

# St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Love God, Love People, Form Faith.

## One of 13,000 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.



November 16, 2025 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

## For Your Prayers –Nov 17-23, 2025

## **Lectionary readings for this week:**

Mon - Nov. 17 Ezekiel 11:14-25; Ephesians 4:25—5:2; Psalm 141

Tue - Nov. 18 Ezekiel 39:21—40:4; 1 Corinthians 10:23—11:1; Psalm141

Wed - Nov. 19 Ezekiel 43:1-12 ;Matthew 23:37—24:14; Psalm 141

Thu - Nov. 20 2 Chronicles 18:12-22; Hebrews 9:23-28; Psalm 46

Fri - Nov. 21 Zechariah 11:1-17;1 Peter 1:3-9; Psalm 46

Sat - Nov. 22 Jeremiah 22:18-30; Luke 18:15-17; Psalm 46

Next Sunday: Jeremiah 23:1-6 Psalm 46 (10) Colossians 1:11-20 Luke 23:33-43

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for Susan Britcher, Ingrid Brown, Preston Burton, Kristin Carter, Bob & Ginny Cummings, Edith Haecker, Sharon Jacobs, Rita Kristiansen, Jim Mayfield, Julie Meeks, Carole Meyer, Paul Reier, Carl and Mitchell Stauffer, Christopher Turner, and George Vonderheide.

<u>Pray for those unable to come to worship</u>: Ailene Bartlett, Ed Brown, Bob and Angie Groom, Pat Janot, Marilyn Johnson, Jeanne Nelson, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff.

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Jerry, Kay C., Susan, Rosa, Celeste, and Isaac, Sam Areheart, Randy Altona, Mary Anderson, Phyllis Andrews, Charles Baugh, Donald and Carol Baum, Robi Bayard, June Brantley, Carol Bergh, Mary Bloom, Doug Bolick, Kay Braman, Bob Britcher, Raymond Bunn, Cagel Family, Karin Cavanaugh, Joyce Clemens, Amaree Cluff, Ruth Ann Coski, Marie Davito, Pat D'Orazio, Judy Drezek, Becky Drury, Darrin and Rosemary Dunn, Eric Farrell, Neal & Julie Fenstermaker, Kay Flatin, Tanya Fritz, Joel Gillespie, Joan Goodhart, The family of Scott Hadly, Jonathan Hallman, Charee Hampton, Sue Hassan and family, Andy Havola, Nick Havola, Bradley, Kim, Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Lisa Hill, Doris Hillenbrand, Michelle Holdsworth, Jaxon Ireland, Claudia Jacobik, Justice Jefferson, Naomi Jefferson Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Connie Kendrick, The Kennedy family, Jenn Kramer, Elaine Lane, Jeff Laub, Pat Layton, Marnah Lund, Keara Mahony, Trish Macerelli, Laura Margolin, Ellen Martin, Mabel Mater, Jack Mayfield, Jackie Mazzone, Tom Mifflin, Jimmy Mitchell, Liz Montalvo, Ed Moninger, Kim Morris, Bob Myers, Jeanette Osborn, Maricel Paulin, Coral Pumley, Scott Radley, Kurt Recktenwald, Brian Ritter, Lou Schuster, Pamela Sharp, Kelsey Slay, Vasili Soultoukis, Kenneth & Laura Spencer, Chad Strausbaugh, Al Stern, Monika Stern, Janis Stevenson, George and Jewel Thomas, Karli Wallace Thompson, Jenn Tyson, Brenda Webster, Jim Weickgenant, Matt Weilmuenster, Roselee Williams, Caleb Winig, and Elaine Wrich.

## 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

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

#### Welcome

**Centering Music** How Firm a Foundation

Zach Unke

## Call to Worship

Followers of Christ, let us remember the path we have chosen:

The way of truth and life.

The way of love for our neighbors and ourselves.

The way of community and connection.

Followers of Christ, let us not grow weary in care for each other.

We will not turn against one another.

Evil tells stories that harm and isolate, but this we proclaim:

We belong to each other.

May this be our joy and our hope.

## **Opening Prayer**

Gracious One, keep us soft in heart toward each other. As struggle multiplies, may we resolve not to isolate ourselves or others. But to move into closer relationship, and into deeper connection. Deeper understanding. Deeper solidarity. We return to the witness of Jesus whose life was shaped by the hope of community, and the courage of compassion. **Amen.** 

**Gathering Hymn** 

How Firm a Foundation

ELW 796

Bulletin page 9

## 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**

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without you nothing is strong, nothing is holy. Embrace us with your mercy, that with you as our ruler and guide, we may live through what is temporary without losing what is eternal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.** 

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

First Reading Malachi 4:1-2a

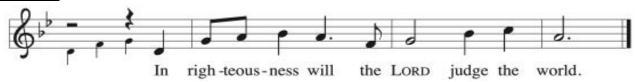
Malachi, whose name means "my messenger," warns that "the day is coming." On that day, the evil will be destroyed like stubble in a fire, but the "sun of righteousness" will shine on those who honor God.

