

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT



SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024

10 A.M.

INTRODUCTION

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



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 writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus.

C **Amen.**

P Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection.

P Holy God,

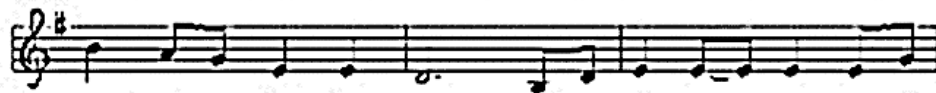
C **we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.**

P Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through ✝ Jesus Christ.

C **Amen.**



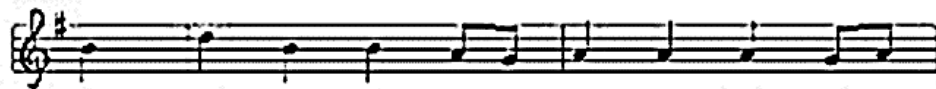
1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . . age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great . . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall . . . weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn: there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be best. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



Refrain
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

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



Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: Ⓞ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



Ⓐ Chri - ste e - le - i - son: Ⓞ Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:



Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: Ⓞ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only 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



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Exodus 20:1-17

After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.

1God spoke all these words:

2I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3you shall have no other gods before me.

4You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 6but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

8Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

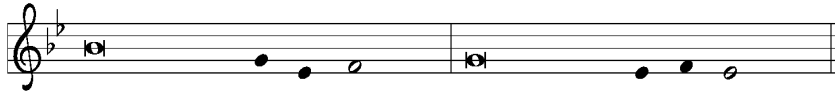
12Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. 13You shall not murder. 14You shall not commit adultery. 15You shall not steal. 16You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 17You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 19

We sing the psalm responsively.



Leader ¹The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its | maker's handiwork.

C ²**One day tells its tale | to another,
and one night imparts knowledge | to another.**

L ³Although they have no | words or language,
and their voices | are not heard,

C ⁴**their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends | of
the world,
where God has pitched a tent | for the sun.**

L ⁵It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.

C ⁶**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the
end of | it again;
nothing is hidden from its | burning heat.**

L ⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re- | vives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to | the simple.

C ⁸**The statutes of the LORD are just and re- | joice the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light | to the eyes.**

L ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and en- | dures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous | altogether.

C ¹⁰**More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb.**

L ¹¹By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is | great reward.

**C ¹²Who can detect one's | own offenses?
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.**

L ¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get
dominion | over me;
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.

**C ¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be
acceptable | in your sight,
O LORD, my strength and | my redeemer.**

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

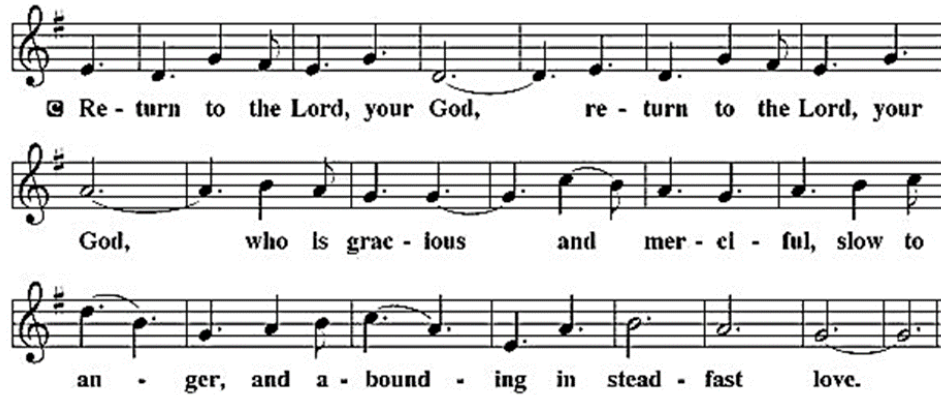
²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



☩ Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your
God, who is grac - ious and mer - ci - ful, slow to
an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL: John 2:13-22

Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.

P The holy gospel according to John, the second chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” ¹⁸The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” ¹⁹Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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 736 *God the Sculptor of the Mountains (Upload not available)*

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: Hear us, O God.

Congregational response: Your mercy is great.

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 *"Let This Be The Time" -True*

When the song of your people rings out from each steeple,
let this be the time.

When our praise and devotion sets lives into motion,
let this be the time.

When the heart of our labor promotes love of neighbor,
let this be the time.

When the care for each nation brings peace to creation,
let this be the time.

(Refrain)

Come and tear down the old ways and build up the new,
be the God of our promise; all hope rests in you.

With the fire of your Spirit, blaze a kingdom of truth.

Prepare us for action, let nothing distract us from you!

Let this be the time.

When we see in each face those we need to embrace,
let this be the time.

When we turn and forgive those the world won't let live,
let this be the time.

When our care for creation becomes our vocation,
let this be the time.

When our deeds and good actions become our true passion,
let this be the time. (Refrain)

When the voice of the Spirit transforms all who hear it,


let this be the time.

When we turn from obsession and needless possessions,
let this be the time.

When we give recognition to the one, true physician,
the healer who bears all our pain,
when we stop and remember that you are our God,
let this be the time. (Refrain)

We stand and sing as the collection and the gifts are brought forward

OFFERING HYMN



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 musical score is written on five staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed 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." The score ends with a double bar line.

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.

