

*Jesus was led by the Spirit
in the wilderness* LUKE 4:1



Let us pray:

Prayer of Confession

**Holy God, you have told us to love our neighbors as ourselves,
but we get tripped up on logistics.**

We want to know: who is our neighbor?

Do we have to love the stranger?

Must we have compassion for our enemy?

Forgive our human tendency to create exceptions in the face of love.

Rewire our hearts so that we might see

the face of a neighbor in every stranger we pass.

With hope we pray, Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

Family of faith, when we set limits on love,

God loves extravagantly.

When we forget that we are neighbors,

God claims us as God's own.

When we judge, hold back, or harm,

God surrounds us with grace.

There is nothing we can do or leave undone

that could separate us from the love of God.

This is the good news of the gospel. Thanks be to God! Amen.

*Opening Hymn *“As The Winter Days Grow* Blue #924

As the winter days grow longer,

drawing short the hours of night;

As our eager expectation waits for Easter's dawning light ~

Yearning people, here we gather,

turning watchful eyes to you:

God who blesses earth with spring time,

shine within our world anew!

(Continued next page)

As the vines burst into blossom,
fragrant in the morning air,
Lifting spirits with their sweetness,
luring hearts to thankful prayer ~
Lenten people, here we gather,
seeking lives refreshed from sin.
God who blesses earth with springtime,
bloom within our hearts again!

As we journey through this season,
pilgrims through a thirsty land,
Quench us with your living presence;
guide us with your loving hand.
Wand'ring people, here we gather,
called to rest a long our way.
God who blesses earth with springtime,
grant us Sabbath joy this day!

*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.

Kyrie—We bring our burdens, cares and hopes for God's mercy.



1. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy.
2. Christ, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy.
3. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy.

*Prayer of the Day

Celebrate insert pg. 1

P: May God be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray...

C: (following the prayer) **Amen.**

The Word of God

First Reading

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Celebrate pg. 1

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy Word..

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 91:1-16

Celebrate pg. 2

Second Reading

Romans 10:8

Celebrate pg. 3

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

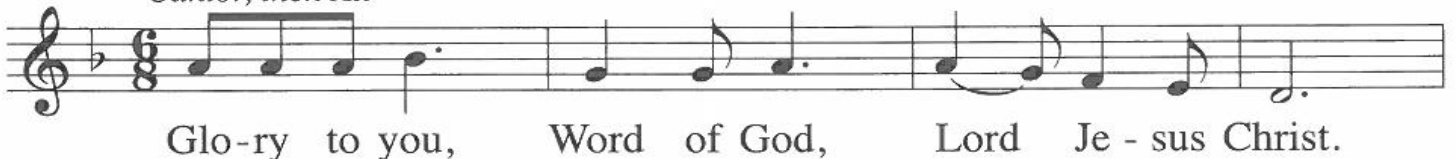
C: **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation—Leader sings first, then all together.

After the Gospel, all sing together twice.

GOSPEL

Cantor, then All



P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 4th Chapter

C: **Glory to you, O God.**

*Gospel Reading

Luke 4:1-13

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ. (Sing “Glory to you...” twice)**

*Hymn of the Day *“When We are Tested”* *Blue #922*

When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.

When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.

When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for power to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.

When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

Prayer for Illumination

Gracious God,

We love to ask you questions.

We love to throw our wonderings at the sky,

to bring our curiosity to your feet,

to examine, beseech, and imagine all day long.

But when the answers come, we don't always like what we hear.

Awaken a curiosity in us.

Awaken a penchant for listening,

and make room in our spirits for your Word to land.

With hope we question, we wonder, we dream, we listen. Amen.

Affirmation of faith

Church, if God asked you, “Who is your neighbor?”
what would you say?

**We would say,
every child, every person,
every weeping willow,
and every morning lark.
Every freckled face,
every wrinkled pair of hands,
every tail-wagging dog,
and every crisp ripe apple.**

**We would say,
we are connected—
to one another, to all of God’s creation.
There are no strangers in God’s house.
We are all family here.**

I think God would delight in that answer. For it is said,
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your strength,
with all your mind,
and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

We believe. Help our unbelief. Amen.

*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.

The Communion Meal

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

Music “As Your Spirit in the Desert”
Michael Costello, music 1979

*Offering Prayer

**C: Gracious Provider,
You have set your immense treasures among us,
Opening your heart to the world.
As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,
Deepen our commitment
to sharing those treasures with others.
Through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

A Prayer of Invocation

God meets us in the night—
**before the sun rises,
before the wound heals,
before there are answers,
before there is closure. (*continued*)**

God meets us in the light—
**where joy is effervescent,
where laughter is contagious,
where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
where people gather around tables.**

God meets us in between—
**at the edge of the water,
at the beginning of the wilderness,
at the start of something new,
on the edge of faith.**

And if God meets us in all those places,
**then surely God meets us everywhere—
at the water’s edge, at the start of something new,
after the baptism, and in the bread and cup.**

We are not alone. God is all around.