See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will

leave them neither root nor branch. <sup>2a</sup> But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings

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

## Psalm 98



- <sup>1</sup> Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done <sup>1</sup> marvelous things, whose right hand and holy arm have <sup>1</sup> won the victory.
- <sup>2</sup>O LORD, you have made | known your victory, you have revealed your righteousness in the sight | of the nations.
- <sup>3</sup> You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the 1 house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the victory 1 of our God.
- <sup>4</sup>Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands; lift up your voice, re- | joice, and sing. REFRAIN
- <sup>5</sup> Sing to the LORD | with the harp, with the harp and the | voice of song.
- <sup>6</sup> With trumpets and the sound | of the horn shout with joy before the | king, the LORD.
- <sup>7</sup>Let the sea roar, and <sup>1</sup> all that fills it, the world and those who <sup>1</sup> dwell therein.
- Elet the rivers | clap their hands, and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to | judge the earth.
- <sup>9</sup>The LORD will judge the <sup>1</sup> world with righteousness and the peo- <sup>1</sup> ples with equity. **REFRAIN**

## **Second Reading**

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Some members of the Thessalonian community, because of their belief in the nearness of Christ's return, had ceased to work, living off the generosity of other members of the community. The writer of this letter warns them bluntly that if they want to eat, they need to work.

<sup>6</sup> Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother or sister living irresponsibly and not according to the tradition that they received from us. <sup>7</sup> For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not irresponsible when we were with you, <sup>8</sup> and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day so that we might not burden any of you. <sup>9</sup> This was not because we do not have that right but in order to give you an example to imitate. <sup>10</sup> For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: anyone unwilling to work should not eat. <sup>11</sup> For we hear that some of you are living irresponsibly, mere busybodies, not doing any work. <sup>12</sup> Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

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

## **Gospel Acclamation**



Stand up and | raise your heads,\* because your redemption is | drawing near. (Luke 21:28)

Gospel Luke 21:5-19

As history moves toward God's fulfillment there will be frightening signs and events. Before the end, believers will draw strength from their relationship to God and will be given the words they need to testify and to endure without fear.

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

<sup>5</sup> When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, [Jesus] said, 6 "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down." <sup>7</sup> They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" 8 And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray, for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them. 9 "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified, for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; <sup>11</sup> there will be great earthquakes and in various places famines and plagues, and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven. 12 "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. <sup>13</sup> This will give you an opportunity to testify. <sup>14</sup> So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance, <sup>15</sup> for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. <sup>16</sup> You will be betrayed even by parents and siblings, by relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. <sup>17</sup> You will be hated by all because of my name. <sup>18</sup> But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By your endurance you will gain your souls."

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

**Sermon:** Between the Burning and the Rising Pastor Jon Nelson

**Hymn of the Day**O God of Love, O King of Peace
ELW 749
Bulletin page 10

**Prayers** 

Each petition concludes: Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

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

## **Offering Invitation**

We belong to each other. Everything is shaped by community: Our wellness. Our livelihoods. Our spirits. Our cities. Our planet. We make or break each other - together. In this spirit, let us bring our offerings to God as an act of celebration of all we can do with and for each other, still and yet.

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 All Shall Be Well Russell Schulz-Widmar 11:00 Grant Us Thy Peace Felix Mendelssohn

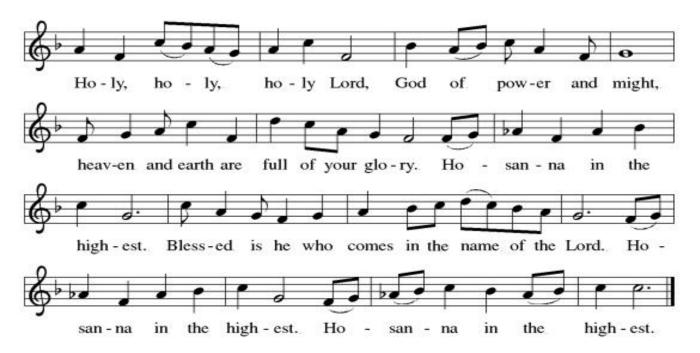
## **Offertory Prayer**

Provider and Protector, when we grow too arrogant, too individualistic, or too full of shame, we return to your teachings. We remember the utter grace of a planet that feeds us. We remember that the earth is not property but kin, alive and aching. We remember that everyone is indebted to others - that every good thing we experience is connected to others. We do this to remember our places - humble and entangled - in the whole of things. To the flourishing of the common good, we offer our gifts. **Amen.** 

