

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



September 20, 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

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

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.**

GATHERING HYMN ELW 765 *Lord of All Hopefulness*



1 Lord of all hope - ful - ness, Lord of all joy,
 2 Lord of all ea - ger - ness, Lord of all faith,
 3 Lord of all kind - li - ness, Lord of all grace,
 4 Lord of all gen - tle - ness, Lord of all calm,



whose trust, ev - er child - like, no cares could de - stroy:
 whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
 your hands swift to wel - come, your arms to em - brace:
 whose voice is con - tent - ment, whose pres - ence is balm:



be there at our wak - ing, and give us, we pray,
 be there at our la - bors, and give us, we pray,
 be there at our hom - ing, and give us, we pray,
 be there at our sleep - ing, and give us, we pray,



your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
 your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
 your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
 your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Text: Jan Struther, 1901–1953
 Music: SLANE, Irish traditional
 Text © Oxford University Press, 1931

GREETING

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

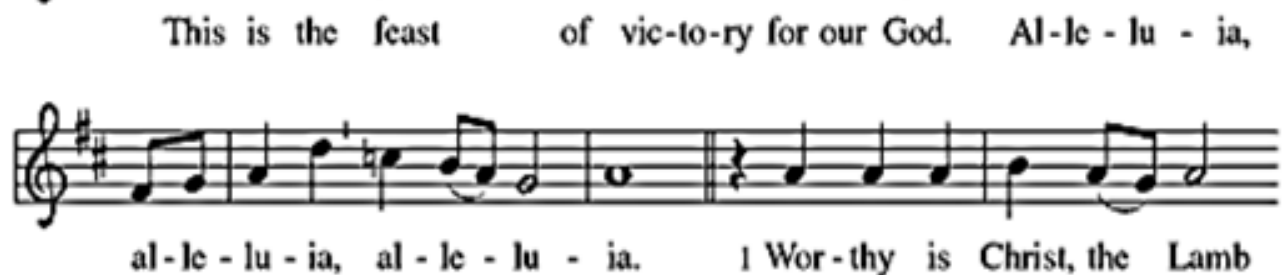
C And also with you.

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. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb

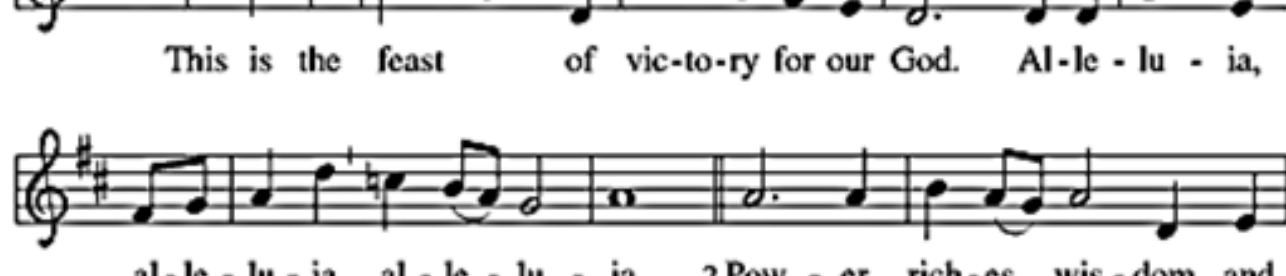


who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

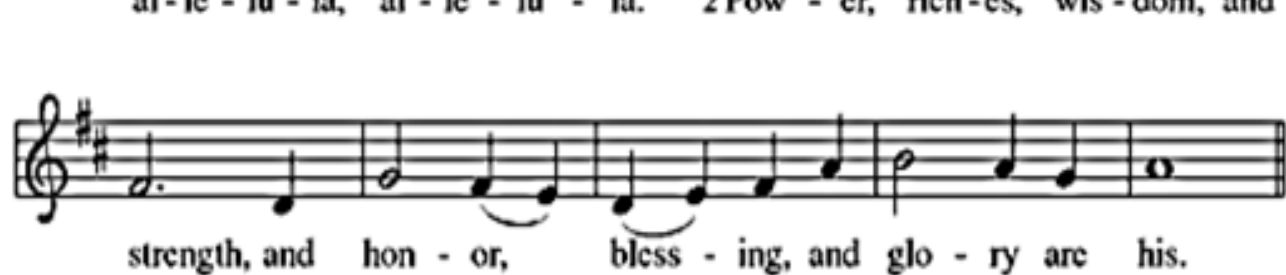
Refrain



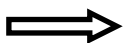
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich-es, wis - dom, and



strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.



PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.



CHILDREN'S TIME

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: Yon, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it. ^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

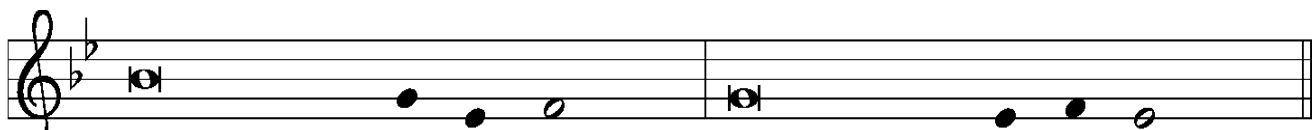
⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: **Psalm 145:1-8** *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader ¹ I will exalt you, my | God and king,
 and bless your name forev- | er and ever.

C ² **Every day | will I bless you**
 and praise your name forev- | er and ever.

L ³ Great is the Lord and greatly | to be praised!
 There is no end | to your greatness.

C ⁴ **One generation shall praise your works | to another**
 and shall de- | clare your power.

L ⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor | of your majesty
 and all your | marvelous works.

C ⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your | wondrous acts,**
 and I will re- | count your greatness.

L ⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of | your great goodness;
 they shall sing joyfully | of your righteousness.

C ⁸ **The Lord is gracious and full | of compassion,**
 slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

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

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

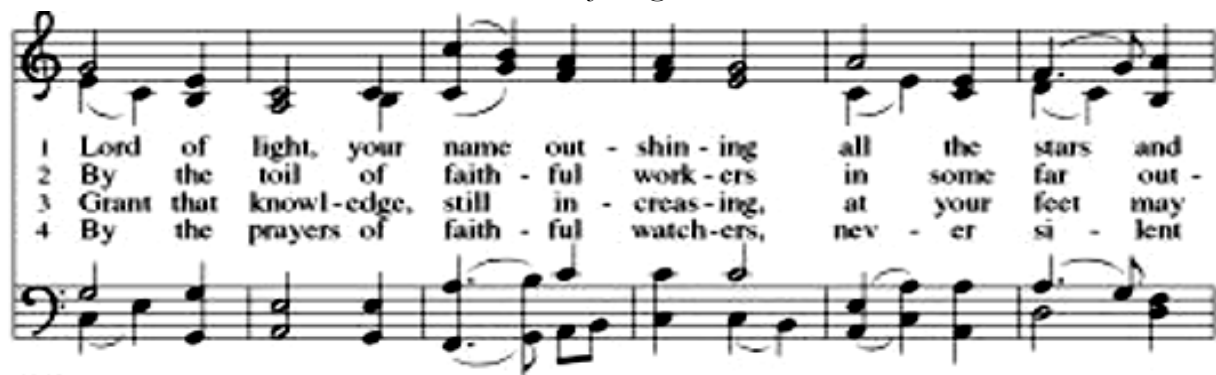
The assembly is seated.

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

Quiet reflection.

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 688 *Lord of Light*



1 Lord of light, your name out - shin - ing all the stars and
 2 By the toil of faith - ful work - ers in some far out -
 3 Grant that knowl - edge, still in - creas - ing, at your feet may
 4 By the prayers of faith - ful watch - ers, nev - er si - lent



suns of space, use our tal - ents in your king - dom
 ly - ing field, use by the cour - age where the ra - diance
 low - ly kneel; with your grace our tri - umphs hal - low,
 day or night; by the cross of Je - sus, bring - ing



as the ser - vants of your grace; use us to ful -
 of the cross is still re - vealed, by the vic - to -
 with your char - i - ty our zeal; lift the na - tions
 peace to all and heal - ing light; by the love that



fill your pur - pose in the gift of Christ your Son.
 ries of meek - ness, through re - proach and suf - f'ring won:
 from the shad - ows to the glad - ness of the sun:
 pass - es knowl - edge, mak - ing all your chil - dren one:

Refrain



Fa - ther, as in high - est heav - en, so on earth your will be done.

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)

Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your love and for our anger at your generosity. Nourish us with your grace and train us to see the way you see. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Curb our nation's addiction to fossil fuels. Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your goodness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Show corporations the benefits of equal pay and lead them to support social services. Fill places of employment with teamwork and meaningful work. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage any who cannot work or cannot work a full day with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love. Provide for the injured and the ill. We pray for humanitarian workers in Sudan and peace makers in Ukraine and the Middle East. St. Stephen, who else would welcome our prayers today?

