



St. Stephen Lutheran Church

One of 11,000 Stephen Ministry Congregations Around the World

We believe that community is *beautiful* and *messy* and *fulfilling* and *conflicted* and...the POINT. God calls us together into community for the sake of one another, our neighbors, and creation. We don't always get it right, but we trust that when we center the love and grace that Jesus taught, we will get it right more often than not. ***You are welcome here!***

We don't expect perfect, put-together people; we don't want you to conform to us and our ways; we want you to show up as who you are and to experience the love and grace of God as we have experienced it. And we hope that once you do, you will join us in sharing it with others too.

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023 ~ 7:30 PM

As We Gather

While a student at William & Mary, Thomas Jefferson sketched a seating plan for an octagonal worship space, with a central altar, for a college chapel. The design of this worship space is based on his sketch.

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** an AED (Automated External Defibrillator), 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.

If you have sponsored poinsettias, feel free to take them home following the service tonight. Poinsettias that are left will remain in the Worship Space through the First Sunday of Christmas.

The Church Office will be closed the week after Christmas, reopening January 3. If you have emergency need for pastoral care between Christmas and January 3, please call **Pastor Nelson**.

New Years Eve Day Worship 9:45AM- Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion for the First Sunday After Christmas.

*Christmas Eve
Order of Service*

December 24, 2022 ~ 7:30 PM

Prelude	<i>Joy to the world</i> Ina Berkey and Karen Ives	arr. Handel-Ashford
	<i>Christmas Meditation</i> <i>The Joy of Christmas</i> St. Stephen Ringers	arr. Jason Krug arr. Lloyd Larson
	<i>The Holly and the Berry</i> St. Stephen Choirs and Ringers	arr. Austin C Lovelace
	<i>For Unto Us a Child Is Born</i> <i>Nowell</i> St. Stephen Choirs	J. Clemens Non Papa Arrangement, John A Behnke

Welcome

Proclamation of the Birth of Christ

Gathering Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful (stanzas 1-3)

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

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.**

Hymn of Praise

Angels We Have Heard on High (stanza 1)

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain (Ring your bells during the refrain!)

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep
darkness--

on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing
plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of
Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping
warriors

and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his
kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and
forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do
this.

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

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

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

Gospel Acclamation

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (stanza 1)

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Gospel**Luke 2:1-20**

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

Response after announcement of the Gospel: "Glory to you, O Lord."

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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

Gospel Response

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (stanza 2)

Christ by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Sermon

Pastor Jon Nelson

The Hymn of the Day will be announced in a few moments. First, take time during the silence: What are your prayers in response to the sermon?

Hymn of the Day

On Christmas Night (stanzas 1 & 4)

- 1 On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring.
On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring:
news of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful king's birth.

- 4 All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night.
All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God in highest heav'n;
peace on earth, and goodwill. Amen."

Prayers

Offering & Offering of Music

Come to the Stable

Carol Browning

St. Stephen Choirs; Marie Nelson, Cello

Offertory Hymn

What Child Is This (Stanza 3)

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

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:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

(stanza 3)

Hail the heav'n born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The bread and wine we're about to share joins us to the people throughout history and across the world who have come to this meal in search of life.

Just as Jesus' birth was for the whole world this bread and wine is for everyone:
for the hungry
for the lost
for those who search
and those who are found
for those who question
and those who know peace
this is bread and wine for everyone.

Holy God, we praise you. Let the heavens be joyful, and the earth be glad. We bless you for creating the whole world, for your promises to your people, and for the life we know in Jesus Christ your son. Born of Mary, he shares our life. Eating with sinners, he welcomes us. Leading his followers, he guides us. Dying on the cross, he loves us. Risen from the dead, he gives new life.

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.

We pray, God of love, that you will send your Holy Spirit upon us and what we do here: that we and these signs, touched by your Spirit, may be signs of life and love to each other and to all the world. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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 Music

<i>The Time of Singing</i>	Anne Krentz Organ
<i>St. Stephen Choirs; Ingrid Brown, Violin</i>	
<i>Silent Night! Holy Night</i>	arr. Marianne Kim
Patty Ballentine and Karen Ives	

Table Blessing

Prayer after Communion

Lighting of Nativity Candles

As you give and receive light for your hand-held candles, please tilt the unlit candle toward the flame. Please hold your lit candle upright, to prevent wax spills.

Hymn after Communion

Silent Night, Holy Night!

- 1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
- 3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

(Silence for Prayer)

Please extinguish your candle when the Pastor extinguishes his.

Sending Hymn

Joy to the World

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

- 3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Blessing

**God bless you and keep you,
✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth,
and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,
now and forever.
Amen.**

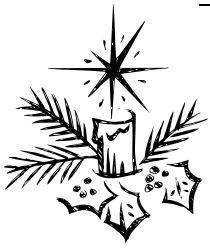
Dismissal

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
Thanks be to God.

