

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



April 26, 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

Today is sometimes called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Jesus is called the “gate” of the sheep in today’s gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



+ GATHERING +

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

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

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C **Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!**

P Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

C **Amen.**

P Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Water may be poured before or during the thanksgiving.

P Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters of Lakes Jackson, Talquin and Bradford that nourish us. Blessed are you.

C **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

P Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you.

C **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

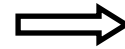
P Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you.

C You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever.

C Amen.

GATHERING HYMN ELW 361 *The Day of Resurrection*



GREETING

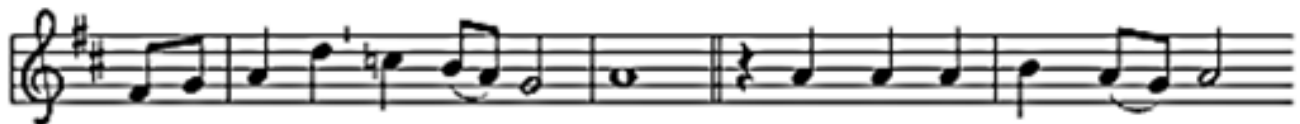
P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE



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

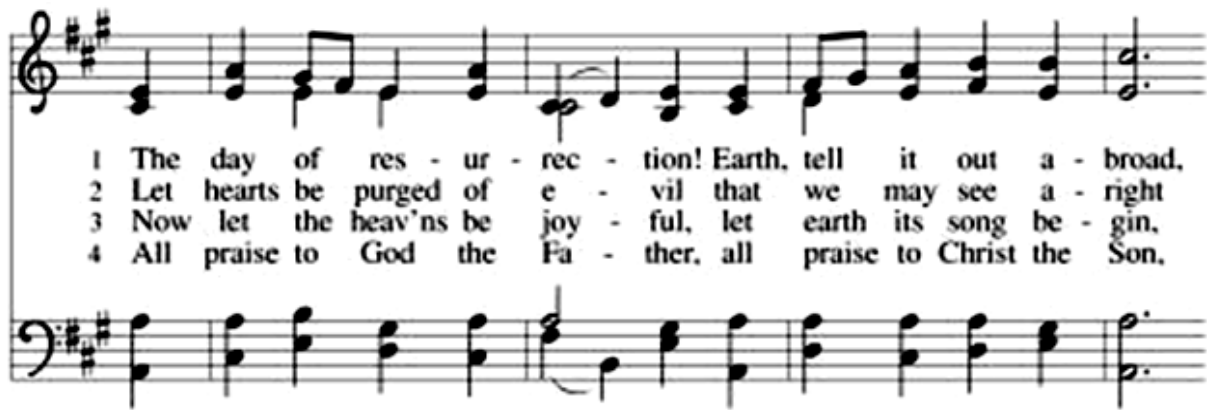


al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. I Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb

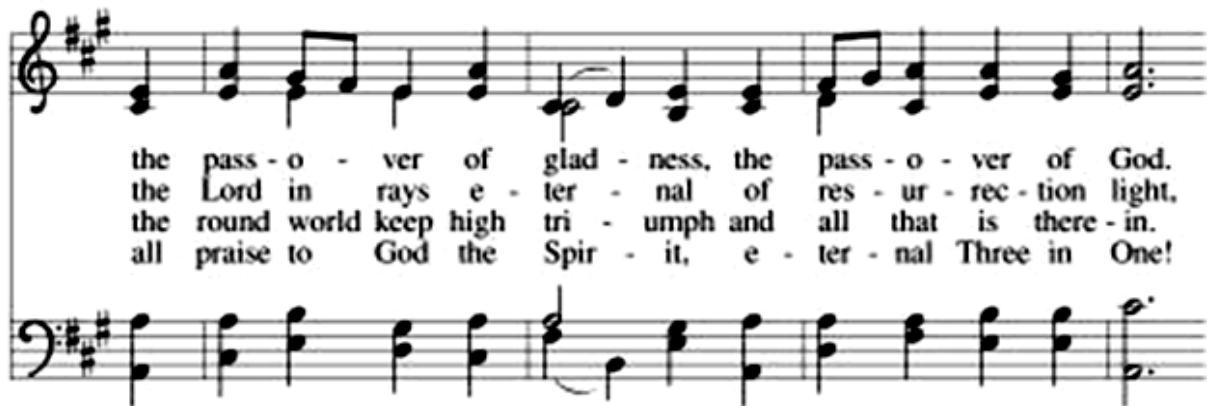


who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

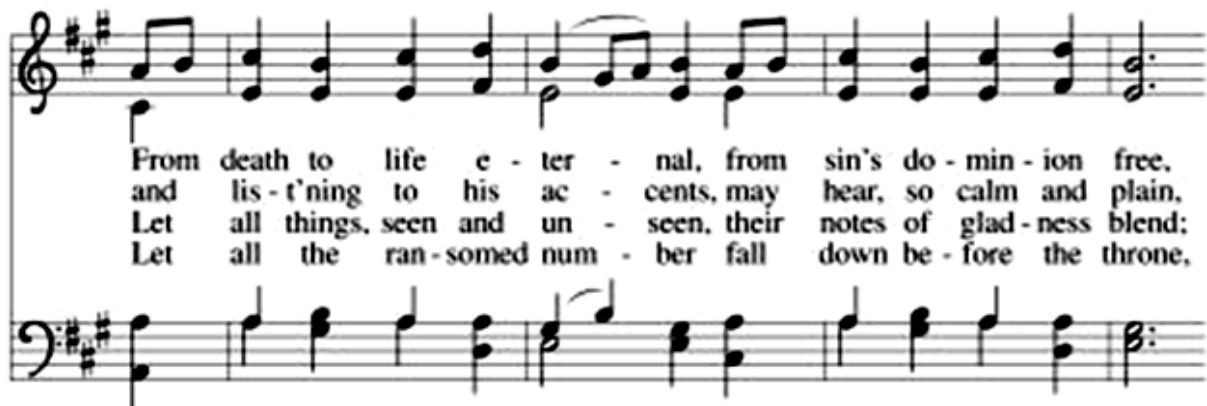
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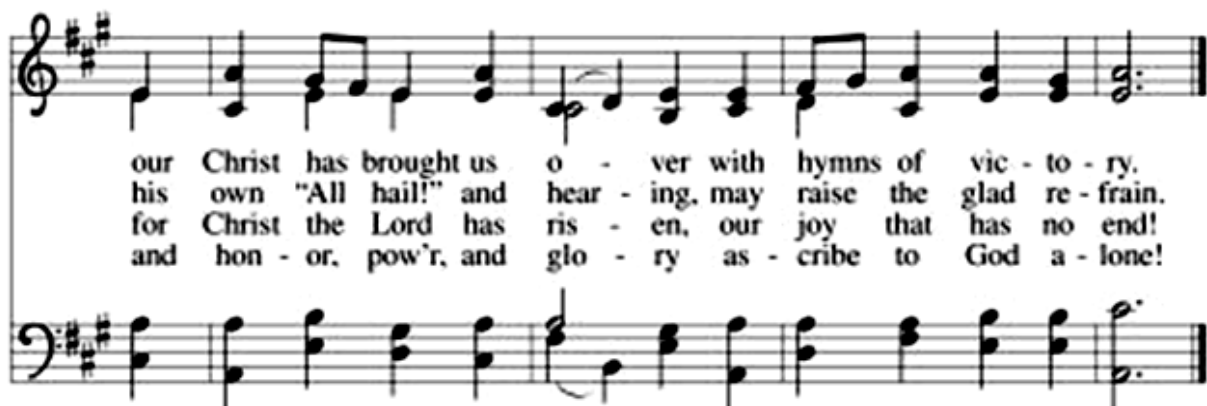
1 The day of res - ur - rec - tion! Earth, tell it out a - broad,
 2 Let hearts be purged of e - vil that we may see a - right
 3 Now let the heav'ns be joy - ful, let earth its song be - gin,
 4 All praise to God the Fa - ther, all praise to Christ the Son,



the pass - o - ver of glad - ness, the pass - o - ver of God.
 the Lord in rays e - ter - nal of res - ur - rec - tion light,
 the round world keep high tri - umph and all that is there - in.
 all praise to God the Spir - it, e - ter - nal Three in One!



