

Carry
the
cross and
follow
me

LUKE 14:27



13th Sunday after Pentecost

September 7, 2025

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 “Now Thank We All Our God”
from Cantata No 79 Johann Sebastian Bach
Arr. Virgil Fox

The Gathering

*Confession and Forgiveness

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Seeking reconciliation with God and neighbor,
let us remember the gift of baptism and confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of mercy

**C: We confess that we have sinned against you,
Against one another,
And against the earth entrusted to our care.
We are worried and distracted by many things,
And we fail to love you above all else.
We store up treasures for ourselves
And turn away from our neighbors in need.
Forgive us,
that we may live in the freedom of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P: When we were laid low by sin and the world's evil,
God made us alive together with Christ,
Forgiving us + all our trespasses
By taking the sin of the world to the cross.
For freedom Christ has set us free:
Rejoice in this good news!

C: Amen.

*Opening Hymn “O God beyond all Praising” Red 880

O God beyond all praising, we worship you today
And sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay;
For we can only wonder at ev'ry gift you send,
At blessings without number and mercies without end:
We lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word,
We honor and adore you, our great and mighty Lord.

The flow'r of earthly splendor in time must surely die,
It's fragile bloom surrender to you, the Lord most high;
But hidden from all nature the eternal seed is sown ~
Though small in mortal stature,
to heaven's garden grown:
For Christ, your gift from heaven,
from death has set us free,
And we through him are given the final victory.

(hymn continued)

Then hear, O gracious Savior, accept the love we bring,
That we who know your favor
may serve you as our King;
And whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill,
We'll triumph through our sorrows
and rise to less you still:
To marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways,
And make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.

*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 & Hymn of Praise

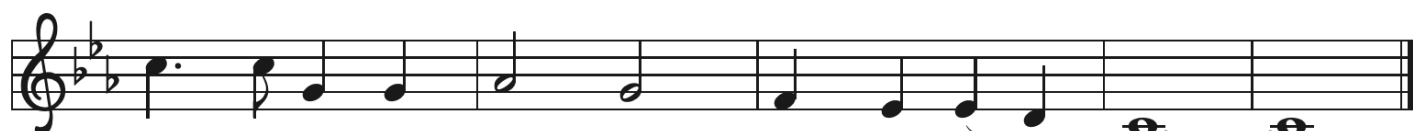
Blue #31



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.



Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.



1 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
2 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
3 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;



yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
yours the ho - san - nas, the dy - ing, re - birth.
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.



Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
Ours the re - joic - ing for na - ture re - claimed;
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;



ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.



Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;



yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

*Prayer of the Day

The Word of God

First Reading Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Celebrate pg. 1

R: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Psalm 1 (read responsively) Celebrate pg. 2

Second Reading Philemon 1-21 Celebrate pg. 3

R: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation Blue #33

Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

*Gospel Reading

Luke 14:25-33

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Luke, the 14th Chapter

C: Glory to you. O God.

(The Gospel is read)

P: This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

Message

Rev. James P. Lapp

*Hymn of the Day

“Faith Begins by Letting Go”

Blue #1004

Faith begins by letting go,
giving up what had seemed sure,
taking risks and pressing on,
though the way feels less secure:
pilgrimage both right and odd,
trusting all our life to God.

Faith endures by holding on,
keeping mem’ry’s roots alive
so that hope may bear its fruit;
promise-fed, our souls will thrive,
not through merit we possess
but by God’s great faithfulness.

Faith matures by reaching out,
stretching minds, enlarging hearts,
sharing struggles, living prayer,
binding up the broken parts;
till we find the commonplace
ripe with witness to God’s grace.

The Communion Meal

* 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 “A Setting for Church” Artur Kapp

Offering Prayer

P: Blessed are you, O God,
For the greening earth given for all,
For the talents we are given to share,
And for this bread and fruit of the vine.
Transform us to be the body of Christ,
That, feasting on this food and drink,
Our lives may reflect your generosity;
Through Christ our Lord,

C: Amen

*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 God thanks and praise.

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

P: God invites you to this table of bounty.
Come, the banquet is ready.

(Please be seated)

Communion Gathering Song



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion Hymn

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

Red #810

O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
Remain forever near me, my Master and my Friend.
I shall not fear the battle if you are by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if you will be my Guide.

Oh, let me feel you near me; the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear.
My foes are ever near me, around me and within;
But, Jesus, then draw nearer to shield my soul from sin.

Oh, let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will.
Now speak to reassure me, to hasten, or control;
Now speak and make me listen, O Guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you
That where you are in glory your servant shall be too.
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
Oh, give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.