## 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 to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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:



#### **Words of Institution**

## 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. All are welcome to the Lord's Supper.



## Though the Earth Shall Change

Though the Burth Shatt Change

## **Table Blessing**



## **Prayer after Communion**

God of field and flower, wheat and grape, you have nourished us with the bread of heaven that gives life to the world. Strengthened by the body and blood of your Son, send us out to gather your good gifts for all who hunger and thirst, and embolden us to love and serve in Christ's name. **Amen.** 

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

**Sending Hymn** 

Soon and Very Soon

ELW 439

Bulletin Page 12

## **Blessing**

The love of God the Sovereign strengthen you, God the Son save you, and God the Holy Spirit anoint you for the work ahead. The holy Trinity bless you + and grant you a faithful and courageous heart now and forever. Amen.

## **Dismissal**

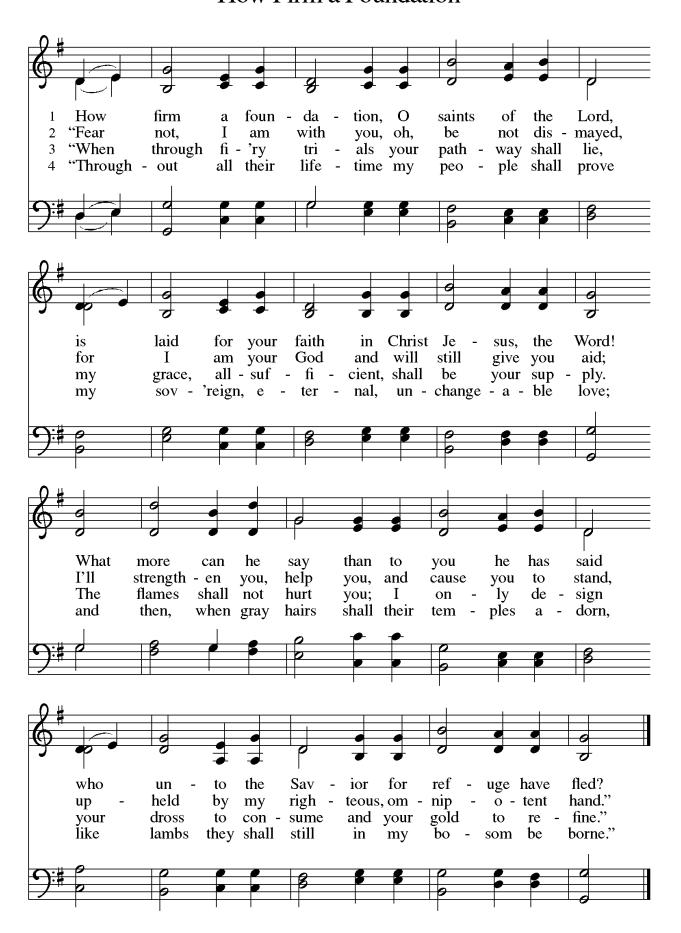
Go in peace. Share the harvest. Thanks be to God.

