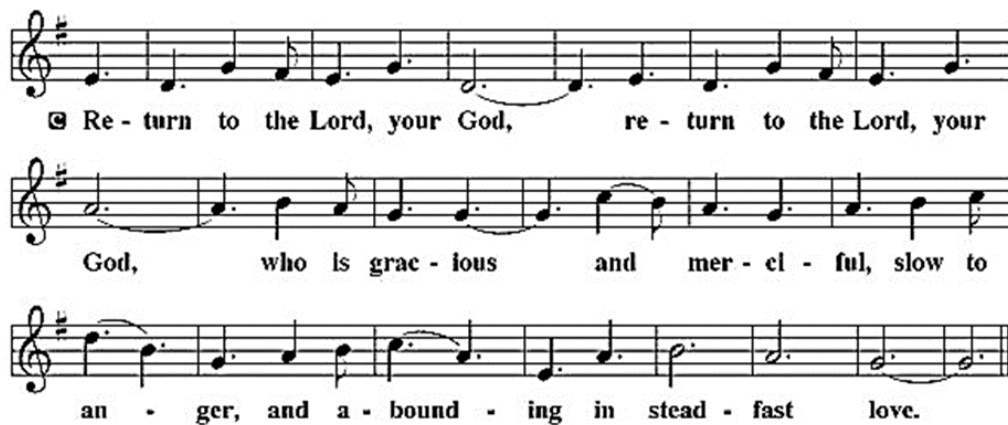
straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: John 12:1-8

Judas willfully misinterprets as waste Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume. Jesus recognizes that her lavish gift is both an expression of love and an anticipation of his burial.

P The holy gospel according to John the twelfth chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 2 There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. 3 Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" 6 (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) 7 Jesus

said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial.
8 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

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 612 *Healer of Our Every Ill*

Refrain



Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to - mor - row,



give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.



1 You who know our fears and sad - ness, grace us with your
2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing how your grace is
3 Give us strength to love each oth - er, ev - 'ry sis - ter,
4 You who know each thought and feel - ing, teach us all your



Refrain

peace and glad-ness; Spir-it of all com-fort, fill our hearts.
still un - fold - ing, give us all your vi - sion, God of love.
ev - 'ry broth - er; Spir-it of all kind-ness, be our guide.
way of heal - ing; Spir-it of com-pas - sion, fill each heart.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: HEALER OF OUR EVERY ILL, Marty Haugen

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INTRODUCTION

P Our Lord Jesus healed many as a sign of the reign of God come near and sent the disciples to continue this work of healing - with prayer, the laying on of hands, and anointing. In the name of Christ, the great healer and reconciler of the world, we now entrust to God all who are in need of healing.

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND ANOINTING WITH OIL

P Siblings in Christ, I invite you to come and receive a sign of healing and wholeness in the name of the triune God.

Those who wish to receive a laying on of hands (and anointing) may kneel or stand at the altar rail.

P Receive this oil as a sign of forgiveness and healing in Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

HYMNS **614** *There Is a Balm in Gilead*

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands, and the presiding minister continues.

P Let us pray.

Merciful Lord God, constant source of all healing, we give you thanks for all your gifts of strength and life, and above all we thank you for the gift of your Son, through whom we have health and salvation. As we wait for that day when there will be no more pain, help us by your Holy Spirit to be assured of your power in our lives and to trust in your eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

A Let us confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: God, in your mercy,

Congregational response: receive our prayer.

PEACE

A The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

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

The assembly is seated.



+ MEAL +

OFFERING

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

ANTHEM

"Shepherd Me, O God" - Haugen

(Refrain)

Shepherd me, O God,
beyond my wants,
beyond my fears,
from death into life.

God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want,
I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love,
I walk by the quiet waters of peace. (refrain)

Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul,
you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth,
my spirit shall sing the music of your name. (refrain)

Though I should wander the valley of death,
I fear no evil, for you are at my side,
your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope. (refrain)

You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred,
crowning me with love beyond my power to hold. (refrain)

Surely your kindness and mercy follow me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore. (refrain)

OFFERING HYMN

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



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

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks.

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

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

C **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

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

COMMUNION HYMNS

491 *Come, Let Us Eat*

637 *Holy God, Holy and Glorious*

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

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

C Amen.

+ SENDING +

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

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

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

1 Let us en-ter in to the song of thanks - giv - ing and free - dom.
 2 Let us en-ter in to the place where our God has pre - ced - ed.
 3 Let us en-ter in to the heart of a world that is bro - ken.

Let us en-ter in to the long line of peo - ple in need.
 Let us en-ter in to the face of the fear and the pain.
 Let us en-ter in to the start of a hope we can share.

Let us en-ter in to the strong mind that God is still liv - ing.
 Let us en-ter in to the grace of the love when it's need - ed.
 Let us en-ter in to the part where we call one an - oth - er

Heal - ing, for - giv - ing— Let us en - ter in.
 Death is de - feat - ed! Let us en - ter in.
 sis - ter and broth - er. Let us en - ter in.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943

Music: LET US ENTER IN, Ray Makeever

Text and music © 1983 Ray Makeever, admin. 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. Care for others as God cares for you.
- C Thanks be to God!

Calendar for April 6 – April 13

April	6	Sun.	9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, Fifth in Lent
	9	Wed.	7 pm	Choir practice
13	Sun.		9 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10 am	Worship, Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday

Next Sunday's Readings, Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday:

[Isaiah 50:4-9a](#)

[Psalms 31:9-16](#)

[Philippians 2:5-11](#)

[Luke 22:14—23:56](#)



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	April 6	April 13
Assisting Minister	Beth Alexander	Colleen Holdcraft
Cup Minister	Colleen Holdcraft	Kirsten Ebbesen
Cantor	Simone Schuster	
Lector	Elliot Reece	Mark Bertolani
Acolyte	Celia Greeley or Graham Reece or Bastian Stover	
Tech Team	Sandy Lamb-Daniels Audrey Post	Mark Greeley Colin Hackley
Ushers	Colin Hackley Lawana Lamb-Daniels	
Altar Guild	Rita Ford Anita Sawh	Lawana Lamb -Daniels Sandy Lamb - Daniels
Counters	Janet Barber Kirsten Ebbesen	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy

PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: Healing for Sue Canning, post-surgery; Family of Donna Schiffer as they grieve the passing of Amy Blount (Donna's sister); Margarete Deckert (mother of Caroline Collins), ongoing prayers for strength as she is recovering from illness; Donna Dickson Miller (friend of Audrey Post), facing health challenges; Gladys Kane for continued healing.

Prayer of thanks: Rob and Donna Schiffer give prayers of thanks to their new grandson, Caleb Gregory Schiffer.

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: Ann Hingst, 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; 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 from 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 Gaza and the Middle East.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTER LILIES: We'll be using Easter lilies to adorn the chancel area for Easter Sunday. If you would like to dedicate one or more, complete the form in the narthex and drop in the offering plate. You can also email Lori the dedication. The cost is \$10 each and the deadline is April 13.

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>.

HOLY WEEK

Sunday, April 13:	10 a.m. - Worship: Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 17:	7 p.m. - Worship: Maundy Thursday with Healing service
Friday, April 18:	7 p.m. - Worship: Good Friday
Sunday, April 20:	9 a.m. - Easter Breakfast Potluck, 10 a.m. - Worship: Easter Sunday