From death to life e - ter - nal, from sin's do - min - ion free,
 and lis - t'ning to his ac - cents, may hear, so calm and plain,
 Let all things, seen and un - seen, their notes of glad - ness blend;
 Let all the ran - somed num - ber fall down be - fore the throne,



our Christ has brought us o - ver with hymns of vic - to - ry.
 his own "All hail!" and hear - ing, may raise the glad re - frain.
 for Christ the Lord has ris - en, our joy that has no end!
 and hon - or, pow'r, and glo - ry as - cribe to God a - lone!

Text: John of Damascus, c. 696–c. 754; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.

Music: ELLACOMBE, German melody, 18th cent.; adapt. X. L. Hartig, *Melodien zum Mäurer Gesangbuche*, 1833

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.

Refrain

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

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of

God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,

glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Refrain

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

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was

slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, 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: Acts 2:42-47

Today's reading is a description of life in the community following Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on God's people. The new community is sustained in worship and fellowship, shares what they have, and ensures that everyone has enough.

⁴² [The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

1 The Lord's my shep-herd; I'll not want. He makes me down to lie
 2 My soul he doth re - store a - gain, and me to walk doth make
 3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear no ill;
 4 My ta - ble thou hast rich - ly spread in pres - ence of my foes;
 5 Good - ness and mer - cy all my life shall sure - ly fol - low me,

in pas - tures green; he lead - eth me the qui - et wa - ters by.
 with - in the paths of righ - teous - ness, e'en for his own name's sake;
 for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com - fort still;
 my head thou dost with oil a - noint, and my cup o - ver - flows.
 and in God's house for - ev - er - more my dwell - ing - place shall be;

He lead - eth me, he lead - eth me the qui - et wa - ters by.
 with - in the paths of righ - teous - ness, e'en for his own name's sake.
 for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com - fort still.
 My head thou dost with oil a - noint, and my cup o - ver - flows.
 and in God's house for - ev - er - more my dwell - ing - place shall be.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:19-25

Doing the right things does not guarantee that one will not experience difficulties, hardships, rejection, or even suffering. Here Christ is presented as the model for our path of endurance and loyalty to God, particularly amid adversity.

¹⁹ It is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. ²² “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

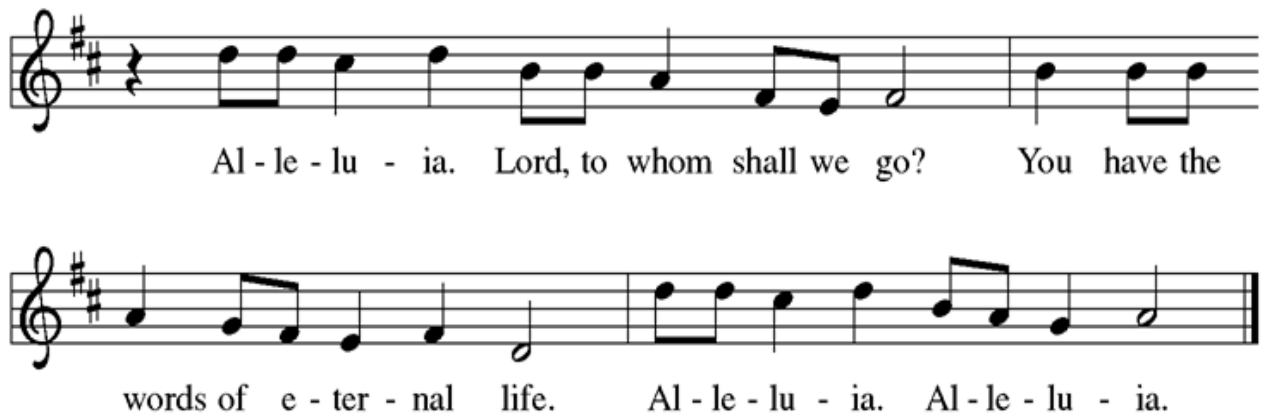
²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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: John 10:1-10

Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Those who listen to Jesus are led to abundant life.

