



a sower
went out to
SOW

MATTHEW 13:3

7th Sunday after Pentecost

July 12, 2026

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 Music from the Four Prayers I Tone.
 R. Purvis for the Pianoforte

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 *“All People That on Earth do Dwell”* Red #883

*All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell;
Come ye before him and rejoice,*

*Know that the Lord is God in deed;
Without our aid he did us make.
We are his folk, he doth us feed,
And for his sheep he doth us take.*

*Oh, enter then his gates with praise;
Approach with joy his courts unto;
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.*

(continued)

*For why: The Lord our God is good;
His mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.*

*To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom heav'n and earth adore,
From us and from the angel host
be praise and glory ever more.*

*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.


One of the following or another song of praise may be sung.



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.



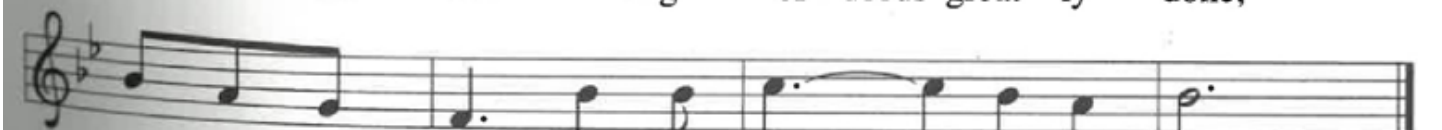
Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
 Ours the re - joic - ing for na - ture re - claimed;
 Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;



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

Isaiah 55:10-13

Celebrate pg. 1

R: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 65:1-13 (read responsively)

Cel. pg. 2

Second Reading

Romans 8:1-11

Celebrate pg. 3

R: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation

Blue #33



The proper verse may be sung, or all may sing one of these verses.



*Gospel Reading

Mathew 13:1-23

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Matthew, the 13th 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

Pr. Larry Vilaro

*Hymn of the Day

"Word of God, Come Down on Earth"

Red #510

Word of God, come down on earth,
living rain from heav'n descending;
Touch our hearts and bring to birth
faith and hope and love unending.
Word almighty, we revere you;
Word made flesh, we long to hear you.

Word eternal, throned on high,
Word that brought to life creation,
Word that came from heav'n to die,
Crucified for our salvation, saving Word,
the world restoring, speak to us, you love outpouring.

Word that speaks God's tender love,
One with God beyond all telling,
Word that sends us from above
God the Spirit, with us dwelling,
Word of truth, to all truth lead us;
Word of life, with one bread feed us.

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 Music for the Parable of the Sower,
for the Gospel of Matthew

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

"I Am the Bread of Life" Red #485

**"I am the Bread of life.
You who come to me shall not hunger,
And who believe in me shall not thirst.
No one can come to me
unless the Father beckons."**

REFRAIN

“And I will raise you up,
and I will raise you up,
and I will raise you up
on the last day.”

“The bread that . . . I will give
Is my flesh for the life of the world,
And if you eat . . . of this bread,
You shall live forever.
You shall live forever.”

REFRAIN

“Unless . . . You . . . eat
Of the flesh of the Son of Man
And...drink . . . of his blood, and
Drink . . . of his blood,
You shall not have life within you.”

REFRAIN

“I am the resurrection,
I . . . am the life.
If you believe . . . In . . . me,
Even..though you die,
You shall live forever.”

REFRAIN

Yes, Lord, . . . I believe
That . . . you. . . are the Christ,
The . . . Son . . . Of . . . God,
Who . . . have . . . come
Into . . . the . . . world.

REFRAIN

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, You Give the Great Commission" Red #579

**Lord, you give the great commission:
"Heal the sick and preach the word."
Lest the Church neglect its mission
and the Gospel go unheard,
help us witness to your purpose
with renewed integrity;**

REFRAIN

with the Spirit's gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

Lord, you call us to your service:
"In my name baptize and teach."
That the world may trust your promise,
life abundant meant for each,
give us all new fervor,
draw us closer in community; REFRAIN

Lord, you make the common holy:
"This my body, this my blood."
Let your priests, for earth's true glory,
daily lift life heavenward,
asking that world around us
share your children's liberty; REFRAIN

Lord, you show us love's true measure:
"Father, what they do, forgive."
Yet we hoard as private treasure
all that you so freely give.
May your care and mercy lead us
to a just society; REFRAIN

Lord, you bless with words assuring:
"I am with you to the end."
Faith and hope and love restoring,
may we serve as you intend,
and, amid the cares that claim us,
hold in mind eternity; REFRAIN

*Dismissal

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

Music “Variation III” from Grand Choeur
Molto Maestoso—Richard Purvis

Serving Today

Reader: Mark Linder
Coffee Host: Jeanne Boudreau
Altar Guild: Connie Cunningham
Office Support: Sheila Buswell & Sherilyn Jager