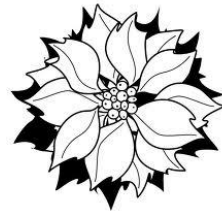
Postlude

Good Christian friends, Rejoice
Patty Ballentine and Karen Ives

Arrangement, Daniel Barta



Poinsettias are given to the Glory of God by the following:



Helen Allen in loving memory of her parents Ervin and Mina Kreitzer, and her brothers and sisters

George and Gerri Bass in memory of their parents

Susan Britcher in honor of our staff at St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Ingrid and Ed Brown in memory of Eva and Georg Siegert

Alison and Michael Carney in memory of Detra Michaels

Jane deSolms in thanks for Karen Ives, our incredibly talented music director

Heidi Flatin to the Glory of God

Steve and Beth Grant in memory of loved ones

Carol and Bob Harman to the Glory of God

Marilyn Johnson in thanks for the generous members of our congregation

Susan Kauffman in memory of her parents, Carl and Helen Herzog

Paul and Rita Kristiansen in thanks for friends and family

Jan Lindblad MacQueston in memory of her beloved husband, Bill MacQueston; Mildred and Arthur Lindblad; Alice, Harold, Kenneth and Jimmy MacQueston

Kathryn Ogborn in memory of Skyla Mahony, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Alt, Mr. and Mrs.

James Ogborn, Sr.

Tom and Sandy Peterkin in thanks for God's many blessings

Randy and Chris Punchard to the Glory of God

Paul and Martha Reier in memory of their parents, John and Jean Reier and Arch and
Ruth Ennis

Karen Shoberg in thanks for God's many gifts

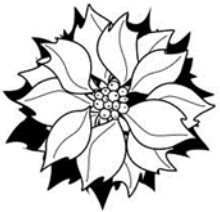
Shoenfelt Family to the Glory of God

Rosemary Stimson in memory of Clarence, Evangeline, and Christine Beal, Daniel,
Gerald, and Nancy Stimson

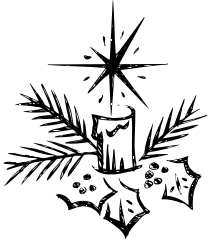
Jim Weilmuenster in loving memory of Sue Blanks Weilmuenster and Linda Laity Hite

Wiers Family in thanks for teachers everywhere

Sandi and Tom Witt in honor of their daughters Alina and Molly, and their
granddaughter, Samantha



Contributions to the Jean Kuhn Memorial Fund



Charles and Rosalie Frey to the Glory of God

Corey Knestrick in memory of Lynn Knestrick

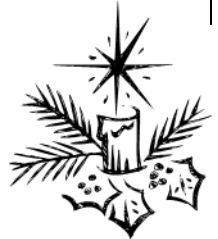
Jim and Janice Mayfield in memory of our parents

Harlan and Anne Schone in thanks for all at St. Stephen

Karen Shoberg in thanks for God's many gifts

Rosemary Stimson in memory of Clarence, Evangeline, and Christine Beal, Daniel,

Gerald, and Nancy Stimson



Leading our Worship and Hospitality Tonight

Acolyte/Crucifer.....	David Nelson
Altar Guild	Carol Wiers & Diane McCurry
Audio-Visual Team.....	
Bread Baker.....	Carol Wiers & Pat Fretz
Communion Assistants	Carol Wiers and Heidi Flatin
Flower Delivery	Diane McCurry
Greeters/Hosts	
Lector	Russ Dabel
Preacher.....	Pastor Jon O Nelson
Tellers.....	John McCurry, Carol Harman, Sandy Croushore
Ushers	Reed & Karen Nester


Copyright Information

Joy to the world ; Contributor Emma L Ashford, George Frideric Handel, ; © 1943, Lorenz Publishing Company, a division of The Lorenz Corporation

Christmas Meditation; Contributor Jason Krug; © 2015. Lorenz Publishing Company

The Joy of Christmas arr. Lloyd Larson © 1995, 2019 Agape a div. of Hope Publishing Company

The Holly and the Berry;arr. Austin C. Lovelace © 1989 Psalter Music Publications

To Us a Child Is Born; Contributor, J Clemons Non Papa; © 2010 St.James Press

Still,Still,Still; Contributor, Chris Biemesderfer.; © 2022 Augsburg Fortress

What Sweeter Music; Contributor, Eleanor Daley;

© 2002 Alliance publications

Lo, How a Rose E'er BLooming;setting Robert Groth,Kevin McChesney ;Ring Together Christmas 2

© 2010 Jeffers Handbell Supply Inc.

Silent Night; setting by Catherin McMicheal ©2022 St.James Press

Joy To the World; setting by Catherin McMicheal ©2022 St.James Press

Away in a Manger; setting by Catherin McMicheal ©2022 St.James Press

Joy to the World;arr. Michael Helman; © 2009 Birnamwood Publications (ASCAP), a division of MorningStar Music Publishers

One License Licensing Permission Reprinted/Streamed with permission under, One License #A721099

New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.



St. Stephen Lutheran Church

612 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

www.saintstephenlutheran.net

(757) 229-6688

We gather to worship and study God's Word to deepen our faith and live our Christian witness and service in the community.

