

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Love God, Love People, Form Faith.

If you are seeking God you are welcome here.

If you have been hurt in a judgmental church, here you will not be judged. Here you will be nurtured in the grace and Good News that our salvation has been accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Here you may discover that, in fact, it is God who has been seeking you!*

> 17th Sunday after Pentecost September 24, 2023



For Your Prayers September 25-October 1, 2023

Lectionary readings for this week: Monday: Genesis 27:1-29 Romans 16:1-6 Psalm 106:1-12 Tuesday: Genesis 28:10-17 Romans 16:17-20 Psalm 106:1-12 Wednesday: Isaiah 41:1-13 Matthew 18:1-5 Psalm 106:1-12 Thursday: Ezekiel 12:17-28 James 4:11-16 Psalm 25:1-9 Friday: Ezekiel 18:5-18 Acts 13:32-41 Psalm 25:1-9 Saturday: Ezekiel 18:19-24 Mark 11:27-33 Psalm 25:1-9 Next Sunday: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 Psalm 25:1-9 (6) Philippians 2:1-13 Matthew 21:23-32

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Ed Brown**, **Kristin Carter**, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Marilyn Johnson, Evelyn Kernan, Julia Mahony, Jim Mayfield, Randy Punchard and Linda Reuben.

<u>Pray for those unable to come to worship</u>: Martin Bleck, Ed Brown, Birdie Burton, York Doerr, Bob and Angie Groom, Edith Haecker, Pat Janot, Jeanne Nelson, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Dawn Allen, Paula Battle, Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, Sally Blackburn, Mary Bloom, Ann Bunn Jerry & Elijah Connor, Judy Craun, Doug Crinklaw, Sophia Czajkowski, Judy Drezek, Derald Edwards, Joan and Frank Goodhart, Deanna Harbison, William Harbison, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Char Henry, Zac and Jen Holtzman and family, Brian Johnson, Mason Jones, Connie Kendrick ,The Kennedy family, Bob Lamoureux, Ron Luchetti, Julia Mahony, Marnah Lund, Doug Mayes, Laura Mcgolin, Detra Michaels, Maddie Murray, Bob Myers, Gina Peterson, Paula Rega, Marci Ries, Betty Roth, Inge Seiter, David Shoberg, Kelsey Slay, Vasili Soultoukis, Chad Strausbaugh, Charley Underdahl, and Caleb Winig

17th Sunday after Pentecost

I. Gathering: The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Welcome

Centering Music As Saints of Old

Setting, Craig Phillips

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be God, the one who forms us, + Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God., 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

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. Amen.

Greeting

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

Prayer of the Day

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. **Amen.**

II. Word: God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

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: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

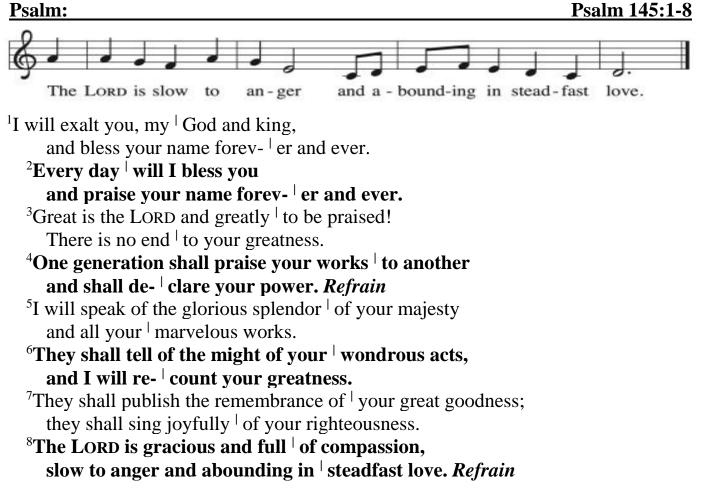
¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He 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 God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Then 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.

⁶The 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. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When 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."

⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰Then 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. ¹¹And 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." Response: "Thanks be to God."



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.

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, 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, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Reader: "The Word of the Lord." Response: "Thanks be to God."



Alleluia. Open our / hearts, O Lord, * to give heed to what is said / by your Son. Alleluia.