The Sending

*Prayer after Communion

P: O God, in this Holy Communion
You have welcomed us into your presence,
Nourished us with words of mercy,
And fed us at your table.
Amid the cares of this life,
Strengthen us to love you with all our heart,
Serve our neighbors with a willing spirit,
And honor the earth you have made;
Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

*Blessing

P: Live your lives in Christ,
rooted and built up in God's Spirit.
May you abound in thanksgiving;
And may the blessing of the holy Trinity, + one God,
Be upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen

*Closing Hymn *“Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song”*
Red #808

Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey;
I'll tell ev'rybody about you wherever I go:
you alone are our life and our peace and our love.
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.

Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.
May all of my joy be a faithful reflection of you.
May the earth and the sea and the sky join my song.
Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.

As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant,
to carry your cross and to share all your burdens and
tears.
For you saved me by giving your body and blood.
As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant.

I fear in the dark and the doubt of my journey;
but courage will come with the sound of your steps by
my side.
And with all of the family you saved by your love,
we'll sing to your dawn at the end of our journey.

*Dismissal

P: Go in Peace, Christ is sending you.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

Music “Rigaudon” from I Do Me’ Ned, Andre Campra
Arr. Virgil Fox

The Altar Flowers are given
by Sheila Buswell
In memory of Ron



Serving Today

Reader: Elke Spires

Coffee Host:

Altar Guild: Judi Alvarado

Office Support: Sheila Buswell & Sherilyn Jager



SHORT TERM: Georgina Beyer's family, Nancy, Jennifer Linkeon, Corrine & Daniel, Tom D., Connie Garcia & Family, Laura, Ayla, Tate, The World & Texas, Family of Elizabeth Schilling, Tina & family, Family of Patrick McCalmont, Atlas, Ana, Kathybelle Barlow,

Family & friends of Rev. Jim Carr, Mt. Cross Summer Staff, Family of Ed Valencia, Family of Tex Ronning, Carla Brown, Tim Oldfield, James S. Chad Fields, Grey, Levi, Lisa J., John B., Linda, Unemployed, Gloria, Marta's parents, Gary & Louse Matz, Nick, James, Mary D., Galahad, Debbie, Sam, Nate Barker, Robin, Francisco, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, 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, Isaac & Marissa, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Sal, Katarina, Stephanie Jager.

LONG TERM: Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit and family (Ethiopia), Miller, April, Aaron Johnson, Shelby, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Bobbie Erickson, Mike, Susan Anderson, Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Karin, Will, Chris and John B. Immigrant families, The Homeless, People of Ukraine, People of Palestine/Israel, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, S.S. Senior Housing, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family, men & women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.

* Please notify when to remove *



Habitat Update

It has been about a year since we last provided lunches to the volunteers, but that does not mean the organization is at a standstill. Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay's administrative office, currently located in Santa Cruz, will consolidate the staff office space with the Watsonville Restore location. Habitat's dedicated construction volunteers have taken on this rehab project, which is scheduled for completion in early September. A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is tentatively scheduled for **October 1, time TBD**. The next home builds will likely break ground in September 2025— a 14-unit home development in Watsonville, at Evan Circle, and another 9-unit home development in Marina, at Marina Station. Applications for homeownership, for both locations will open October 20, 2025. The Habitat Volunteer Manager will be reach-

New Ways of Giving

Our *Virtual Offering Plate* has been enhanced. Donations can be made by: credit card, debit card, PayPal, Venmo and Zelle.

- 1) **Vanco**, our regular electronic giving provider;
- 2) **PayPal / Venmo / Zelle** for single one-time gifts;
- 3) **PayPal** with the possibility of recurring donations and an option to cover the fees.

All are available at
<https://ststephenslutheran.org>
Or by scanning this QR code.





Sister Parish Events

PUPUSA LUNCHEON TODAY

Trinity Presbyterian (420 Melrose)

For those of you who are not familiar, pupusas are thick tortillas stuffed with savory fillings such as cheese, or pork and are typically served with curtido, a tangy pickled cabbage slaw, and a mild salsa. The luncheon will begin after the Sunday 10:30-11:30 a.m. worship service. It will include a brief slide show by Trinity's Chuck Cobery, who has participated for ten years in this mission. We will be entertained by Trinity's own home-grown a cappella group, the Presby-Tones, and a few other musical surprises.