(Pause for people to speak petitions.)

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen all in this congregation whose labor serves the needs of others in the community. We pray for the tech team and all who spread the gospel on social media. 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 Laura Kimel, Steve Kunst and Cheryl Stuart and for their extended families.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled. 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

"Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior" - Farrell

Refrain:

Praise to you, O Christ, our Savior,
Word of the Father, calling us to life;
Son of God who leads us to freedom:
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

You are the Word who calls us out of darkness;
you are the Word who leads us into light;
you are the Word who brings us through the desert:
glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ! (refrain)

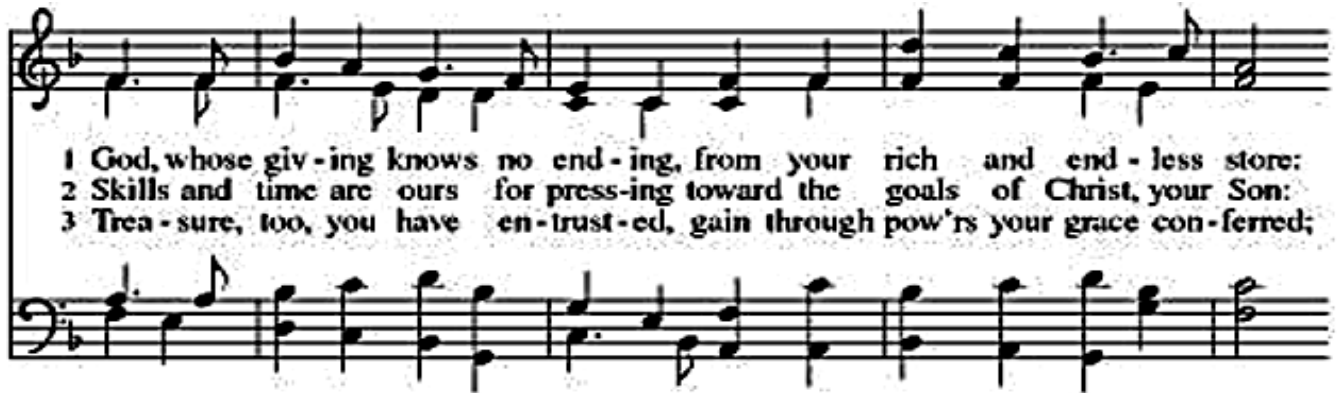
You are the one whom prophets hoped and longed for;
you are the one who speaks to us today;
you are the one who leads us to our future:
glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ! (refrain)

You are the Word who calls us to be servants;
you are the Word whose only law is love;
you are the Word – made flesh who lives among us:
glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ! (refrain)

You are the Word who binds us and unites us:
you are the Word who calls us to be one;
you are the Word who teaches us forgiveness:
glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ! (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.



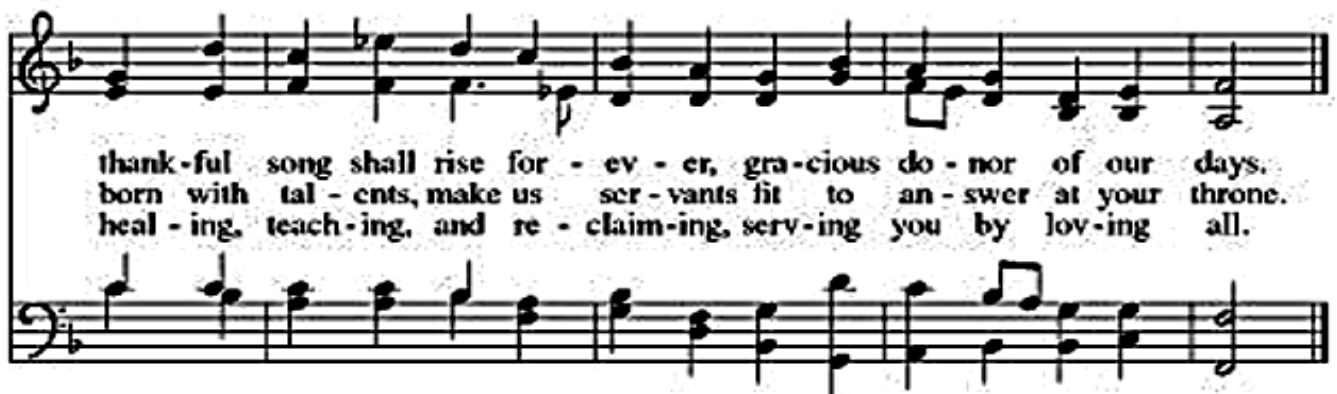
1 God, whose giv - ing knows no end - ing, from your rich and end - less store:
2 Skills and time are ours for press - ing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
3 Trea - sure, too, you have en - trust - ed, gain through pow'rs your grace con - ferred;



