

Lord, how often
should I forgive?

MATTHEW 18:21



16th Sunday after Pentecost

September 17, 2023

10:00 a.m.

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians from every tradition. Welcome to all who have no church home, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. Welcome to new visitors and old friends. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation and marital status, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners and questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate and sorrow, rejoice and recover. This is a place where lives are made new. Welcome on this day.

Please fill out the “Worship Slip” and place it in the offering plate.

(*) Asterisk means, “Please stand as you are able.”

Music

“When Morning Gilds the Skies”

German Hymn Joseph Barnby 1838~ 1896

The Gathering

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

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

P: Blessed be God, the one who forms us,
+ Christ Jesus who bears the cross,
And the Holy Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Steadfast and faithful God,

**C: You have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.**

We are overwhelmed

by the world's violence and suffering.

**We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.**

**For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.**

**For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.**

**For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.**

Lead us back to you and set us on the right path:

**In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Friend
Amen.**

P: Beloved in Christ,

God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.

God's compassion is beyond compare.

In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.

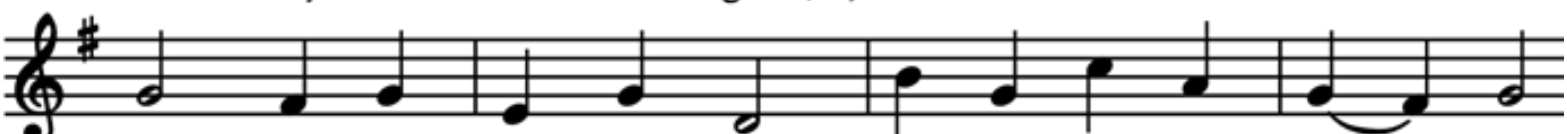
In + Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C: Amen.

*Opening Hymn *“Come, Christians, Join to Sing”*



1. Come, Chris-tians, join to sing
2. Come, lift your hearts on high;
3. Praise yet our Christ a-gain; } Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



1. Loud praise to Christ our King;
2. Let prais-es fill the sky;
3. Life shall not end the strain; } Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



1. Let all, with heart and voice, Be - fore his throne re - joice;
2. He is our guide and friend; Our cry he will at - tend;
3. On heav-en's joy - ful shore His good-ness we'll a - dore,



1. Praise is his gra-cious choice:
2. His love shall nev - er end:
3. Sing - ing for - ev - er - more: } Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!

*Greeting

*P: The grace that is Christ's gift to us,
 The love of God,
 and the unity of the Spirit
 in the bond of peace be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Kyrie

“Spirit, Open My Heart”

ACS #1043

REFRAIN

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving.

Spirit, open my heart.

1. God, replace my stony heart
with a heart that’s kind and tender.

All my coldness and fear

to your grace I now surrender.

REFRAIN

2. Write your love upon my heart
as my law, my goal, my story.

In each thought, word, and deed,

may my living bring you glory.

REFRAIN

3. May I weep with those who weep;
Share the joy of friend and neighbor.

As I live from day to day,

love will be my finest labor.

REFRAIN

*Prayer of the Day

God Stories

The Word of God

First Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

Celebrate pg. 1

Second Reading

Romans 14:1-12

Celebrate pg. 2

*Gospel Acclamation

ELW #175

ALLELUIA



*Gospel Reading

Matthew 18:21-35

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Matthew, the 18th Chapter

C: Glory to you, O God.

(The Gospel is read)

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Message

*Hymn of the Day

“Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive” #605 (repeat vs 1)

“forgive our sins as we forgive,”
You taught us, Lord, to pray;
But you alone can grant us grace
To live the words we say.

How can your pardon reach and bless
The unforgiving heart
That broods on wrongs and
Will not let old bitterness depart?

In blazing light your cross reveals
The truth we dimly knew:
How trifling others' debts to us;
How great our debt to you!

Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls
And bid resentment cease;
Then, by your mercy reconciled,
Our lives will spread your peace.

*The Prayers of the Church

Celebrate, Page 4

* Passing of the Peace

P: May the peace of God be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Offering — We honor and worship God by returning some
of the gifts with which we have been blessed.

Music

“Come Share the Sport of The Lord”
Smallwood 1948

*Words of Institution

*Lord's Prayer

**C: Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is 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**

P: The gifts of God for the people of God.
Come for all is ready!

(You may be seated)

Hymn

“Goodness Is Stronger Than Evil” #721 (repeat often)

Goodness is stronger than evil;
Love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness;
Life is stronger than death;
vict'ry is ours, vict'ry is ours,
Through God who loves us.
Vict'ry is ours, vict'ry is ours,
Through God who loves us.

The Sending

*Blessing

P: May the God of glory,
+ Jesus Christ, the Lover of all humanity,
and the Spirit who lives in you,
bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Closing Hymn

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

Red #836

1. Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,
Praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
Drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.
2. All thy works with joy surround thee,
Earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in thee.

(Hymn continued)

3. Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,
All who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine!