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>





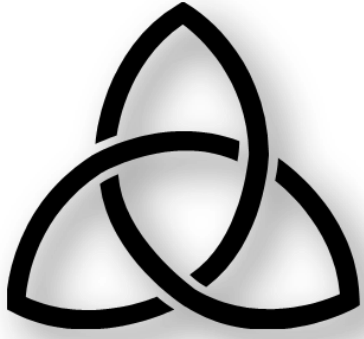
Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM *Jordan Perez, Yvonne Lowery, Lydia, Fred, Sioux Antonella, Jan Dun, James Price, ,Peggy Reed, Rev. Will & Dorothy Sieburg, Pam Huypner, Karin Zaun & family, Bob Zigler, Kathybelle, Taiyo, Sam, Nancy's Family, Kat, Penny, Kathy Freeman, Colin, Camryn, Dorothy Ronning, Bob Holzwarth, Mary Robe & Family, Sina & Bella, Chad Fields, James, Don, Pr. Gary & Corinne Stevenson, Kevin, Liz, Sam, Kathy M., Nancy, Grey, Levi, James, Galahad, Debbie, Sam, 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, Biergiel—Colclough family, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Beth UG, Brian Utto, Kathy Brooks, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit & family (Ethiopia), Miller, April, Aaron Johnson, Shelby, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Mike, Susan Anderson, Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Karin, Will, Chris & 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 *





Trinity Tuesday

(Pub Theology / Discussion)

One Beverage ~ One Hour ~ One Question

Tuesday August 4 at 6:30pm

First Tuesday of the month at Discretion Brewery

*BRING YOUR DEEPEST QUESTIONS,
AN OPEN HEART,
& A CURIOUS MIND*

Gather with us for an evening of meaningful conversation and real community. Bring your questions about faith, life, and everything in between. No judgment, no limits—just authentic dialogue over a cold one.

Whether you've been with us from the start or you're stepping through the door for the first time, there's a seat waiting for you.

Past conversations: How do we see God? How are we called? Why do bad things happen to good people? Recognizing our God-given talents. How do we forgive?

Kathy Allen 430-6359 for more info.



On ZOOM
with Pr. Larry

Check email on
Tues. for link

WEDNESDAYS

7:30 – 8:30 pm

We will be looking at the upcoming scripture readings for Sunday, to enrich our worship experience and uncover some of the deeper truths of our faith. As we grow in our faith, we grow in community.

Larry Vilardo <lvilardo@earthlink.net>

Host AFC Shelter Dinner

August 29 5:45—7:15 pm

St. John's - 125 Canterbury Dr, Aptos



Come offer your resources to our neighbors without housing. Along the way, we find a deeper understanding that we are all worthy of dignity and connection. You can assist those without homes to a better life.

Since 2012, the AFC has been sponsoring a nightly transitional shelter for 15 participants at faith communities from Santa Cruz to Aptos. We rotate daily from site to site. St. Stephen's has committed to dinners months with 5th Saturdays. Call office for more info 476-4700



Greetings! My vision is to recruit talented church members who are interested in music used in worship and love to praise God, as I do.

Let's celebrate, and enhance our weekly singing, playing, praying together, here in our God centered / worship gatherings. Won't you take a moment and speak to yourself and see if this good for you and others. Relax, pray, and say yes!

Be a leader in these four instrumental parts to an orchestra—find (1 player each) and build a team:

Strings *Wood* *Brass* *Percussion*

I will work with you also. You will not be a lone contact person.

Support team:

Posters, artwork etc.

Pre-recorded music, listen & order

Website, communications etc.

Yours in Christ and Mission,
Gary



Upcoming Events:

July Benevolence Offering = ELCA World Hunger

- July 14 Scouts 6:00 pm
- July 15 Bible Study Zoon 7:30 pm
- July 16 Women's Bold Café 6:00pm
devotions and potluck
- July 16 Men's A.A. Group 7:00 pm
- July 17 Newsletter Deadline Noon
- July 17 A. A. Group 7:00 pm
- July 19 & 26 Coffee Host needed
- July 20 CDC Board 11:15 am
- July 30 NL Collating 10:30 am Help needed
- August 4 Trinity Tuesday 6:30 pm
Discretion Brewry 41st Ave.
Faith Questions genuine community
- August 9 Back to School Blessing
Students & Educators
- Aug. 29 AFC Shelter Dinner. We are committed to the
rare 5th Saturday of the month. St. John's, Aptos 6 pm.
We are all worthy of dignity & connection. Plan ahead
and Sign up now!

Pr. Larry will have brief office hours Tues. & 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

"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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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
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