



**Take heart, daughter;
your faith has
made you well**

MATTHEW 9:22

Second Sunday after Pentecost June 7, 2026—10am

Prelude “Great is Thy Faithfulness”
 a modern take on this hymn

Welcome, family of faith! During this Pentecost Season, we are joining Christians all around the world to celebrate the formation of the church when the Holy Spirit called people into community as Christ’s body and blessed them with universal understanding of languages.

Some theologians describe Pentecost as the Church’s birthday. Others describe it as a “big bang” that brought the Church into being, for just as God’s Spirit came rushing into the world over the waters of creation, in the very beginning of Acts, God’s Spirit rushes into the world to gather and transform God’s people.

So where does that leave us? If we are willing to be amazed, Pentecost is one of the most awe-inspiring days in our Christian calendar. If we are willing to be transformed, it is an opportunity to be renewed in energy and faithfulness toward the work of God’s kingdom on earth when all people will experience true liberation and boundless love.

So may we be willing to be amazed. May we be open to being transformed. Let us worship God together. Please rise in body or in spirit to join me in the call to worship.

Please fill out the “Worship Slip”
and place it in the offering plate during the offering,
as a sign of thanksgiving for all of God’s blessings.

(* means to please stand in body or spirit)

Gathering

*Call to Worship

As we gather together in this place,
let us strain our ears to hear the rush of wind,
the crackle pop of fire.

We listen for your call, God of spirit and flame.

We take our place in your unfolding creation.

Rejoice, for God’s spirit flows among us!

Rejoice, for today the church embraces transformation.

**In the midst of rebirth, we join our voices in praise!
Let us worship God!**

***Invitation to Confession**

Through confession, we have the opportunity to turn our bodies to God and, as one body, name the actions and inactions that separate us from God and one another. Let us lift our hearts and voices together in prayer.

***Prayer of Confession**

**God, you invite us to wonder.
We confess that we find more comfort in the mundane.
We lean into the familiar and treat the amazing
as suspicious or even threatening.
We long for a routine to keep us safe from pain,
and we're willing to give up joy in exchange.
Reshape our hearts for possibility, O God.
Awaken our senses to your wondrous work in the world,
and give us the courage and will to follow you.**

***Assurance of Grace** From Psalm 104, vs 24, 28 & 30

The psalmist writes,
"O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
When you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth."

**It is through this same creative,
renewing Spirit that we experience God's grace.
We give thanks as a renewed, forgiven people!**

*Opening Hymn

"God We Gather as Your People" ACS #1038

God, we gather as your people to raise our song above,
And we dare to claim the promise of your love.
Though the day may not yet be here,
We trust it soon will be,
when your children will be free.

REFRAIN

Oh, may our hearts and minds be opened,
Fling the church doors open wide.
May there be room enough for ev'ryone inside.
For in God there is a welcome,
in God we all belong.
May that welcome be our song.

Oh, we sing for all the children,
That one day they be free;
And we sing for generations yet to be,
That they never have a reason
To doubt that they are blest.
May they, in your love, find rest. **REFRAIN**

Oh, we pray for all the young lives cut short
By fear and shame,
So afraid of who they are and whom they love.
May the message now be banished
That your love is for the few;
May their faith in you renew. **REFRAIN**

God, we're working for the future
when children far and wide can . . .
Live their lives with dignity and pride,
As they grow in strength and stature,
May they join us hand in hand,
As against all hate we stand. **REFRAIN**

*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.

*Prayer of the Day

Celebrate pg. 1

P: Let us pray:

C: Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

Friends, please join me in a meditative prayer for illumination.

I invite you to bow your head and open your non-dominant hand, palm side up. With your finger, trace the shape of the wind on your palm in honor of the way the Spirit can move in us. (pause for silence)

Now, trace a flame on your palm, remembering how God can show up in mysterious ways, remembering how the presence of God warms and purifies us. (pause for silence)

Now, clasp your hands, lacing your fingers together, remembering the way in which scripture calls us into unity with one another.

With clear minds and focused hearts, may we hear the God stories and the words of scripture today and be receptive to the way in which God speaks to us through this good word.

In God's holy name we pray, **Amen.**

Word

God Stories —How has God's Word come alive in your life?

First Reading

Hosea 5:15-6:6

Celebrate pg. 1

Psalm Psalm 50:7-15 (reader) Celebrate pg. 1

Second Reading Romans 4:13-25 Celebrate pg. 3

*Gospel Acclamation "Halle Halle"

Halle, Halle, Halle—lu –u –jah! (repeat twice)
Halle-lujah! Hal-le—lu-jah!

*Gospel Reading Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Matthew, the 9th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O God

(The Gospel is read)

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Message

Pastor Larry Vilaro

*Hymn of the Day "O God of Light" Red #507

1 O God of light, your word, a lamp unfailing,
shall pierce the darkness of our earthbound way
and show Your grace, your plan for us unveiling,
and guide our footsteps to the perfect day.