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

ACS 1084 God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me ➡

ELW 770 Give Me Jesus

The assembly stands.



- 1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
- 2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho - ly, great cloud of wit - ness -
- 3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash - ing of light - ning,
- 4 Walk - ing be-hind to hem my jour - ney, go - ing a - head to
- 5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up - hold me:
es en - fold; proph - ets, a - pos - tles, an - gels wit - ness:
strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan - et:
light my way, and from be - neath, a - bove, and all ways:
hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur - round me; O Christ, sur - round me.

Text: Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, b. 1967

Music: GREEN TYLER, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

Text and music © 2004 This Here Music, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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 845** *Voices Raised to You*



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 Voic - es raised to you we of - fer; tune them, God, for
 2 All cre - a - tion joins to praise you; earth and sky your
 3 Christ, the song of love in - car - nate, touch - ing earth with
 4 Spir - it, flam - ing through cre - a - tion, kin - dle faith with -
 5 How can an - y praise we of - fer mea - sure all the

songs of praise. Hearts and hands we bring in trib - ute
 works dis - play. Art and mu - sic, gifts you lend us,
 heav - en's grace, for your liv - ing, suf - f'ring, dy - ing,
 in each heart. Lift our voic - es high in cho - rus;
 thanks we owe? Take our hearts and hands and voic - es—

for your gifts through all our days. Al - le - lu - ia!
 we re - turn to you to - day. Al - le - lu - ia!
 for your ris - ing, hear our praise! Al - le - lu - ia!
 through our hands your love im - part. Al - le - lu - ia!
 gifts of love we can be - stow. Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!
 Al - le - lu - ia! God, cre - a - tor, source of life!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, re - deem - er, Lord of life!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Spir - it, help - er, breath of life!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!

Text: Herman G. Stuenkel Jr., b. 1923

Music: SONG OF PRAISE, Carolyn Jennings, b. 1936



Lawana and Sandy Lamb-Daniels
provided today's altar flowers to honor their
birthday-girl Goddaughter, Alexandria Lawana Warren.

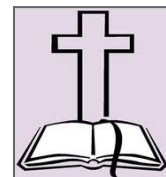
Next Sunday's Readings, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost:

[Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32](#)

[Psalms 25:1-9](#)

[Philippians 2:1-13](#)

[Matthew 21:23-32](#)



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. 20	Sept. 27
Assisting Minister	Colleen Holdcraft	Kirsten Ebbesen
Cup Minister	Jen Drit	Rita Ford
Cantor	Simone Schuster	Cassandra White
Lector	Andrew Stover	Jennifer Slusarz
Acolyte		
Tech Team	Caroline Collins Emery Oates	Sandy Lamb-Daniels Loraine Sunberg
Ushers	Bob Eshleman Colin Hackley	Erik Robinson Bob Eshleman
Altar Guild	Lawana Lamb-Daniels Sandy Lamb-Daniels	Beth Alexander
Counters	Patricia Handschy Margaret Bowers	Loraine Sundberg Marilyn Larson

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 ODonnell).

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 20 - 27

Sep. 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
23	Wed.	6:00 pm	Confirmation for adults
		7:00 pm	Choir rehearsal
24	Thurs.	10:00 am	Bible study
27	Sun.	9:00 am	Bible study
		9:30 am	Choir practice
		10:00 am	Worship, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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>

CHURCH COUNCIL	
President, Denise Bookwalter	
Treasurer, Jennifer Dritt	Buildings Coordinator, Sandy Lamb-Daniels
Worship & Music, Susan Hehn	Grounds Coordinator, Rob Schiffer
Care & Hospitality, Lawana Lamb-Daniels	Outreach, Sharon Simmons
Mutual Ministry, Sylvia Smith	Education & Discipleship, Emily Stover
Communications, Colleen Holdcraft	Youth, Graham Reece