Let us worship the God of everything.

*Great Thanksgiving

P: May God be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to God.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.....

*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 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**

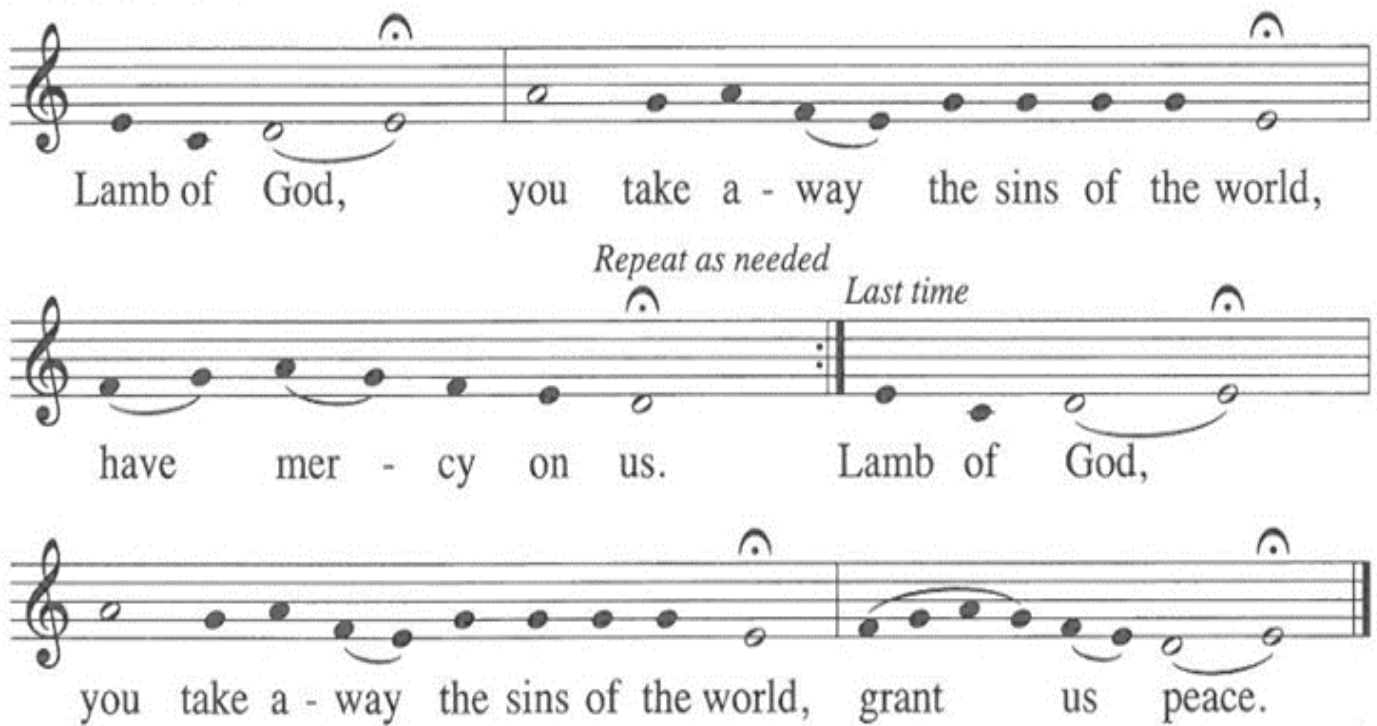
Invitation to Communion

P: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread..

Holy Communion — ALL, Yes — EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Communion is by intinction, we dip the bread into either the wine (red) or grape juice (white).

AGNUS DEI



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world,
have mer - cy on us. *Repeat as needed* Lamb of God, *Last time*
you take a - way the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Communion Hymn “Sometimes Our Only Song” Blue #1050

Sometimes our only song is weeping;
our only sound is gasping breath.
Sometimes it seems that God is sleeping
while our brief lives are bound in death.
Who hears the song our sorrows swallow
and offers hope to calm our fears?
When all our words seem frail and hollow,
God heeds the prayers within our tears.

Sometimes we catch the faintest humming,
a faroff tune our hearts know well.
Sometimes we sense the Spirit coming.
Our song returns; our voices swell.
The Spirit sings though we are shaken,
and Christ has shared our heartfelt cries.
Restored, our weary souls awaken
to join God’s song that never dies.

*Communion Blessing

P: May this Holy Communion of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us in God's grace now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Prayer After Communion

P: Generous Host, You have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

The Sending

Blessing

P: As you leave this place,

may you find God in every messy middle.

