

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023

10 A.M.

INTRODUCTION

In Isaiah we are given a vision of the great feast to come, when God will wipe away death forever. In Jesus' parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ✚ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Congregation (C) Amen.

P Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Steadfast and faithful God,

C you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

P Beloved in Christ,

God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ✚ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C Amen.

1 O God be-yond all prais-ing, we wor-ship you to-day
 2 The flow'r of earth-ly splen-dor in time must sure-ly die,
 3 Then hear, O gra-cious Sav-ior, ac-cept the love we bring,

and sing the love a-maz-ing that songs can-not re-pay;
 its frag-ile bloom sur-ren-der to you, the Lord most high;
 that we who know your fa-vor may serve you as our King;

for we can on-ly won-der at ev-'ry gift you send,
 but hid-den from all na-ture the e-ter-nal seed is sown—
 and wheth-er our to-mor-rows be filled with good or ill,

at bless-ings with-out num-ber and mer-cies with-out end;
 though small in mor-tal stat-ure, to heav-en's gar-den grown:
 we'll tri-umph through our sor-rows and rise to bless you still:

we lift our hearts be-fore you and wait up-on your word,
 for Christ, your gift from heav-en, from death has set us free,
 to mar-vel at your beau-ty and glo-ry in your ways,

we hon-or and a-dore you, our great and might-y Lord,
 and we through him are giv-en the fi-nal vic-to-ry.
 and make a joy-ful du-ty our sac-ri-fice of praise.

Text: Michael Perry, 1942-1996

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874-1934

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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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain

Congregation:

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy
to the God of life and love and
free-dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -
er - more!

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

Verse 1

Congregation or Congregation 1:

1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once
slain, whose blood has freed and u -
nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of
God. *to Refrain*

Verse 2

Congregation or Congregation 2:

2. Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and
might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ
for ev - er. *to Refrain*

Verse 3

Congregation:

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to
make us peo - ple of God; to make
all things new. *to Refrain*



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Isaiah 25:1-9

After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet at which death—which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a monster swallowing up everyone—will be swallowed up forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of salvation.

¹O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. ²For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt. ³Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. ⁴For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, ⁵the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled.

⁶On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. ⁷And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; ⁸he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. ⁹It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for

him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 23 *We sing the psalm in response to the first reading.*



Leader ¹The LORD¹ is my shepherd;
I shall not ¹ be in want.

**C ²The LORD makes me lie down ¹ in green pastures
and leads me be- ¹ side still waters.**

L ³You restore my ¹ soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways ¹ for your name's sake.

**C ⁴Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall ¹ fear no
evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they ¹ comfort me.**

L ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence ¹ of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is ¹ running over.

**C ⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days ¹ of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the ¹ LORD forever.**

Spoken after the Psalm is sung:

C Amen.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:1-9

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

¶My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

¶I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ¶Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

¶Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ¶Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ¶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ¶And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

¶Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ¶Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

R The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Congregation:

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

P The holy gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, “Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.” ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his slaves, “The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.” ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

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 **523** *Let Us Go Now to the Banquet*

Refrain / Estribillo



Vá - mos to - dos al ban - que - te, a la
Let us go now to the ban - quet, to the



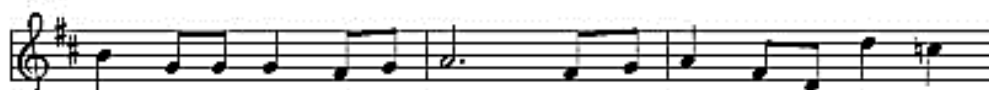
me - sa de la crea - ción; ca - da cual con su ta - bu -
feast of the u - ni - verse. The ta - ble's set and a place is



re - te tie - ne un pues - to y u - na mí - sión.
wait - ing; come, ev - 'ry - one, with your gifts to share.



1 Hoy me le - van - to muy tem - pra - no; ya me es -
1 I will rise in the ear - ly morn - ing; the com -
2 God in - vites all the poor and hun - gry to the
3 May we build such a place a - mong us where all



pe - ra la co - mu - ni - dad; voy su - bien - do a - le - gre la
mu - ni - ty's wait - ing for me. With a spring in my step I'm
ban - quet of jus - tice and good where the har - vest will not be
peo - ple are e - qual in love. God has called us to work to -

Refrain / Estribillo



cues - ta, voy en bus - ca de tu a - mis - tad.
walk - ing with my friends and my fam - i - ly.
hoard - ed so that no one will lack for food.
geth - er and to share ev - 'ry - thing we have.

2 Dios invita a todos los pobres
a esta mesa común por la fe,
donde no hay acaparadores
y a nadie le falta el conqué. Estribillo

3 Dios nos manda a hacer de este mundo
una mesa donde haya igualdad,
trabajando y luchando juntos,
compartiendo la propiedad. Estribillo

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

P 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

"Nature's Praise" - Braud

Praise the Lord, ocean and river,
Surge and deliver, splashes of light.
Praise the Lord, lightning and thunder,
Roar out the wonder of his great might.

Lake and wood, resound with his glory,
Echo the story of gifts from above.
Pine and oak, cypress and holly,
Dance in his folly, sway in his love.

Praise the Lord, falcon and swallow,
Circle and follow heaven's design.
Praise the Lord, whitetail by leaping,
Lizard, by creeping, fall into line.

All shall praise, your instruments ringing
Fill out the singing of nature's great choir.
Christ the Lord comes with salvation;
All of creation glows with his fire.

OFFERING HYMN

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

Refrain

Congregation:

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath - ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath - ered in - to one in you.

