



St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Love God, Love People, Form Faith.

One of 13,000 Stephen Ministry Congregations Around the World

We believe that community is *beautiful* and *messy* and *fulfilling* and *conflicted* and...the POINT. God calls us together into community for the sake of one another, our neighbors, and creation. We don't always get it right, but we trust that when we center the love and grace that Jesus taught, we will get it right more often than not. ***You are welcome here!*** We don't expect perfect, put-together people; we don't want you to conform to us and our ways; we want you to show up as who you are and to experience the love and grace of God as we have experienced it. And we hope that once you do, you will join us in sharing it with others too.

15th Sunday after Pentecost
September 1, 2024

Lectionary readings for this week:

Monday: Deuteronomy 4:9-14 1 Timothy 4:6-16 Psalm 106:1-6, 13-23,47-48

Tuesday: Deuteronomy 4:15-20 1 Peter 2:19-25 Psalm 106:1-6, 13-23,47-48

Wednesday: Deuteronomy 4:21-40 Mark 7:9-23 Psalm 106:1-6, 13-23,47-48

Thursday: Isaiah 30:27-33 Romans 2:1-11 Psalm 146

Friday: Isaiah 32:1-8 Romans 2:12-16 Psalm 146

Saturday: Isaiah 33:1-9 Matthew 15:21-31 Psalm 146

Next Sunday: Isaiah 35:4-7a Psalm 146 (2) James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17 Mark 7:24-37

I. Gathering: *The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen.

Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us.

**We confess that we have honored you with our lips,
but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues.**

**The cravings at war within us
cause conflicts and disputes.**

**In our desire to be first
we make distinctions among ourselves.**

We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last.

In your great mercy, forgive us our sins.

**Draw near to us with grace in time of need,
and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

God promises to forgive our iniquity
and to remember our sin no more.

By grace you have been saved.

In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ,
the source of eternal healing,
your sins are forgiven. **Amen.**

Gathering Song:

Sing Out, Earth and Skies

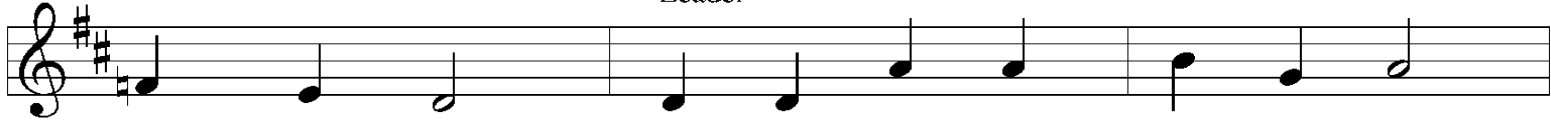
Leader

All



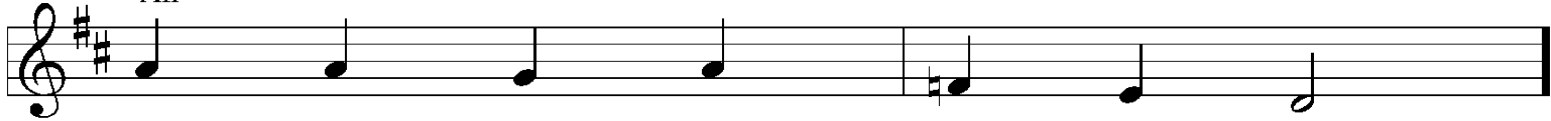
1 Come, O God of all the earth: come to us, O
2 Come, O God of wind and flame: fill the earth with
3 Come, O God of flash - ing light: twin - kling star and
4 Come, O God of snow and rain: show - er down up -
5 Come, O Jus - tice, come, O Peace: come and shape our

Leader



Righ - teous One; come, and bring our love to birth:
righ - teous - ness; teach us all to sing your name:
burn - ing sun; God of day and God of night:
on the earth; come, O God of joy and pain:
hearts a - new; come and make op - pres - sion cease:

All



in the glo - ry of your Son.
may our lives your love con - fess.
in your light we all are one.
God of sor - row, God of mirth.
bring us all to life in you.

Refrain



Sing out, earth and skies! Sing of the God who



loves you! Raise your joy - ful cries!



Dance to the life a - round you!