*Dismissal

P: Go in Peace. God is at work in you.
C: **Thanks be to God.**



Music

“When in Our Music God is Glorified”
Charles Anders 1929

Serving Today

Reader: Janet Slay

Coffee Host: Connie Cunningham & Jeanette Dawson

Office Support: Sheila Buswell & Sherilyn Jager

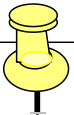


Blessing of Animals

**October 1st
10:00 am**

Bring your pet or a
photograph of your

pet to receive a special blessing during worship. All creatures great and small are welcome! This custom is conducted in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's celebration of all of God's creation including all the animals, on the Sunday his life is remembered and his witness of faith is lifted up.



Your God Stories:

SAVE THE DATE

SUNDAY OCTOBER 29
10:00 AM

Confirmation

Affirmation of Baptism

&

Church 70th Anniversary

Celebration

Stay tuned for more info...

Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM:

Family of Lupe Rodriguez, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Father Jack Davis, Keith, Frank, Pr. Susan, Mike Homer, Charlie & Tracy, Andre, Joshua & Andrea, Irma, Family of Deane Strong & M. Hudi, Sam, Family of Jim Schafer, Jamie Sheehan, Family of Ron Mullen, Family of Sonya Miller, Ralph, Aria Brown, Karin Zaun, Family of Mark Oeding, Conrad, Boudreau family, Chelsea, John, Tim, Charmaine, Linda, Atlas, Tony, Sandi Csik, Janiea Paustian, Amy Wimmer, Gray, Hailey, Jesse, Joyce, James, John, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Rowe, George & Scott, Darlene Woodburn, Jacob & Family, Barbara Hansen, Tom Harris, Barbara Allen, Rena Brown, Carla Brown, Kathy, Joel Hurttgam, Jacob & Family, Sandy, Levi & Alexandria, Norman's Father, friends in Bakersfield, Gary Toops, Donna Kemper, Lisa & Beau, Craig Dahl, Family of Kurt Bell, Genell Csik, Barbara Barte, Family of Mark Cronquist, Barbara Stiles, Paul Cunningham, Anita & Howard, Sydnei Wilbywold, Paul Paustian, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Nancy, Marisa & Isaac, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Anthony, Steve, Margot Wilson, Rose, Will, Aaron Johnson, Sal, Katarina, Taiyo, Stephanie Jager, Parents, Healthcare workers & teachers.

LONG TERM:

Biergiel—Colclough family, April McCalmont, Marty Nehring, Miller Mouw, Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Michelle, Josh, CJ, Bobbie Erickson, Lupe, Joyce, Susan Anderson, Jan Wagner, Richard C., Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Karin, Will, Chris, Pearl Runquist, Volpi & Robe Family, Cabel, Noah, Esdras, Immigrant families, The Homeless, People of Ukraine, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family, men and women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.



The Altar flowers are given by
Paul & Connie Cunningham
In honor of their 56 anniversary

Music at St. Stephen's



Today the *Good News Singers* will introduce the new song:

"Come Christians Join to Sing" with *All That Brass*
Anthony Plaza , Rawley Capone, and
Adonay Gonzalez . . . all of Soquel Music

Still looking forward to strings & woodwinds in our service. Many talented young musicians are eager to participate in our church music. So, come on down!

Thanksgiving Brass — November 19

Christmas Brass — December 31

Please donate to the “Musicians Fund”
to enhance our worship together

Musical Quote:

“Dear music, thank you for always
Clearing my head, healing my heart,
And lifting my spirits”

~ Unknown

Upcoming Events:

September Benevolence Offering Lutheran Campus Ministry

TBA Confirmation 6:30 pm

Sept. 18 Newsletter Deadline noon

Sept. 19 Boy Scouts 7:00 pm

Sept. 20 Women's Café Group 6:00 pm

Sept. 21 Knitters Guild 10 am

Sept. 21 Preschool chapel 10:15 am

Sept. 21 Bible Study 11:00 am & 7:30 pm

Sept. 21 Mens beginner A.A. 7:00 pm

Sept. 22 A.A. 7:00 pm

Sept. 23 Marshall Bautz Memorial
1:00 pm Christ Lutheran Aptos

Sept. 26 Provide Habitat Lunches 10:30 am

Sept. 28 NL Collating 2:00 pm

Oct. 1 Blessing of the Animals 10 am

Oct. 10 Church Council 6:30 pm

Pastor's Office Hours Wed & Thurs. 10:00 to 1:00

Our Mission Statement

St. Stephen's is a welcoming, healing community who worship God in Christ, nurture people growing in faith, serve others with acceptance and love, invite people to share the joy of the Spirit.

Reconciling in Christ

"We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ."

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Office Hours: Mon.—Fri. Noon—5:00 pm

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp
Music Director: Gary Roberts
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp
Custodian: John Hopping
Powerpoint: Jay Johnston, Kent Madsen & Barbara Rice

Music used by permission Onelicense #A-706539