**Postlude** 

Soon and Very Soon

Jack Schrader

## How Firm a Foundation

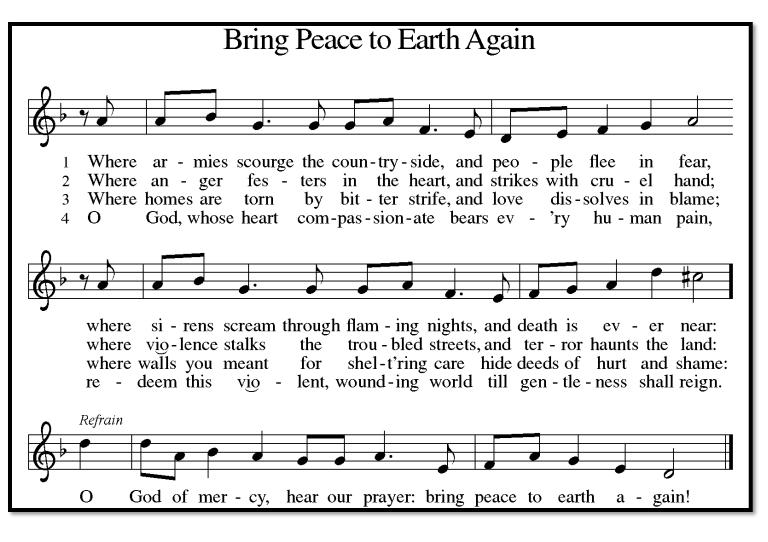


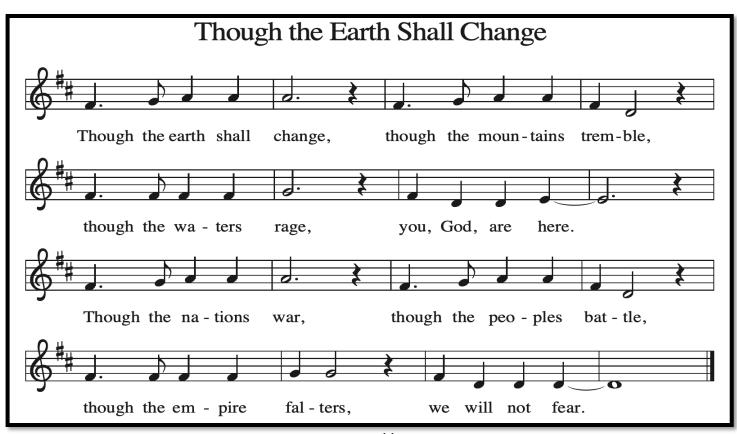
## O God of Love, O King of Peace



Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821-1877

Music: ERHALT UNS, HERR, J. Klug, Geistliche Lieder, 1543





## Soon and Very Soon



Text: Andraé Crouch, b. 1945

Music: VERY SOON, Andraé Crouch

Text and music © 1976 Bud John Songs, Inc./Crouch Music, admin. EMI Christian Music Publishing

## As We Gather

## Restrooms & First Aid

- ❖ A gender-neutral, family restroom and a Women's restroom can be found in the hallway behind our Worship Space.
- ❖ Additional Men's and Women's restrooms can be found on the lower level of the church building.
- ❖ A first aid kit and an A.E.D. can be found hanging on the wall in the hallway behind our Worship Space.

## **Live-streaming**

❖ We regularly live-stream our services and cannot guarantee that you will not appear on our YouTube channel. Sitting in the East Wing or the NE section of the Worship Space will minimize your chances of being on screen. We can also bring communion to you if you inform an usher of that desire.

## 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.org)
- ❖ When parents and children need to take a break for a few minutes, there's a play area (aka "prayground") with toys and books in the East wing of 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.

<u>Health Update</u>: 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 Bob and Carol Harman in celebration of their great-grandchild's first birthday.

<u>Parish Life:</u> Please join us this Sunday between services for a conversation about how we as a congregation can meet the needs of our St. Stephen community. We want to look at what works and vision what could be. Everyone is welcome to come and join this process. See Chris Punchard for more information.

**Quilting group** needs Queen size unfitted bed sheets (non-white). If you have any to donate, please feel free to drop them off at the office or Box in the gathering space.

## **Upcoming**

<u>Poinsettias and Jean Kuhn Memorial Fund.</u> Please let the Office know if you want to order poinsettias for Christmas Eve (\$21.00 each) and/or contribute to the Jean Kuhn Memorial Fund for Christmas. Slips can be found in the gathering space. This fund helps with those ministries needing assistance during the year for which we have not budgeted. **The deadline for poinsettias is Monday, November 24.** 



<u>Community Of Faith Mission:</u> St. Stephen is partnering with the Williamsburg United Methodist Church to feed and shelter the homeless in our community. The dates of our participation are **Thursday, November 20** through **Saturday, November 22.** We are looking for volunteers for four shifts each night.

<u>Pledge cards</u>: Please make sure that all pledge cards are put in the offering plate or that they get turned into the office.

## The last date to accept 2025 donations is December 27th

The Kitchen Keepers I would like to introduce you to the Kitchen Keepers of St Stephen. We are a small but mighty group who works to keep the kitchen clean and safe. Our cleaning contract with an outside contractor does NOT include the kitchen! So this group once a month, cleans the refrigerator, disinfects counters and cabinets, cleans the dishwasher filter, the drip pans on the stove and washes the floor. As you can see it's a lot to keep up with. So we are asking anyone or group that uses the kitchen to be sure if you're using the kitchen for anything that you have a person or two designated as your clean up crew. Please wipe down the counters, wash your dishes, put them away and take home any food that is left over. PLEASE DON'T LEAVE DIRTY DISHES IN THE SINK, IT ATTRACTS BUGS. Thank you for your help. If you have questions please contact Chris Punchard.