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

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

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 789 *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*



1 Sav - ior like a shep - herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.
2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard - ian of our way;
3 You have prom - ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;
4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas - ant pas - tures feed us, for our use your fold pre - pare.
keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.
you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

Text: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779–1847
Music: BRADBURY, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

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

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

(A brief silence)

Shepherding God, guide your church with gentleness and peace. Hold all faith communities together for the sake of the world. We pray for prison and military chaplains near and far.

Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Creator God, your gate protects and liberates creation. Help us revere and protect the wonders of your creation. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Righteous Judge, strengthen and uphold those who work for justice and advocate for human rights. Bring an end to oppression and dictatorships. Save us from the temptation of violence or vengeance. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Great Physician, walk with those who are grieving, and anoint those who are ill or injured. St. Stephen, who else requires prayer today? Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Good Shepherd, continually seek us out as lambs of your flock, and form this community with even tighter bonds of love. You spread a feast before us and our cups are running over; bring us to share in our abundance. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

A few at a time, each week, we pray for people within the St. Stephen worship community. We pray today for Margaret Bertolami, Mark Bertolami and Elizabeth Swiman and for all their families. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Living God, we praise you for the saints who have died in faith and dwell in your love. At our end, bring us, with them, to our heavenly home. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

AMEN!

PEACE

A The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

Let us share peace with others, respecting boundaries and safety.

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



+ MEAL +

Stephen Saint
@Stephen-Saint



venmo

Use this QR Code to connect to Venmo for a donation to St. Stephen. Code 5469.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including caring for those in need. We welcome you to place your gift in the offering plate near the baptismal font, mail it to the church, or by using the Venmo QR Code to the right.

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)