Verses

1. As this cup of bless - ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

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 reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. 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

Congregation:

The musical score is written on five staves in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first staff begins with a 6/8 time signature. The second staff changes to 3/8 time. The third staff changes to 6/8 time. The fourth and fifth staves return to 6/8 time. The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. 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.**

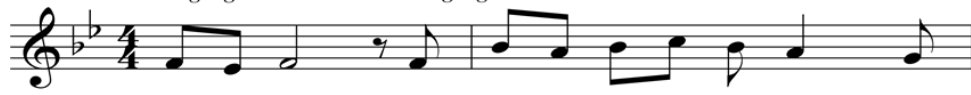
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

The assembly is seated.


LAMB OF GOD

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*




Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
you break the chains of ha - tred and
you are the way of jus - tice and
you are the way of mer - cy and

Congregation:



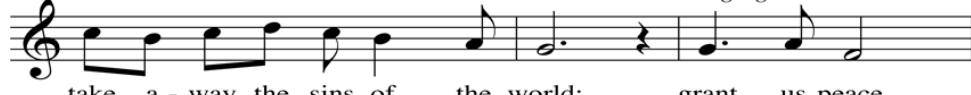
world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
fear:
peace:
love.

Final Stanza
Congregation or Assistant:



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Congregation:



take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,
grant us peace, grant us peace.

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

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	491	<i>Come, Let Us Eat</i>
	ACS 1023	<i>God Alone be Praised (see next page)</i>
	468	<i>Around You, O Lord Jesus</i>

The assembly stands.

God Alone Be Praised



1 O - ceans rise, the coast-land trem-bles; moun-tains melt and dry earth
2 Na - tions rage, the em - pire fal - ters; seek-ing ref - uge, ex - iles
3 Come and see; God's mer - cy gath - ers all that sin and grief have



crum-bles. All the world with long - ing groans. Love a -
wan - der. Walls and weap - ons rise from fear. Through this
shat - tered. Life from fields of death is raised. Peace, be



bides, this gra - cious prom - ise is our help, our hope and
wil - der - ness a riv - er flows to heal and bless us
still; let pride - ful thun - der yield to songs of joy and



so - lace. God's strong word is sol - id ground.
ev - er. God the cru - ci - fied dwells here.
won - der. God and God a - lone be praised.

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952, based on Psalm 46
Music: AD LUCEM, Zebulon M. Highben, b. 1979
Text © 2016 Susan R. Briehl, admin. Augsburg Fortress
Music © 2016 Zebulon M. Highben, admin. Augsburg Fortress

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray.

C **Amen.**

+ SENDING +

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

P The God of glory, ✝ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN 547 *Sent Forth by God's Blessing*



1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,
2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing, to God ev - er - liv - ing,



the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave.
the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face—



The sup - per is end - ed, Oh, now be ex - tend - ed
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,



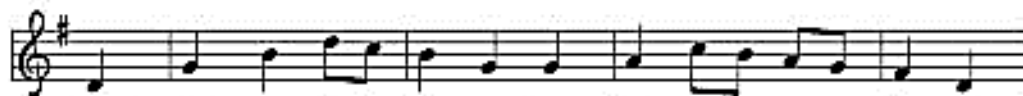
the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.
em - brace - ing God's chil - dren, the whole hu - man race,



The seed of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls
With your feast you feed us, with your light now



reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.
lead us; u - nite us as one in this life that we share.



Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us
Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing



to work for your king - dom and an - swer your call.
give hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1987, alt.

Music: THE ASH GROVE, Welsh folk tune


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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. Go in peace. Share the harvest.
C **Thanks be to God!**

+ + +

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	<p>TODAY’S ALTAR FLOWERS ARE DEDICATED TO THE GLORY OF GOD.</p>
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<u>Calendar for October 15 - 22</u>				
Oct.	15	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
			11:30 a.m.	Congregational Open Forum
	17	Tue.	6:30 pm	Tallahassee Swing Band at American Legion
	18	Wed.	7:00 pm	Choir practice
	22	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
			11:30 am	Council meeting

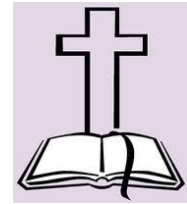
Next Sunday, Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost:

[Isaiah 45:1-7](#)

[Psalm 96:1-9 \[10-13\]](#)

[1 Thessalonians 1:1-10](#)

[Matthew 22:15-22](#)



SERVING TABLE

Serving	October 15	October 22
Presiding	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
Preaching	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
Assisting Minister	Rob Schiffer	Colleen Holdcraft
Cup Minister	Colleen Holdcraft	Rita Ford
Lector	Ceilia Greeley	Violet Greeley
Tech Team	Caroline Collins Cindy Suhrweir	Jonas Holdcraft Sandy Lamb-Daniels
Altar Guild	Beth Alexander Erik Robinson	
Counters	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy
Announcements	Denise Bookwalter	Denise Bookwalter

PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: The family of Mike Martinez and Nancy Staff, mourning the loss of Mike's mother, Judith Kent; Debee Meyer, recovering from surgery; Kyle Magee and family (friend of Cheryl), our shared sympathy on the sudden death of his father, Robert; Aubrey; Thonvold (Reconciling Works Exec. Dir.), in treatment for breast cancer; Steve Michael (cousin of Rob Schiffer), in rehab after a serious accident.

For the sick: Val Sullivan; 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).

In treatment for cancer: Gordon Fleischer; Stephanie Barber; Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Chris Dickman (synod council member); Craig Timm (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Laura Ketchum-Jahn, (friend of Cheryl & Steve.)

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.

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; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; 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

TALLAHASSEE SWING BAND AT AMERICAN LEGION: Tuesday, Oct. 17- 6:30 p.m. - Dance lessons (free); 7:30-10:00 band music (\$6.00)

FLOWER CHART FOR 2023: 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 2023 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>.