2 From days of old, through blind and willful ages,
though we rebelled, you gently sought again,
and spoke through saints, apostles, prophets, sages,
who wrote with eager or reluctant pen.

3 Undimmed by time, those words are still revealing
to sinful hearts your justice and your grace;
and questing spirits, longing for your healing,
see your compassion in the Savior's face.

4 To all the world your summons you are sending,
through all the earth, to ev'ry land and race,
that myriad tongues, in one great anthem blending,
may praise and celebrate your gift of grace.

*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.**

P: On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit enabled
people from different nations and languages
to not only speak to one another,
but to understand each other.

Friends, in many ways, celebrating Pentecost
Is celebrating God's ability to forge connection
and peace among diverse people and nations.
As renewed, forgiven people, let us share the unifying
peace of God with one another now, saying:
"The peace of Christ be with you."

Invitation to the Offering

Let us contemplate our gifts and offerings
as we read a poem titled, "A Blessing for the Seekers,"
by the Reverend Sarah Speed:

**Blessed are you who turn your face up to the sky,
who open your arms to feel the wind,
who notice all the things that we should notice.
Blessed are you who are fluent in wonder
and familiar with awe.
Blessed are you who, even now, dream dreams,
who have not lost hope,
who swear the glass is still half-full.
Blessed are you who plant trees and sing the harmony,
who tell the children how this world can be magic.
Blessed are you who walk and seek
and turn over every stone,
pointing out all the corners and colors that God lives in.
Blessed are you.
Trusting in our blessedness, let us give generously.**

Offering — We honor and worship God by returning some of the gifts with which we have been blessed.
Please leave worship slip & offering in plates near you.

Music “Guide My Feet” African American Music

*Offering Prayer

P: God of goodness and growth,

C: All creation is yours.

Water and word, wine and bread:

These are signs of our abundant grace.

Nourish us through these gifts,

That we might proclaim your steadfast love

In our communities and in the world,

Through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.

Amen.

Meal

Invitation to the Table

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit flung the invitation far and wide to participate fully in the body of Christ.

Following her example,

we set this Table as a place without limits,

Without entrance requirements, or any type of exclusion.

The invitation already has your name on it.

Come, all who wish to take part in the joyful feast.

Great Thanksgiving

God, who is the maker of all things,

we give you thanks as we celebrate the day

when you brought together the multitudes to worship you

and to place their hope in Jesus Christ.

We thank you for the countless possibilities for

awe, wonder, and amazement

that we experience as your people.

We celebrate this day and remember your still unfolding work to bring together people of all tongues, nations, races, genders, sexualities, abilities, and economic circumstances into the work of re-forming the world for your glory and for the good of all people.

We thank you for the blessing of this holy meal as you impart grace upon us, a grace that we are still learning to understand.

May God be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*Eucharistic Prayer

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places, offer thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection, you pour out your Holy Spirit, uniting in one body, people of every tongue and nation.

*Words of Institution

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.”

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.”

*Lord's Prayer

P: Great Creator Spirit, equip us for a world where all people experience connection, belonging, safety, and well-being. Help us become those who make such a world not just possible, but present. With hope, we join our voices with the voices of countless generations, languages, and communities as we pray the words Jesus taught us. God, remember us in your love and teach us to pray:

**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: Friends of Jesus, come to Christ's table.
Receive nourishment for the journey.

Holy Communion

ALL, Yes — EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
Communion is by intinction, we dip the bread (gluten-free) into either the wine (red) or grape juice (white).

Communion Hymn

"I Come with Joy" Red #482

I come with joy, a child of God,
Forgiven, loved, and free,
The life of Jesus to recall in love
Laid down for me, in love laid down for me.

I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
The new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.

As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
Each proud division ends,
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
Is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here, alive among us here.

Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
We'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

*Communion Blessing

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

*Prayer After Communion

God of the welcome table,
In this meal we have feasted on your goodness
And have been united by your presence among us.
Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts
So that we may share your neighborly love with all,
Through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life.
Amen.

The Sending

*Blessing

May God bless you and keep you.
May God's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
May God look upon you with favor,
And give you peace.
Amen.

*Closing Hymn "Son of God, Eternal Savior" Red #655

1 Son of God, eternal Savior,
source of life and truth and grace,
Word made flesh, whose birth among us
hallows all our human race,
you our head, who, throned in glory,
for your own will ever plead:
fill us with your love and pity,
heal our wrong, and help our need.

2 As you, Lord, have lived for others,
so may we for others live.
Freely have your gifts been granted;
freely may your servants give.
Yours the gold and yours the silver,
yours the wealth of land and sea;

we but stewards of your bounty
held in solemn trust will be.