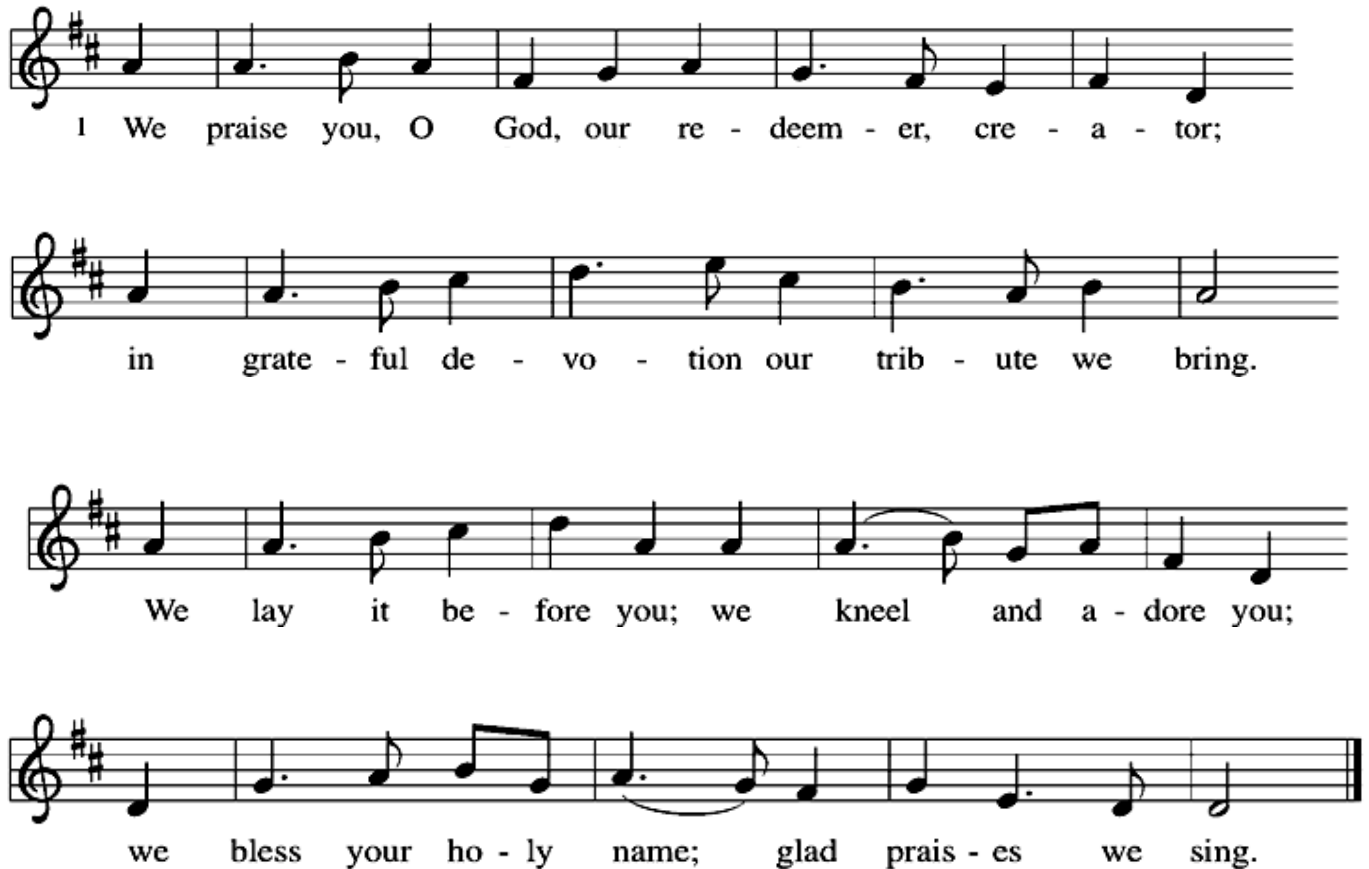
You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred,
crowning me with love beyond my power to hold. (refrain)

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 ELW 870 (verse 1)

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

We Praise You, O God



1 We praise you, O God, our re - deem - er, cre - a - tor;
in grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
we bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.

Text: Julia C. Cory, 1882–1963

Music: KREMSER, A. Valerius, *Nederlandsch Gedenckclanck*, 1626

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, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

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 Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

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.

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 (first) and grape juice (second) from pouring cups. Take a communion glass from one of the trays at the corners as you approach the rail. Leave the empty glass on the lower rail. Wheat-free wafers are available, simply tell the pastor.

COMMUNION HYMNS **ELW 502** *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*
 ELW 484 *You Satisfy the Hungry Heart*

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus,

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

+ SENDING +

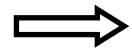
BLESSING *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

The assembly stands.

SENDING HYMN **ELW 544** *Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing*



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 Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

A Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

C Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

+ + +



1 Praise the Lord, rise up re - joic - ing, wor - ship, thanks, de -
 2 Scat - tered flock, one shep - herd shar - ing, lost and lone - ly,
 3 Sins for - giv - en, wrongs for - giv - ing, we go forth a -



vo - tion voic - ing: glo - ry be to God on high!
 one voice hear - ing, ears at - ten - tive to your word;
 lert and liv - ing in your Spir - it, strong and free.



Christ, your cross and pas - sion shar - ing, by this eu - cha -
 by your blood new life re - ceiv - ing, in your bod - y,
 Part - ners in your new cre - a - tion, seek - ing peace in



rist de - clar - ing yours the fi - nal vic - to - ry.
 firm be - liev - ing, we are yours, and you the Lord.
 ev - 'ry na - tion, may we faith - ful fol - l'wers be.

Text: Howard C. A. Gaunt, 1902–1983, alt.

Music: ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN, Johann Löhner, 1645–1705, adapt.

Text © Oxford University Press.