Text: Marty Haugen
Music: SING OUT, Marty Haugen

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Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Kyrie

Refrain

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the

u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you

this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,

let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Refrain

II. Word: *God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song*

First Reading

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

The Israelites believed the law was a divine gift that provided guidelines for living out the covenant. Moses commands the people to obey the law and to neither add to nor subtract from it. The Israelites are also to teach the law to their children and their children's children.

¹So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you.

⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" ⁷For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

Reader: "The Word of the Lord." Response: "**Thanks be to God.**"

Second Reading

James 1:17-27

The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Reader: "The Word of the Lord." Response: "**Thanks be to God.**"

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.

Response after announcement of the Gospel: "Glory to you, O Lord."

¹Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around [Jesus], ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" ⁶He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

'This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

⁸You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.

²¹"For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness,

Communion Music	<i>This Is My Father's World</i>	ELW 824
		Bulletin page 11
	<i>Change my Heart, O God</i>	ELW 801
		Bulletin page 12
	<i>Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am</i>	ELW 814
		Bulletin page 13
	<i>Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God</i>	W&P 122
		Bulletin page 14

Table Blessing

Prayer after Communion

Holy God, you have welcomed us to this meal and fed us with dignity at your table. Send us now to welcome others and to be at peace with one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

IV. Sending: *God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

Sending Song	<i>Go in Peace and Serve the Lord</i>	W&P 46
		Bulletin page 15

Blessing

**God all mighty,
 God most merciful
 † bless you, keep you,
 and give you peace.
 Amen.**

Dismissal

**Go in peace. Follow Jesus.
 Thanks be to God.**

A special thank you to our guitarists Marj Gottschalk-Trone and Jim Larsen.

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950

Music: GOOD SOIL, Handt Hanson

Text and music © 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc., admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Take My Life, That I May Be

Toma, oh Dios, mi voluntad

Refrain/Estribillo



To - ma, oh Dios, mi vo - lun - tad, y haz - la tu - ya, na -
Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord,



da más; to - ma, sí, mi co - ra - zón
to thee; take my mo - ments and my days;



y tu tro - no en él ten - drás. ten - drás.
let them flow in cease - less praise. less praise.



1 *Que mi vi - da en - te - ra es - té*
1 Take my hands and let them move
2 Take my sil - ver and my gold,
3 Take my voice and let me sing
4 Take my will and make it thine;



con - sa - gra - da a ti, Se - ñor;
at the im - pulse of thy love;
not a mite would I with - hold;
al - ways, on - ly for my King;
it shall be no lon - ger mine;



que a mis ma - nos pue - da guiar el im -
take my feet and let them be swift and
take my in - tel - lect and use ev - 'ry
take my lips and let them be filled with
take my heart, it is thine own; it shall



pul - so de tu a - mor.
beau - ti - ful for thee.
pow'r as thou shalt choose.
mes - sag - es from thee.
be thy roy - al throne.

2 *Que mis pies tan sólo en pos
de lo santo puedan ir,
y que a ti, Señor, mi voz,
se complazca en bendecir. Estribillo*

3 *Que mis labios al hablar
hablen sólo de tu amor;
que mis bienes dedicar
yo los quiera a ti, Señor. Estribillo*

4 *Que mi tiempo todo esté
consagrado a tu loor;
que mi mente y su poder
sean usados en tu honor. Estribillo*

This Is My Father's World



1 This is my Fa-ther's world, and to my lis-t'ning ears all
2 This is my Fa-ther's world; the birds their car-ols raise; the
3 This is my Fa-ther's world; oh, let me not for-get that,



na - ture sings, and round me rings the mu - sic of the spheres.
morn - ing light, the lil - y white, de - clare their mak - er's praise.
though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the rul - er yet.

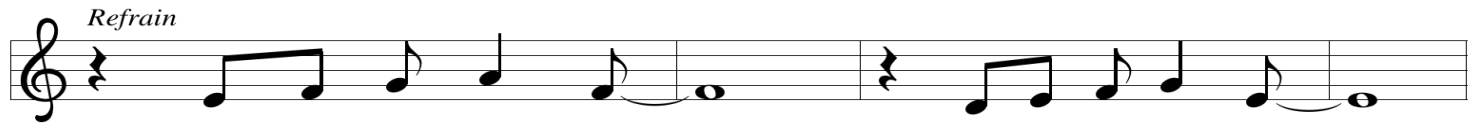


This is my Fa-ther's world; I rest me in the thought of
This is my Fa-ther's world; he shines in all that's fair. In the
This is my Fa-ther's world; why should my heart be sad? The



rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the won - ders wrought.
rus - tling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me ev-'ry-where.
Lord is king, let heav - en ring; God reigns, let earth be glad!