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. Response after announcement of the Gospel: "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. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And 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?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When 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.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, '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.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Response at the conclusion of the Gospel: "Praise to you, O Christ."

Sermon

Fairness or JusticePastor Jon NelsonSilence for reflection and Prayer in response to the sermon.

Hymn of the DayAll Who Love and Serve Your City

ELW 724 Bulletin page 12

Statement of Faith

Holy Love, Beginning and End, beyond all Names: giver of food and drink, clothing and warmth, love and hope: life in all its goodness, we praise and adore you.

Jesus Christ, Wisdom and Word: lover of outcasts, friend of the poor; one of us, yet one with God; crucified and risen; life in the midst of death, we praise and adore you.

Holy Spirit, Storm and Breath: building bridges, breaking chains, waking the oppressed, making us one, unseen and unexpected, untamable energy of life, we praise and adore you.

Holy Trinity, forever One, whose nature is community, unbounded dance of love; in whom we live and grow and know our neighbor; life in all its fullness, making all things new, we praise and adore you.

From Oremus III, the worship book of the Lutheran Student Movement, USA (campus ministry).

Prayers

Each petition concludes, "Lord in your mercy." Response: "Hear our prayer."

III. Meal: God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

Offering

Offerings are gathered for the mission of the church: preaching and teaching the good news of our salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ, and caring for the poor. During the offering, the table is set for the Lord's Supper.

Offering of Music

8:30 Sing Out your Joy to God from "Joshua" G.F. Handel, arr. Hal Hopson Matins Choir and Linda Baumgarten, Bassoon

11:00	O Lord, You Are My God and King	Donald Busarow
	Chancel Choir and St. Stephen Ringers	
	(congregation joins in on the 3 rd stanza)	

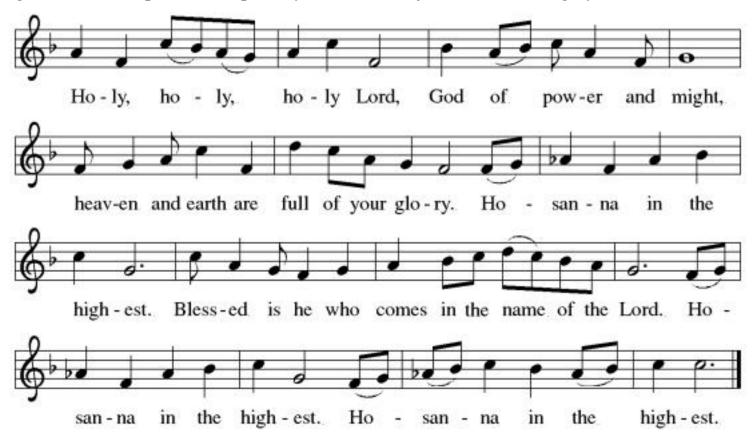
Offertory Prayer

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.** It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

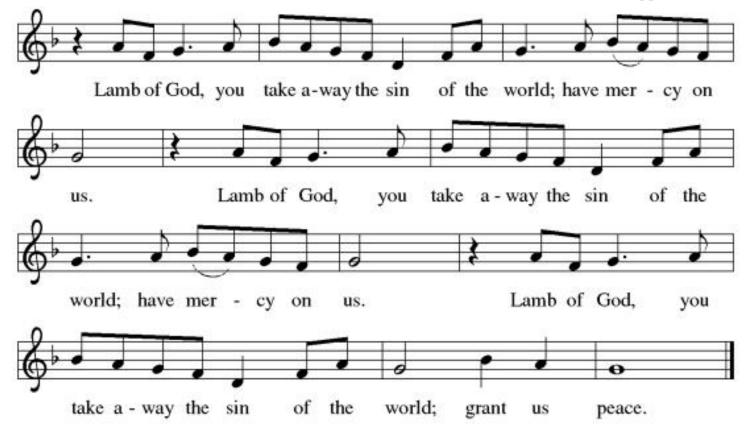


Words of Institution

<u>The Lord's Prayer</u> 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.

Holy Communion

When receiving Communion, either stand or kneel at the Rail. Pastor will distribute the bread and a Communion Assistant will come with a tray of pre-filled cups of wine and grape juice. The juice will be in the middle of the tray. Gluten-free wafers are available as an alternative to bread. St. Stephen is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, so all are welcome to receive Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper.



