

# 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.



Fourth Sunday of Advent Dec 22, 2024

# For Your Prayers - Dec 23-29, 2024

#### **Lectionary readings for this week:**

Monday: Micah 4:6-8 2 Peter 1:16-21 Luke 1:46b-55

**Tuesday**: Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 [15-20] Psalm 96 (11) **Wednesday**: Isaiah 62:6-12 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20 Psalm 97 (11)

Thursday: 2 Chronicles 24:17-24 Acts 6:1-7; 7:51-60 Psalm 148

*Friday* Proverbs 8:32-36 John 21:19b-24 Psalm 148 *Saturday*: Isaiah 54:1-13 Revelation 21:1-7 Psalm 148

Next Sunday's Lessons 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 Psalm 148 (13) Colossians 3:12-17

Luke 2:41-52

<u>Join your prayers for healing</u> with God's desires for Ed Brown, Kristin Carter, Bob & Ginny Cummings, Jack Harris, Sharon Jacobs, Donna Kittelson, Jim Mayfield, Carole Meyer, Helen Nelsen, Paul Reier and George Vonderheide.

<u>Pray for those unable to come to worship</u>: 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: Susan, Charles Baugh, Donald and Carol Baum, , Eleftheria Beck, Tom Beck, Sally Blackburn, June Brantley, Linda Bonfiglio, Mary Bloom, Amy Carl, Karin Cavanaugh, Chris Clarke, Amaree Cluff, Ruth Ann Coski, Judy Craun, Ginny Cummings, Judy Drezek, Becky Drury, Darrin and Rosemary Dunn, Tanya Fritz, David Gade, Joel Gillespie, Greg Gildner, Joan and John Goodhart, Charee Hampton, Sue Hassan and family, Andy Havola, Nick Havola, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Lisa Hill, Jaxon Ireland, Claudia Jacobik, Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Connie Kendrick, The Kennedy family, Jenn Kramer, Chantal Lacroix, Marnah Lund, Trish and Sara and Matthew Macerelli, Keara Mahony, Laura Margolin, Jack Mayfield, Doug MacKenzie, The Keith Meins family, Liz Montalvo, Ed Moninger, Kim Morris, Bob Myers, Coral Pumley, Kurt Recktenwald, Kurtis Schultz, Lou Schuster, Inge Seiter, Pamela Sharp, Chad Strausbaugh, Al Stern, Monika Stern, Charley Underdahl, Brenda Webster, Caleb Winig, and Elaine Wrich.

# Fourth Sunday of Advent

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

#### Welcome

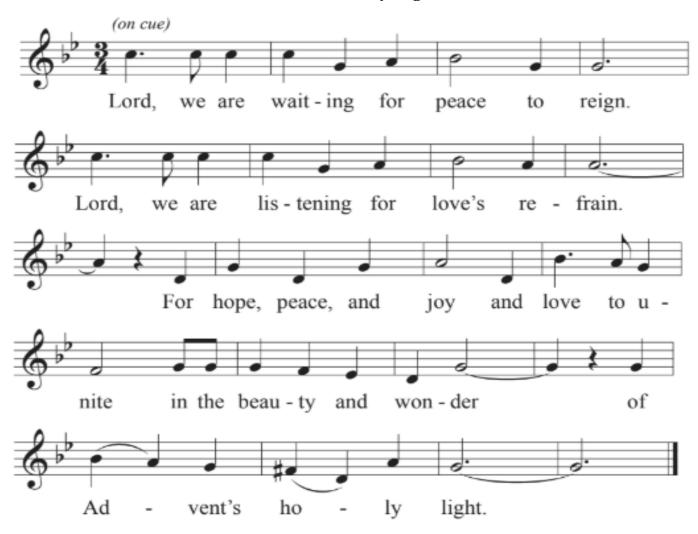
**Centering Music** 

**Emmanuel** 

Chris de Silva

#### **Advent Wreath Lighting**

## Advent's Holy Light



#### **FOURTH SUNDAY - Love**

(The first, second, third and fourth candles are lit.)

**Leader:** Today the fourth candle, the candle of Love, joins the candles of Hope, Peace, and Joy. Like the combined glow of many candles, let this season remind us of the strength found in unity as we come together to love and uplift one another. Let the warmth of love illuminate the connections that bind us together and foster us in a deep sense of belonging.

Love creates the bonds that provide us with deep meaningful relationships. **The greatest of all gifts is love.** 

Love inspires random acts of kindness and generosity. **The greatest of all gifts is love.**Love causes us to only look for the best in others. **The greatest of all gifts is love.**Love allows us to be accepted for who we are, flaws and all. **The greatest of all gifts is love. love.** 

Gracious Creator, we gather in your presence today, hearts brimming with gratitude for the extraordinary gift of love you have bestowed upon us. May the celebration of love extend beyond our immediate circles, creating ripples of compassion and unity in the world. In recognizing the beauty of love, may we become vessels of your light, shining brightly for all to see. **Amen**.