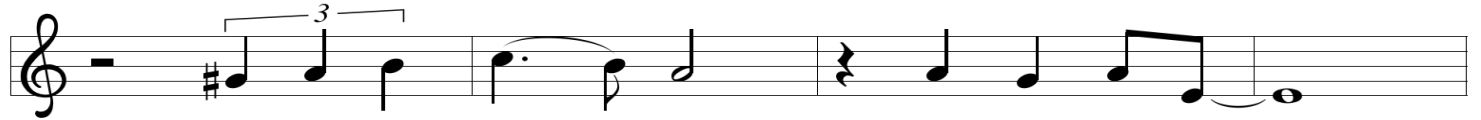
Change My Heart, O God



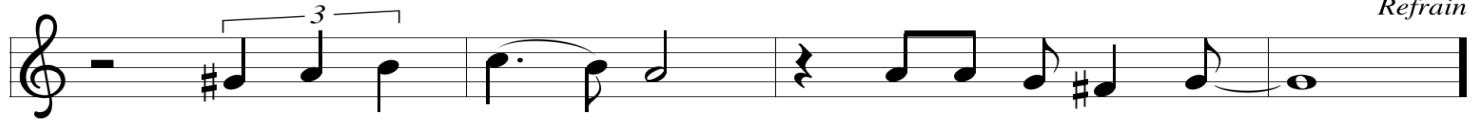
Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Text: Eddie Espinosa, b. 1953
Music: CHANGE MY HEART, Eddie Espinosa
Text and music © 1982 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing, admin. Music Services

Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: 'Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be; set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.' The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, and the second system covers the third line. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords and some melodic movement.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

Music: TAKE ME AS I AM, John L. Bell

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Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

783

Descant

Al - le - lu - ia, al -
 D F#m G D G

1 Seek ye . . . first the king - dom of God and its
 2 Ask and it shall be giv - en un - to you; seek and
 3 We do not live by bread . . . a - lone, but by

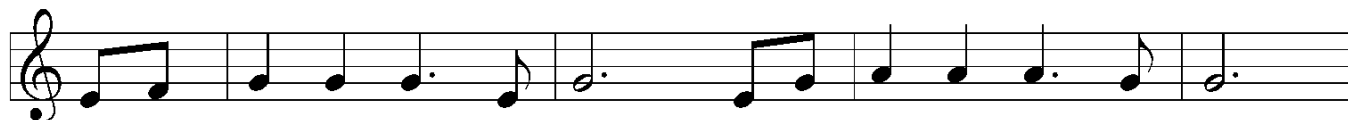
le - lu - ia, al - le -
 D Em A⁷ D F#m

right - teous - ness, and all these things shall be
 you shall find; and knock and the door shall be
 ev - 'ry word that pro - ceeds from the

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
 G D G D Em A D

add - ed un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.
 o - pened un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.
 mouth . . . of . . . God. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.

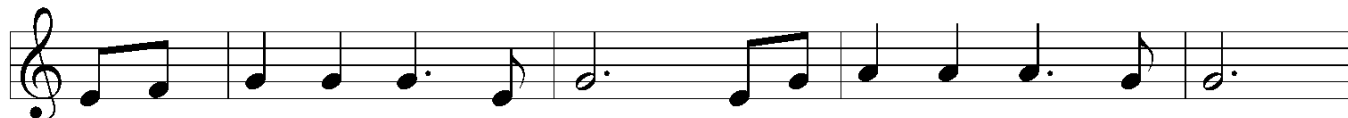
Go in Peace and Serve the Lord



Go in peace and serve the Lord. God is call - ing you to - day.



Go and tell gos - pel news ev - 'ry - where.



Go in peace and serve the Lord. God is call - ing you to - day



to bring truth and love to ev - 'ry na - tion.

Text: Handt Hanson

Music: GO IN PEACE, Handt Hanson

Text and music © 1996 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc.

Upcoming

St. Stephen Fall 2024 Women's Retreat: "Walking the Spiritual Journey"

Registration forms are available in the Gathering Space!