Communion Hymn There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

ELW 587 Bulletin page13

Table Blessing

Prayer after Communion

IV. Sending: God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

Sending Hymn

The Lord Now Sends Us Forth

ELW 538 Bulletin page 14

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

Dismissal Go in peace. God is at work in you. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude As Saints of Old

Setting, John Turner

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As Saints of Old Contributors: Craig Phillip Tune: Setting © 2018 Augsburg Fortress

Sing out your Joy to god Contributors: G.F.Handel, / Hal Hopson © 1990 Hope Publishing Co.

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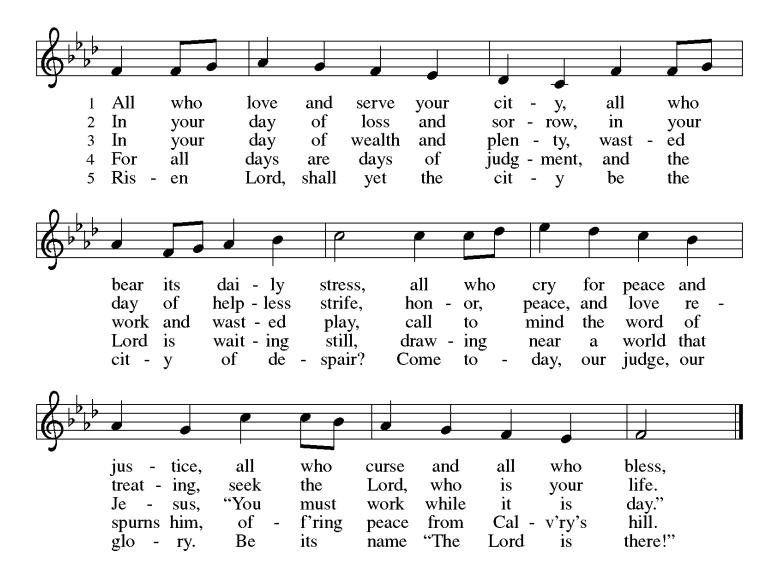
As Saints of Old



Text: Frank von Christierson, 1900–1996, alt. Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958 Text © 1961, ren. 1989 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

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All Who Love and Serve Your City



Text: Erik Routley, 1917–1982 Music: NEW ORLEANS, Paul D. Weber, b. 1949

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There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt. Music: ST. HELENA, Calvin Hampton, 1938–1984 Music © 1977 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

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Text: Anonymous, Central America; tr. Gerhard M. Cartford, b. 1923 Music: ENVIADO, anonymous, Central America English text © 1998 Augsburg Fortress.

As We Gather

Parents! Thanks for bringing your children to worship.

- Did you know that intergenerational worship is the single most important activity encouraging children's faith formation? (See vibrantfaith.com)
- When parents and children need to take a break for a few minutes, there's a play area with toys and books in the room right beneath the Worship Space.
- Age-appropriate activity bags are available in the Gathering Space ask an usher for assistance.

Assistance is Available for You:

- An induction loop is provided for the benefit of hearing aid users. To use, please switch your hearing aid to "T."
- Large print worship materials are available ask an usher.
- **Rest rooms** are accessible through the door in the wing to the left of the altar.
- **If someone should need emergency medical assistance,** CPR supplies, and a first aid kit are located in the hallway next to the Fellowship Hall.

Health Update:

We always encourage you to monitor yourself for symptoms of illness and to worship from home if you are experiencing any. We have masks and hand sanitizer available for use in our building should you require.

What's Happening Today

Flowers this morning are given by Ward Bourn In memory of Jane L. Bourn, in honor of our 62nd wedding anniversary.

Communal Life: Hymn Sing. The Rev. Dr. Paul Weber and his wife, organist Florence Jowers, will lead a Hymn Sing today **Sunday, September 24, from 3:00-4:30 PM** at St. Stephen. Dr. Weber will introduce songs from his expansive hymn collection, *So Great a Cloud of Witnesses*, published by Augsburg Fortress. Thanks to a grant from the Michael Peeler Fund of the NC Synod there is no cost to attend.