3 Come, O Christ, and reign among us,
King of Love, and Prince of peace;
hush the storm of strife and passion,
bid its cruel discords cease.

By your patient years of toiling,
by your silent hours of pain,
quench our fevered thirst of pleasure,
stem our selfish greed of gain.

4 Son of God, eternal Savior,
source of life and truth and grace,
Word made flesh, whose birth among us
hallows all our human race:

by your praying, by your willing
that your people should be one,
grant, oh, grant our hope's fruition:
here on earth your will be done.

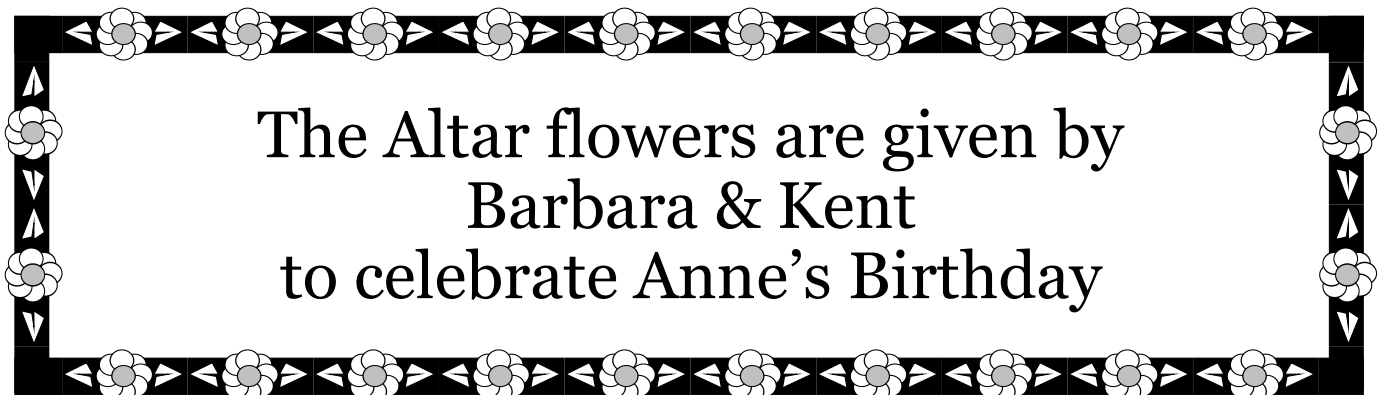
*Dismissal

P: Go in Peace. Share the Good News.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Thanks Giving” Richard Purvis



Serving Today

Altar Guild— Judi Alvarado

Reader— Mt. Cross

Coffee Host — Connie Cunningham

Office support—Candace A., Sheila B. & Sherilyn J.

Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM *Mt. Cross staff, Pam Hupner, Barbara, Beth Stiles, Bob Zigler, Alfrad family, Ratliff family, Kathybelle, Taiyo, Sam, Nancy's Family, Kat, Penny, Kathy Freeman, Family of Pr. Herb Schmidt, Colin, Camryn, Dorothy Ronning, Bob Holzwarth, Mary Robe & Family, Renee, Sina & Bella, James, Don, Pr. Gary & Corinne Stevenson, Kevin, Liz, Sam, Kathy M., Nancy, Grey, Levi, James, Galahad, Debbie, Nate Barker, Robbin, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Adolfo, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Allen, Gary & Marjie Toops, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Isaac & Marissa, Mateo & Lina, Atlas, Katarina.* LONG TERM *Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Beth UG, Brian Utto, Kathy Brooks, Joel Hurtgamm,*

Other Giving Options

We are now able to receive donations made by:
credit card, debit card, PayPal, Venmo & Zelle.

There are three choices:

- 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>



Upcoming Events:

June Benevolence Offering =
Society for the Prevention of Suicide

- TODAY Summer kick off BBQ
Clean up needed!!!
- June 9 Scouts 6:00 pm
- June 9 Knitter's Guild 6:15 pm
- June 9 Church Council 6:30 pm
- June 10 Bible Study 7:30 pm Zoom
- June 11 Men's A.A. Group 7:00 pm
- June 12 A. A. Group 7:00 pm
- June 13 Embroiders Guild 9—4:00 pm
- June 17 Taize Prayer Service 7:00 pm
- June 18 Women's Bold Café 6:00 pm
devotions and potluck
- June 22 NL deadline noon
Your Faith Journey / God Stories are welcome
- June 29 NL Collating 10:30 am

Sign up for Altar Flowers

June 21, July 12, July 19, July 26, Aug. 2

Pr. Larry will have brief office hours Tuesday & Weds afternoons
Now through August 24 Pastor Jim on sabbatical

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 Statement

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.

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church E.L.C.A.

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Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp
Music Directors: Gary Roberts
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens
Custodian: John Hopping

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Prayer by Rev. Srah A. Speed / A Sanctified Art LLC