The Preschool and the Church Office will be closed November 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

## St. Stephen Calendar: November 16-23, 2025

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

SUNDAY, N	November 16 ~ 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost
8:00 AM	Matins Choir Warm-up (Worship Space)
8:30 AM	Worship - Holy Communion (livestreamed on our YouTube channel)
9:45 AM	Matins Choir Rehearsal (Worship Space)
9:50 AM	Faith Formation: AoB & 6 <sup>th</sup> Graders (Library & Pastor's Office)
10:00 AM	Parish Life Convo (Fellowship Hall)
10:30 AM	Chancel Choir Warm-up (Worship Space)
11:00 AM	Worship – Holy Communion
6:00 PM	LSA Dinner (College room)
MONDAY,	November 17
10:00 PM	Staff meeting (Pastor Jon's Office)
1:30 PM	Bible Study (Library/Conference room)
3:00 PM	Stephen Ministry meeting (Library/Conference room)

#### **TUESDAY, November 18**

7:00 PM Church Council (Fellowship Hall)

#### WEDNESDAY, November 19

8:55 AM	Yoga (Gathering space)
5:00 PM	Girl Scouts (Preschool Room)
7:00 PM	Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Worship Space)
7:00 PM	AA meeting (Fellowship Hall)

## THURSDAY, November 20

11:30 AM	Bulletin Review (Office)
2:00 PM	Preschool Committee meeting (Library/ Conference room)
5:30 PM	St. Stephen Ringer Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

## FRIDAY, November 21

## **SATURDAY, November 22**

11:30 AM	Orcha Band Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
5:30 PM	AA Meeting (Library/conference room)
5:30 PM	AlAnon (Gathering Space)

## **SUNDAY, November 23** ~ 24<sup>th</sup> Christ the King

8:00 AM	Matins Choir Warm-up (Worship Space)
8:30 AM	Worship - Holy Communion (livestreamed on our YouTube channel)
9:45 AM	Matins Choir Rehearsal (Worship Space)
10:30 AM	Chancel Choir Warm-up (Worship Space)
11:00 AM	Worship – Holy Communion
7:00 PM	HART Interfaith Thanksgiving Service (Walsingham Academy)

## **Leading our Worship and Hospitality Today**

Acolyte/Crucifer	(8:30) Corey Knestrick
	(11:00) Alina Dabel
Altar Guild	(8:30) Diane McCurry
	(11:00)
	(8:30) Nancy Carter (11:00) Mike Morgan
Bread Baker	Paul Kristiansen
Cantors	(8:30)Randy Punchard (11:00) Brian Hesse
Communion Assistants	(8:30) Paula Agor and Karen Shoberg
	(11:00) Jennifer Dabel and Alina Dabel
	Nelia Lamoureux
Greeters/Hosts	(8:30) Beth Grant (11:00) Diana Tiller-Dichtel
Lectors	(8:30) Linda Baumgarten (11:00) Jeanne Garrison
	Pastor Jon Nelson
Tellers	Jeanne Garrison and Carol Brown
	(8:30) Tom and Sandy Peterkin (11:00)

## 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 Baptisms Pastor Jon Nelson (320-295-8861) Karen Ives – Director of Music (757-229-6688) Hollie Jones – Parish Administrator (229-6688) Jessica Kimball – Preschool Director (229-6688) Doing Ministry in the World Pastorjn@saintstephenlutheran.net MusicDir@saintstephenlutheran.net Office@saintstephenlutheran.net Preschool@saintstephenlutheran.net

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

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

November 16, 2025

Name:			
For guests and members			
Address (Home)			
City/State	Zip	<u> </u>	
Telephone #			
E-Mail Address		_	
Guests Only: I belong to			
Church Address			
Please check as many as pe			
Member			
First time guest			
Regular guest			
Guest (out of town)			
Student at William &			
Looking for a church			
Desire to speak with	_		
Would like more info	ormation about Ste	phen Ministry	
Any comments? Please be	sure your name is	above, so we may resp	pond, if necessary.

# **Prayer Requests**

Name:	
Please <b>remove</b> from prayer con	ncerns:
Name:	
I/ We need a name tag	
_ I/We would like to help with	COFM preparing the:
Thursday, Nov 20	
Dinner	
Friday, Nov 21	
Breakfast	
Dinner	
Saturday, Nov 22	
Breakfast	
e	

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November 16, 2025

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For guests and members with			
Address (Home)			
City/State	Zip		
Telephone #			
E-Mail Address			
Guests Only: I belong to			
Church Address			-
Please check as many as pertai			-
Member			
First time guest			
Regular guest			
Guest (out of town)			
Student at William & Ma			
Looking for a church hor			
Desire to speak with past Would like more information		ephen Ministry	
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