May you know that the world is bigger than two sides.

May you trust that you are made in the image of God, and therefore, you contain multitudes.

So may you move through this world with an open heart, with a curious mind, and with the confidence that you do not go alone.

God is with you in the mountains, in the valleys, and everywhere in between.

Believe that good news, and go in peace.

C: Amen.

*Closing Hymn “What a Fellowship,…” Red #774

**What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.**

(continued)

Refrain:

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
leaning on the everlasting arms. Refrain

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms. Refrain

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude “Restore in Us, God and Remove Our Sins”
Music, David Hunt 1950

Serving Today

Reader: Janet Slay

Coffee Host: Rebecca Wickham

Altar Guild: Tina Gates

SHORT TERM: family of George Webber, Jim Aller's family, Margaret, Bill Giles family, Dr. Bruce Dunn's family, Grey, Ruth Stiles, Susan Birkelo Family, James, Riley, Mary Saccullo, Chad Fields, Ana Cardenas, Rose, Levi, Lisa J., John B., Linda, Glosier family, Unemployed, Isaac & Marissa, Chris Powers, Gloria, Marta's parents, Gary & Louse Matz, Nick, James, Mary D., Tom, Galahad, Debbie, Sam, Nate Barker, Robbin, Francisco, Michael, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, Sierra, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, Taiyo, Marissa, Isaac, Alvarado family, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Sandi Csik, Sam, Adolfo, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Allen, Gary & Marjie Toops, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Nancy, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Sal, Katarina, Stephanie Jager.

LONG TERM: Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Carla Brown, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit and family (Ethiopia), April McCalmont, Marty Nehring, Miller Mouw, Kyle Lapp, Aaron Johnson, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Lisa & Beau, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Bobbie Erickson, Susan Anderson, Jan Wagner, Brouse Family, Karin, Will, Chris, Volpi & Robe Family, Cabel, Noah, Esdras, Immigrant families, The Homeless, People of Ukraine, People of Palestine/Israel, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child De-

Music at St. Stephen's



Thank you, Tina Gates & Steven Hendrickson, for joining the outreach steering committee. We have openings for two additional spots (of course—all are welcome) especially your ideas, and spirit of the invitation to others.

I have an artist who is interested in designing a logo for the music programs, and special music. This will be a great asset for our team.

Again: Join the Easter Choir or stay with year round. If you read or sing parts — Yes!

Thank you for your donations to the musicians fund.

Sing, for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter morning

Yours in Christ & Mission, Gary



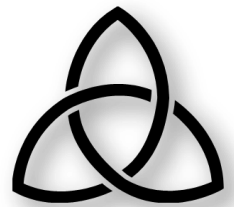
Long Range Task Force Small Group Meetings

Sundays, March 23 & 30 at 11:30 a
and
Thurs. March 27 & April 3 at 7:00 p

Plan to gather for these important conversations as we begin to plan for our ministry in the next 5 years.

Trinity Tuesday

April 1 at 6:30pm



Place: Discretion Brewing 41st Ave.

1 HOUR 1 QUESTION 1 DRINK (3-in-1)

Bring your deepest questions about:

- God, Faith, and the Biblical narrative
- The big questions that keep you up at night

Come with:

- An open mind
- A willingness to engage in respectful dialogue

*Join the conversation. Challenge your assumptions.
Deepen your understanding.*

All viewpoints welcome. Come as you are.

Questions: Call Kathy Allen at 831-430-6359
or email allen.kj@comcast.net

Upcoming Events:

March Benevolence Offering — Scholarship Fund

Easter Lilies for sale today through April 10

March 11 Boy Scouts 6:00 pm

April 1 Trinity Tuesday 6:30 pm Discretion Brew.

March 12 Preschool Chapel 10:15

**March 12 Lent Soupers 6:00 pm (sign up to host)
Worship 7:00 pm**

March 13 MMRR Circle 10:30 am

March 13 Mens beginner A.A. Thurs. 7:00 pm Fireside

March 14 A.A. Fridays 7:00 pm Fellowship Hall

March 23 & 30 Long Range Meetings 11:30 am

March 27& April 3 Long Range Meeting 7:00 pm

April 13 Palm Sunday Dramatic Worship—readers pls

April 17 Maundy Thursday 7:00 pm

April 18 Good Friday 7:00 pm

April 19 Easter set up 10 am

April 20 Easter Breakfast & celebration
— help needed

Pastor's Office Hours: Weds. & Thur. 10:00—1:00 pm

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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Web Address: www.ststephenslutheran.org
Office Hours: Mon.—Fri. Noon—5:00 pm

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp
Church Musician: Gary Roberts
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens
Custodian: John Hopping
Videographers: Kent Madsen & Barb Rice

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prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org