Calendar for April 26 - May 3

April 26	Sun.	9:30 am	Choir rehearsal
		10 am	Worship, Fourth Sunday of Easter
29	Wed.	7 pm	Choir rehearsal
30	Thurs.	10 am	Bible study
May 3	Sun.	9 am	Bible study
		9:30 am	Choir rehearsal
		10 am	Worship, Fifth Sunday of Easter

SERVING EVERY SUNDAY

Pastor Tom Holdcraft, presiding and preaching

Katharine Gossman, piano

Karl Barton, flute

Denise Bookwalter, announcements

Choir: Jordi Banitt, Karl Barton, Melissa Barton, Mark Canning, Kirsten Ebbesen, Rita Ford, Alison Haney, Rudy Hehn, Susan Hehn, Colleen Holdcraft, Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Olivia James, Lawana Lamb-Daniels, Simone Schuster, Sylvia Smith, Dave Suhrweir, Cassandra White.

SERVING TODAY AND ONE WEEK FROM TODAY

Serving	April 26	May 3
Assisting Minister	Audrey Post	Colleen Holdcraft
Cup Minister	Rita Ford	Loraine Sundberg
Cantor		Susan Hehn
Lector	Ceilia/ Mark Greeley	Colleen Holdcraft
Acolyte		
Tech Team	Caroline Collins Sandy Lamb-Daniels	Colin Hackley Audrey Post
Ushers	Colin Hackley Bob Eshleman	Erik Robinson Patrick Kennell
Altar Guild	Beth Alexander Rita Ford	Lawana Lamb-Daniels Sandy Lamb-Daniels
Counters	Marilyn Larson Janet Barber	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer

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: Scott Simmons (son of Sharon Simmons); Gordon Fleischer; Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Linda Bobbitt, (friend of Cheryl Stuart) diagnosed with metastasized breast cancer.; David McManus (friend of Audrey Post); Shannon Miller (friend of Barb O'Donnell); Pat Yeager (sister of Sue Canning); Roger Stombert (friend of Margaret Bowers).

Health and protection: For Frank “Ramy” Meyers in the hospital, following broken leg. 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 to be safe and secure without unnecessary deportations.

For prisoners: All those on Death Row.

Other concerns: For Jan Harrison and family following the death of her son, Wayne Harrison; Jeanette Sickel and family following the death of her cousin, Elaine Harris; Rick Bobbitt (friend of Cheryl Stuart), our shared sympathy on his death; 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); Allana Lochan-Tekaram (sister of Anita Sawh and Rita Ford), for hormone imbalance; Walt Steinvorth (friend of Rob Schiffer), suffering from pericarditis and vestibular neuritis and learning to cope with dizziness and severe equilibrium problems; Karen Olson.

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; 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.

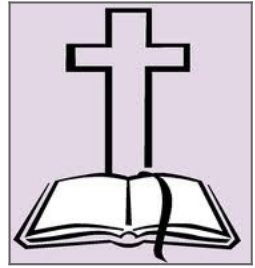
Next Sunday's Readings, Fifth Sunday of Easter:

[Acts 7:55-60](#)

[Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16](#)

[1 Peter 2:2-10](#)

[John 14:1-14](#)



Today's altar flowers are dedicated to the
glory of God and in appreciation
of the faithful service of our counters.

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 on the sidewalk near 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>.

CHURCH COUNCIL

President, Denise Bookwalter

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Buildings Coordinator, Sandy Lamb-Daniels

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Care & Hospitality, Lawana Lamb-Daniels

Outreach, Sharon Simmons

Mutual Ministry, Sylvia Smith

Education & Discipleship, Emily Stover

Communications, Colleen Holdcraft

Youth, Graham Reece



Our Guiding Principles

1. Jesus is Lord of our lives.
2. We welcome absolutely everyone.
3. We enjoy a celebratory relationship with God through worship.
4. We support and encourage community both in and beyond our congregation.
5. We are called to use our God-given gifts of time, talent, and treasure to serve all of God's people and seek justice for them.
6. Creativity and new ideas are a vital part of our life together as a congregation.