Upcoming

Communal Life: Board Game Night. Mark your calendars for our next Board Game Night at SSLC on **September 30th, 5:30 - 9:00 PM**. Please bring a dish to share along with your favorite board/card game.

<u>Adopt-A-Student Program:</u> Building Connections and Community with LSA Our college students are returning! Welcome! One program St. Stephen provides for students is the adopted student/church family program. The Campus Ministry Committee pairs interested students with members from St. Stephen who would like to form relationships with college students. These new church families meet for meals, ice cream, coffee, visit local museums, take walks, etc. We encourage St. Stephen members to become family away from home for our new students! If interested, please sign up on the bulletin sign-up sheet with your name and contact information. Interested students may sign up on the bulletin sign-up sheet as well, with your name and campus email address. Questions, contact Nancy Egloff (knegloff@verizon.net).

Communal Life: LSA Sunday Dinners. Want to get to know our LSA members? Host a meal for them! Sign up to host a Sunday evening meal for LSA on the chart in the Gathering Space. If you haven't hosted before, instructions are available.

Support: Come out to celebrate the beginning of the school year while supporting our preschool at **Shoofly Diary Bar Spirit Night** on **Thursday September 28th** from **6-8 PM**. Please be sure to mention that you are there for St. Stephen Preschool. A portion of the sales will be donated to our preschool. Shoo Fly will also place a jar out and 100% of those donations will be given to the preschool.

Service: Rise Against Hunger. Saturday, October 14, 2023, is the date for the RISE AGAINST HUNGER event held at Williamsburg Presbyterian Church. Mark your calendars as everyone from 4 years old to 104 years old can participate in this fun event to help eradicate World Hunger. This year we plan to package 55,296 meals, meaning we need about 130 volunteers per shift. You can sign up by visiting mywpc.org/rah or by sending a note to volunteer@mywpc.org and give us your name(s), the shift you want to work, and your best contact information. Shifts are 11:00am-1:00pm and/or 1:30-3:30pm. If you would like to learn more about the Rise Against Hunger organization and food-packaging events, please contact Gary Davis at (724) 208-1081.

<u>Mulch Party!</u> We will be receiving six yards of mulch on Friday evening October 13th for our preschool playground and will need your help to spread it. If you are available **Saturday October 14**, please come to St. Stephen at **10:00 AM**- bring your wheelbarrows, shovels, and rakes if you have them. Please mark the insert if you will be available to help our school.

<u>Come One, Come All</u> We are having our annual Ministry fair on October 1st between services. We will have tables set up and representatives from the current ministries at St. Stephen Lutheran Church. We are asking that you stop in and see what the church is doing. We will have a list of ministries with the leaders and a brief descriptions. We ask that you prayerfully consider where you could donate your time and talents to St. Stephen. If you are not ready to come back, no problem. There are many things that can be done from home and still be part of a ministry. There are also ministries that are behind the scenes and can be done when there are fewer people in the church. The church is strong because of the members. Our church thrives because of those who are willing to donate time and talent to the various ministries. Many hands make light work.

Adult Ed. Opportunities: Thomas Keesecker Concert. Join us between services on Sunday, Sept. 15th for a concert by Thomas Keesecker. Thomas retired in 2019 after serving as a church musician for over 40 years in Lutheran and Roman Catholic parishes in Virginia, Montana, and Maryland. In his retirement he travels the country sharing his piano collections in informal recitals which incorporate hymn singing, readings, and poetry.

Education: Explore Spiritual Practices. Starting October 22nd, Christina Nelson will lead an exploration of various spiritual practices for four weeks between services. Come to learn more about how to develop and/or deepen your faith practices. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall with a Zoom option as well.

<u>We are looking for Volunteers</u> to help with the new <u>Church Directory</u>. If you think you can help sign people up for times or help the days of the photos shoots **December 11 and 12th** please fill out the insert.

Our worship service is available on our website <u>www.saintstephenlutheran.net</u>, click on "Worship with Us" and "Services."