(St. Stephen Lutheran Church Vision Statement)

All of Us, Called Through Our Baptisms

Pastor Jon Nelson (320-295-8861)

Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt (717-434-5037)

Karen Ives – Director of Music (757-229-6688)

Hollie Jones – Parish Administrator (229-6688)

Diana Tiller-Dichtel – Parish Nurse (232-5924)

Holly Ready – Preschool Director (229-6688)

Peninsula Pastoral Counseling Center (873-2273; counselors are in Williamsburg on Thursdays)

Doing Ministry in the World

Pastorjn@saintstephenlutheran.net

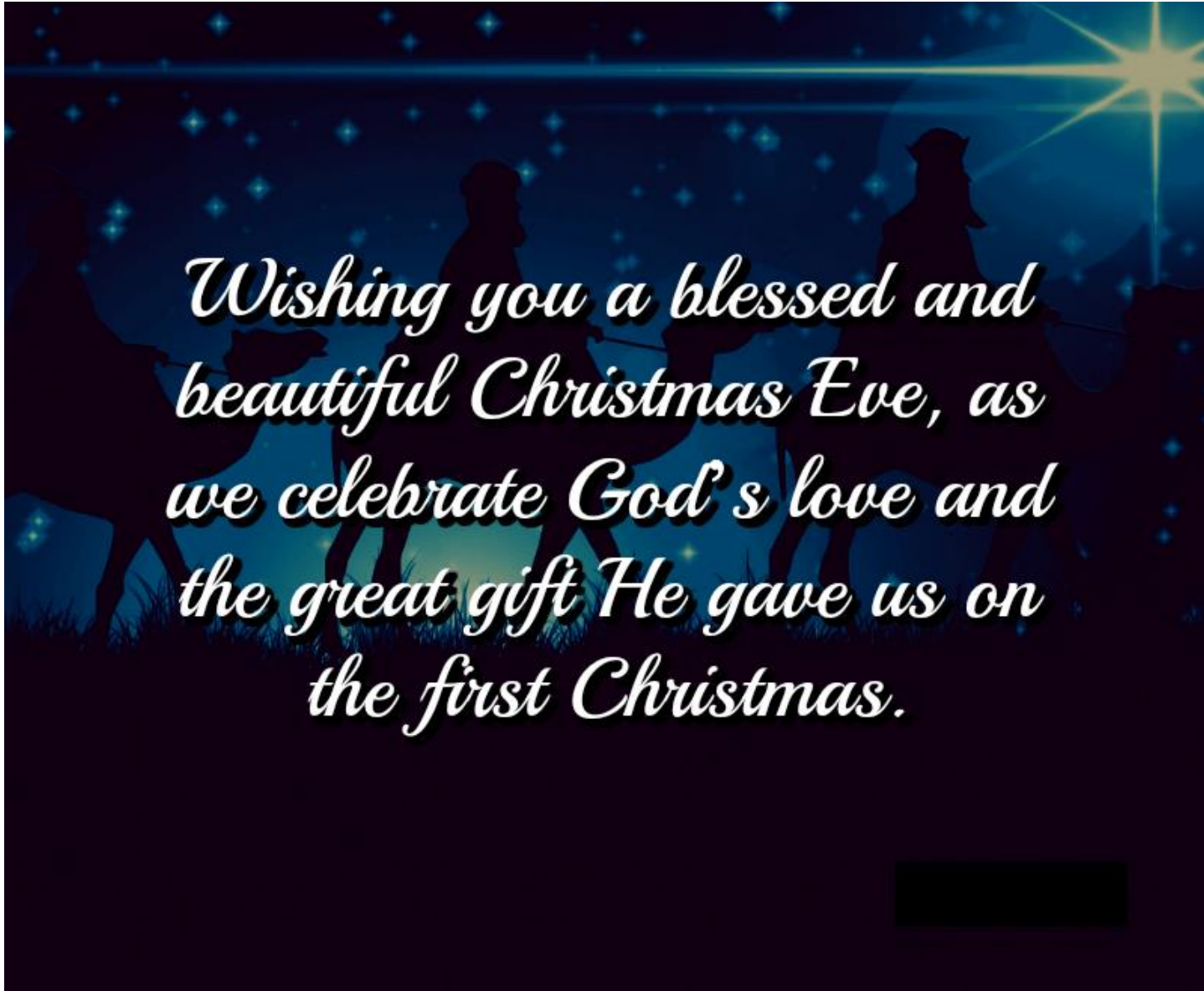
Pastorasw@saintstephenlutheran.net

MusicDir@saintstephenlutheran.net

Office@saintstephenlutheran.net

Parishnurse@saintstephenlutheran.net

Preschool@saintstephenlutheran.net

The background of the image is a dark blue night sky filled with numerous small, twinkling stars. A prominent, bright yellow star with a multi-pointed starburst effect is located in the upper right corner. In the foreground, the silhouettes of three camels are visible, each carrying a rider. The riders are positioned as if they are following the bright star in the distance. The overall scene is a classic representation of the Nativity story.

*Wishing you a blessed and
beautiful Christmas Eve, as
we celebrate God's love and
the great gift He gave us on
the first Christmas.*