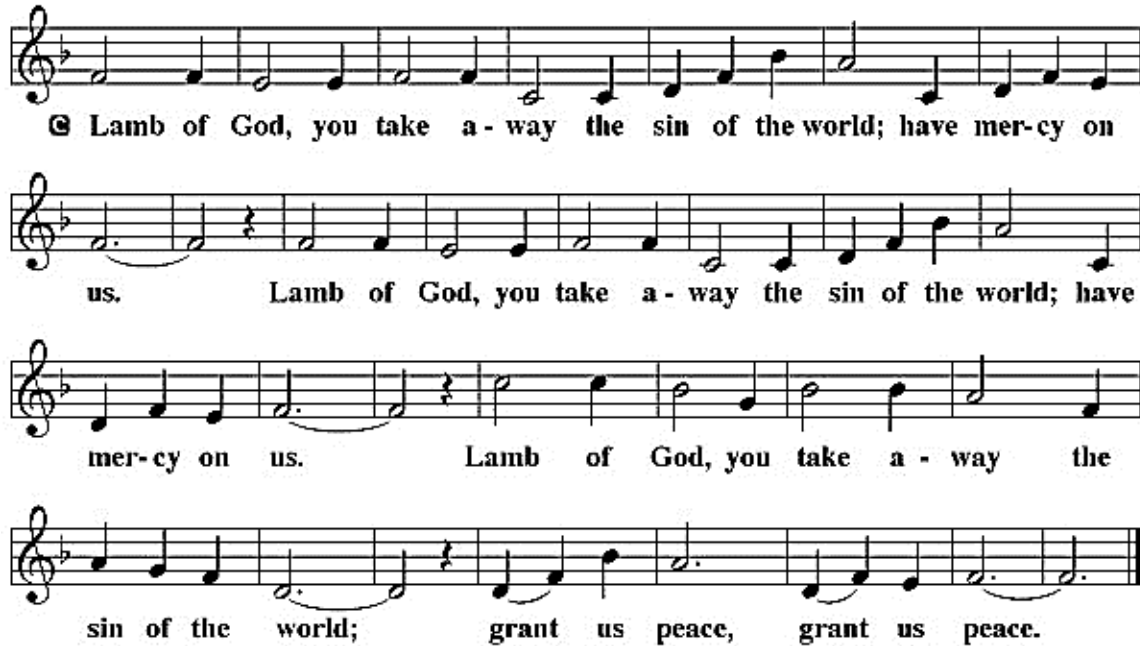
C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

The assembly is seated.

LAMB OF GOD



♩ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

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 minister offers 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	637	<i>Holy God, Holy and Glorious</i>
	803	<i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i>
	334	<i>Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery (add Lent verse 3)</i>

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

C **Amen.**

+ SENDING +

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

P Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and ✝ give you peace.

C **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till

all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,
 2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied
 3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
 4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

Refrain

our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
 as thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

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. Share your bread.

C Thanks be to God.

+ + +

Sundays and Seasons v.20220805.1416

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Calendar for March 3 - 10

March	3	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Third Sunday in Lent
	6	Wed.	7:00 pm	Choir practice
	9	Sat.	11:00 am	Celebration of Life service for Don Dowd
	10	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Fourth Sunday in Lent

Next Sunday's Readings, Fourth Sunday in Lent:

[Numbers 21:4-9](#)

[Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22](#)

[Ephesians 2:1-10](#)

[John 3:14-21](#)



SERVING EVERY SUNDAY

Pastor Tom, presiding and preaching

Katharine Gossman, piano

Karl Barton, flute

Denise Bookwalter, announcements

Choir: Karl Barton, Melissa Barton, Mark Canning, Judi Duffy, Kirsten Ebbesen, Rita Ford, Martin Guttenplan, Vicki Guttenplan, Ron Hartung, Rudy Hehn, Susan Hehn, Colleen Holdcraft, Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Sandy Ness, Dave Suhrweir, Cassandra White

SERVING TODAY AND ONE WEEK FROM TODAY

Serving	March 3	March 10
Assisting Minister	Audrey Post	Jennifer Dritt
Cup Minister	Rob Schiffer	Rita Ford
Cantor	Susan Hehn	Pastor Tom
Lector	Violet Greeley	Stephanie Leitch
Acolyte	Cup Minister - or Colton Allen or Graham Reece	
Tech Team		
Ushers		
Altar Guild	Billie Reardon Erik Robinson	Lawana Lamb-Daniels Sandy Lamb-Daniels
Counters	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer

PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: Family and friends of Don Dowd, as we mourn his passing; Pr. Pam Smith (Lakeland), prayers for recovery from cancer, covid and hepatitis; Bob Eshleman, recovering from heart surgery; Gladys Kane for continued healing.

For the sick: Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Sallie Robinson (wife of Erik Robinson); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor), being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Laura McDuffie (sister of Rob Schiffer), diagnosed with primary immunodeficiency and Sjogren's syndrome.

In treatment for cancer: Phil Williams; Gordon Fleischer; Stephanie Barber; Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Craig Timm (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Laura Ketchum-Jahn, (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Aubrey Thonvold (Reconciling Works Exec. Dir.); Judy Renwick (friend of Judi Duffy); Gil Johnson (friend of Judi Duffy); Amanda George (daughter-in-law of Rob Schiffer).

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; for rest and rejuvenation for Presiding Bishop Eaton as she takes a leave of absence for several months; Interim Presiding Bishop Michael Burk, providing leadership in Bp. Eaton's absence; 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

SPRING WORK DAY: Along with spring flowers come spring weeds, and our weeds demand attention. So Building & Grounds Coordinator Sandy Lamb-Daniels is inviting us to a weed-removal session at church. Write it on your calendar: 9 a.m. Saturday, March 16. She'll provide Gatorade, water, *maybe* even doughnuts. She invites us to show up at 9 with hats, gloves, bug spray (just in case) and any weed-removal tools we might have. Pray for good weeding weather.

FLOWER CHART FOR 2024: 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 2024 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>.