SUNDAY, September 24

8:30 AM Worship – Holy Communion (livestreamed on our YouTube channel)

9:45 AM Affirmation Of Baptism (Library/Conference Room)

9:45 AM Matins Choir Rehearsal (Worship Space)

10:00 AM Faith Formation (Fellowship hall/Preschool Room)

11:00 AM Worship – Holy Communion

3-4:30 PM Hymn Sing (Worship Space)

MONDAY September 25

10:00 AM Staff Meeting (Pastor's Office)

1:30 PM Bible Study (Library/Conference Room)

7:00 PM Pub & Grub (Billsburg Brewery)

TUESDAY, September 26

11:30 AM Preschool Chapel (Worship Space)

7:00 PM Personnel Committee (Library/Conference Room & Zoom)

WEDNESDAY, September 27

11:30 AM Preschool Chapel (Worship Space)

1:30 PM Banner Committee (Library/Conference Room)

7:00 PM AA Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 PM Chancel Choir (Worship Space)

THURSDAY, September 28

12:00 PM Bulletin review (Library/Conference Room)

5:30 PM St. Stephen Ringers Rehearsal (Worship Space)

7:00 PM SMCC (Library/Conference Room)

FRIDAY, September 29

SATURDAY, September 30

5:30 PM Game Night (Fellowship Hall)

5:30 PM AA Meeting (Library/Conference room)

SUNDAY, October 1

8:30 AM Worship – Holy Communion (livestreamed on our YouTube channel)

- 9:45 AM Affirmation Of Baptism (Library/Conference Room)
- 9:45 AM Matins Choir Rehearsal Come join us! (Worship Space)
- 10:00 AM Ministry Fair (Fellowship Hall)
- 10:00 AM Faith Formation (Preschool Room)
- 11:00 AM Worship Holy Communion

Leading our Worship and Hospitality Today

•	
Altar Guild	
	Ned Neidlinger
Communion Assistants	
	(11:00) George Bass and Ingrid Brown
Flower Delivery	Karen Nester
Greeters/Hosts	
Lectors	
Preacher & Presider	Jon Nelson
Tellers	John McCurry, Carol Harman, Sandy Croushore
Ushers	(8:30) Bob Achenbach & Bill Dichtel (11:00) Glenn Joppa

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

612 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185 <u>www.saintstephenlutheran.net</u> (757) 229-6688

Love God, Love People, Form Faith.

(St. Stephen Lutheran Church Vision Statement)

All of Us, Called Through Our BaptismsDoing Ministry in the WorldPastor Jon Nelson (320-295-8861)Pastorin@saintstephenlutheran.netPastor Alex Sheppard-Witt (717-434-5037)Pastorasw@saintstephenlutheran.netKaren Ives – Director of Music (757-229-6688)MusicDir@saintstephenlutheran.netHollie Jones – Parish Administrator (229-6688)Office@saintstephenlutheran.netDiana Tiller-Dichtel – Parish Nurse (232-5924)Parishnurse@saintstephenlutheran.netHolly Ready – Preschool Director (229-6688)Preschool@saintstephenlutheran.netPeninsula Pastoral Counseling Center (873-2273; counselors are in Williamsburg on Thursdays)Doing Ministry in the World
Pastoral Counseling Center (873-2273; counselors are in Williamsburg on Thursdays)

Welcome to St. Stephen Lutheran Church! Please fill this out and drop it in the offering plate or give it to an usher.

September 24, 2023

Name:	
For guests and members with changes:	
Address (Home)	
City/StateZip	
Telephone #	
E-Mail Address	
Guests Only: I belong to	
Church Address	
	-
Please check as many as pertain:	-
Member	
First time guest	
Regular guest	
Guest (out of town)	
Student at William & Mary	
Looking for a church home	
Desire to speak with pastor	
Would like more information about Stephen Ministry	
Would like a Parish Nurse to contact me	

Any comments? Please be sure your name is above, so we may respond, if necessary.

Prayer Requests

Name:			
Plea	Please remove from prayer concerns:		
Nam	e:		
	I/We need a name tag:		
	I'm interested in adopting a college student:		
(pro	_I'm a college student who is interested in being adopted wide name and campus email address)		
Nan	ne:		
Ema	il:		
	_ I /We can help on October 14 th spread mulch for the preschool playground		
Wo	will bring wheelbarrow/ rakes/ shovel/ other		