~ ~ ~

Watsonville Public House Fundraiser tentatively titled "Give Water, Give Life 2025" **October 11 at 2:00 pm**

Details to be provided later – mark your calendars

~ ~ ~

2025 DELEGATION **Sunday, November 23 to Wednesday, December 3**

Contact us if you would like to join this year's delegation. The agenda is being developed. There will be visits to both communities, Guillermo Ungo and Las Orquideas/Bendicion de Dios. Lodging will be in two guest houses, one in San Salvador and the other in Suchitoto, which is near Guillermo Ungo. Airfare will probably not get cheaper from here, so it's time to make a decision and plan to join the group.

Visiting El Salvador is a life-changing experience!



On ZOOM
with Pr. Jim

Check email on
Tues. for link

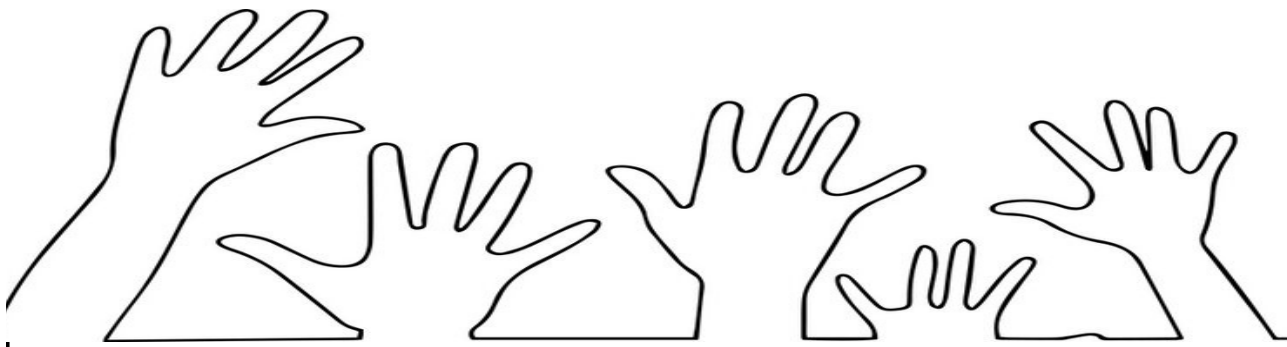
WEDNESDAYS

7:30 – 8:30 pm

As we grow in our faith, we grow in community.



Our Preschool is enrolling NOW. Ages 2-4
Full & Part Time openings.
Tell your friends!
Contact Kathy 462-4453



MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

So many creative ideas for fellowship this Fall. The time is NOW. We are looking for Thrivent Members to apply for a Action Team Grants for these two events. Contact for info.

REFORMATION SUNDAY OKTOBER-FEAST
OCT. 26

ST. NICKS SURPRISES FOR SENIORS
DEC. 5

In Partner with MMRR circle

- - -

Other ways to help:

PROPERTY WORK DAY : Pick up truck & people needed
OCT. 4

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: Big coffee hour & juice boxes
DEC. 7



Trinity Tuesday

One Hour ~ One Question ~ One Beverage

Tuesday, October 7 at 6:30pm

YOUR PERSONAL INVITATION TO OUR 9TH EPISODE OF T3

Join us for informal faith conversations in a welcoming, relaxed setting. On the first Tuesday of each month, we gather to explore one thoughtful question together - from deep theological mysteries to everyday questions about how faith intersects with life.

What to expect:

- One focused discussion topic per month
- All perspectives welcome -
doubters, seekers, and believers alike
- Variety of beverages available (no need to drink beer!)
- Comfortable, judgment-free environment

Whether you're wrestling with big theological questions or simply curious about how others see the church's role in today's world, Trinity Tuesday is a place for honest conversation and genuine community.

When: First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM

Where: Discretion Brewery, 2703 41st Ave. Ste A

Questions? Contact Kathy Allen, 831-430-6359

Upcoming Events:

September Benevolence Offering -
St. Stephen's Child Development Center

TODAY	Choir Lunch
Sept. 9	Scouts 6:00 pm
Sept. 9	Knitting Guild 6:15 pm
Sept. 9	Church Council 6:30 pm
Sept. 10	Preschool Chapel 10:15
Sept. 10	Bible Study Weds. 7:30 pm
Sept. 11	MMRR Circle 10:30 am
Sept. 11	Mens beginner A.A. Thursdays 7:00 pm Fireside
Sept. 12	A.A. Fridays 7:00 pm Fellowship Hall
Sept. 14	MMRR Bake Sale
Sept. 18	Women's Café Group 6:00 pm Thursdays Dinner and devotions
Sept. 19	Newsletter Deadline
Sept. 25	Newsletter Collating 2:00 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