Friday evening social, Sept. 27 * Saturday retreat program, led by our own Christina Nelson, Sept. 28 * Sunday sermon, by Kristen Berkey-Abbott, Sept. 29 Plan to come (and bring a friend!) for part or all of the retreat weekend! A light continental breakfast and box lunch are provided on Saturday. Venue: St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Outreach project: **School kits for Lutheran World Relief** We are asking for donations of items. Please look for a basket and poster in the gathering space. Monetary donations can be made by writing a check to St. Stephen and putting "**Special Campaign – School Kits**" on the memo line. If you have any questions, please contact Pam Buckley. Thank you for any help you can give!

The Church Offices/Preschool will be closed **Labor Day Monday September 2nd**.

Stockholders' Dinner. All stockholders of the LYO Gathering Trip are invited to attend a stockholder's dinner on **Saturday, September 7 at 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall**. We will present a program with pictures and stories from our trip followed by a spaghetti dinner as a THANK YOU for supporting this important and formational trip!

Bible Study Resumes. Join us **in the Library every Monday at 1:30 PM starting on September 9** as we look at and discuss the upcoming Sundays texts.

Communal Life: Breakfasts. Come to build and deepen relationships – **at the Colonial Pancake House**, on the corner of Page Street and Penniman Road.

Gatherings take place at **8:00 AM**.

Tuesday Sept 3rd- Women are invited to join together

Thursday Sept 5th-Men are invited to join together

Preschool: Support by shopping! Is your *Harris Teeter* card linked to St. Stephen Preschool for its "Together in Education" program? Our number is **1216**. See **Hollie Jones** if you have any questions!

Yoga Please make sure to arrive by **8:45am** on Wednesday's as preschool starts back next week. Parking is available at the Christian Science Reading Room. Please use the office side door.



St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Love God, Love People, Form Faith.

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Trudi Arnold, Karen Bailey, Linda Baumgarten, Ed Brown, Kristin Carter, Bob Cummings, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Jim Mayfield, Carol Meyer, Helen Nelsen and Jim Nickols.**

Pray for those unable to come to worship: **Martin Bleck, Ed Brown, Birdie Burton, York Doerr, Bob and Angie Groom, Pat Janot, Marilyn Johnson, Jeanne Nelson, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff.**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Bob Alt, Charles Baugh, Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, Sally Blackburn, June Brantley, Sharon Brown, Linda Bonfiglio, Mary Bloom, Amy Carl, Karin Cavanaugh, Ruth Ann Coski, Judy Craun, Sophia Czajkowski, Judy Drezek, Mark Flatin, David Gade, Greg Gildner, Claudia Jacobik, Joan Goodhart, John Goodhart, Sue Hassan and family, Nick Havola, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzeman, Lisa Hill, Jaxon Ireland, The Jacobs Family, Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Connie Kendrick, The Kennedy family, Marnah Lund, Trish and Matthew Macerelli, Laura Margolin, Jack Mayfield, The Keith Meins family, Liz Montalvo, Becky Murphy, Ed Moninger, Bob Myers, Silvana Oderisi, Denise Ogborn, Lori Ogborn, Lou Schuster, Chad Strausbaugh, Simone Tucker, Charley Underdahl, Brenda Webster, Kim Whittaker and Caleb Winig.

St. Stephen Calendar – September 1-8 , 2024

Our worship service is available on our website www.saintstephenlutheran.net, click on “Worship with Us” and “Services.”

SUNDAY, September 1

10:00 AM Worship at Chickahominy Park-Holy Communion
(located in the shelter between the playground and the pool)

MONDAY September 2

Office Closed in observance of Labor Day

TUESDAY, September 3

8:00 AM Women’s Breakfast (Colonial Pancake house)
9:00 AM Preschool Starts Today

WEDNESDAY, September 4

9:00 AM Yoga (Fellowship Hall)
7:00 PM AA Meeting (Fellowship Hall)
7:00 PM Chancel Choir (Worship Space)

THURSDAY, September 5

8:00 AM Men’s Breakfast (Colonial Pancake house)
12:00 PM Bulletin review (Library/Conference Room)
5:30 PM St. Stephen Rings Rehearsal (Worship Space)

FRIDAY, September 6

SATURDAY, September 7

5:30 PM AA Meeting (Library)
5:30 PM LYO Stockholder’s Dinner (Fellowship Hall)
(Stocks will be available at the door if you have not already purchased yours)

SUNDAY, September 8

9:00 AM Coffee (Gathering Space)
9:45 AM Worship – Holy Communion (*livestreamed on our YouTube channel*)
11:00 AM God’s Work, Our Hands Service Projects (Various Locations)