# Repeat "Advent's Holy Light"



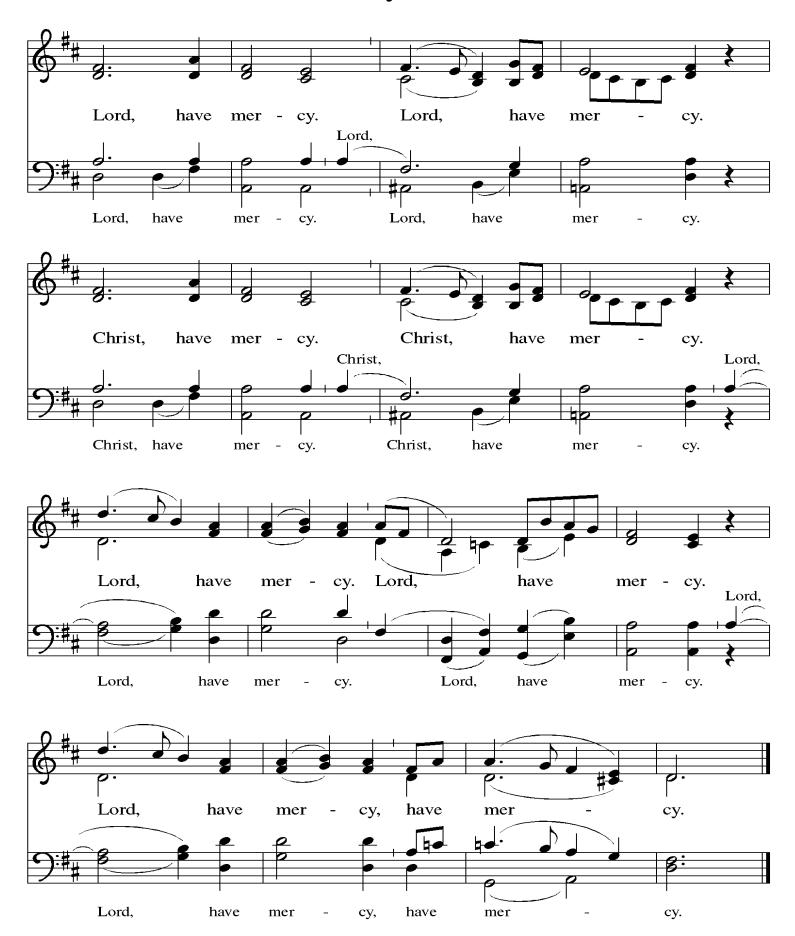
**Gathering Hymn** 

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

ELW 257 Bulletin page 11

**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.** 

# Kyrie



#### **Prayer of the Day**

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.** 

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

First Reading Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. <sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5a</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

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

**Psalm Hymn** 

My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord

ELW 573

Bulletin page 12

Second Reading Hebrews 10:5-10

The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Through obedient acceptance of God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.

<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." <sup>8</sup> When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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

Gospel Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

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

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When

Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." [ <sup>46</sup> And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

Response at the conclusion of the Gospel: "Praise to you, O Christ."

**Sermon** "Bron into Politics" Pastor Jon Nelson

Silence for prayer and reflection.

**Hymn of the Day** Savior of the Nations, Come ELW 263

Bulletin page 13

#### **Prayers**

Each petition concludes, "Lord, in your mercy," Response: "receive our prayer."

# III. Meal: God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

# Offering

Offerings are gathered for the mission of the church: preaching and teaching the good news of our salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ, and caring for the poor. During the offering, the table is set for the Lord's Supper.

Offering of Music My Soul Proclaims Marty Haugen

# **Offertory Prayer**

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.** 

# The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



#### **Words of Institution**

#### The Lord's Prayer

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.

## **Holy Communion**

When receiving Communion, either stand or kneel at the Rail. Pastor will distribute the bread and a Communion Assistant will come with a tray of pre-filled cups of wine and grape juice. The juice will be in the middle of the tray. Gluten-free wafers are available as an alternative to bread. St. Stephen is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, so all are welcome to receive Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper.



#### **Communion Hymn**

*No Wind at the Window* 

Magnificat

ACS 906 Bulletin page 14 ELW 236 Bulletin page 15

#### **Table Blessing**

#### **Prayer after Communion**

Faithful God, you have spread before us a feast of rich food and drink in the body and blood of your Son. Now send us out to labor with you, in service to the world you have made, and among the people you have made your home, in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.** 

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

**Sending Hymn** 

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

ELW 254

Bulletin page 16

## **Blessing**

#### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. Thanks be to God.

**Postlude** 

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Lynn L. Petersen

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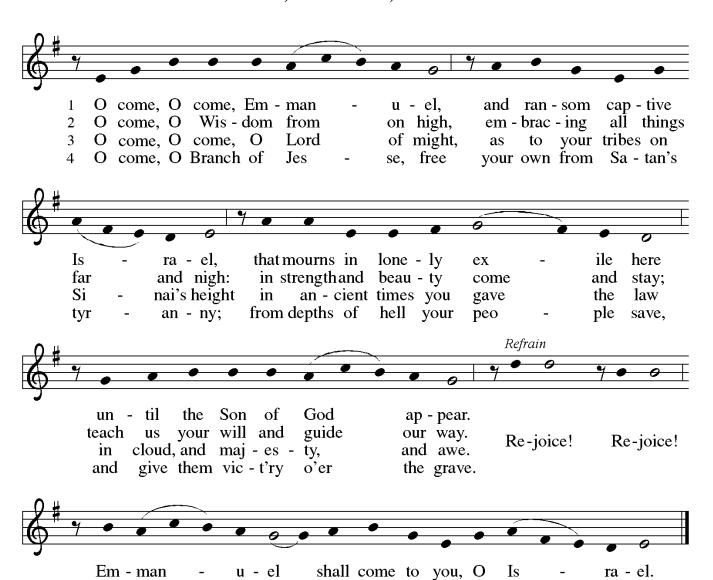
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# O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



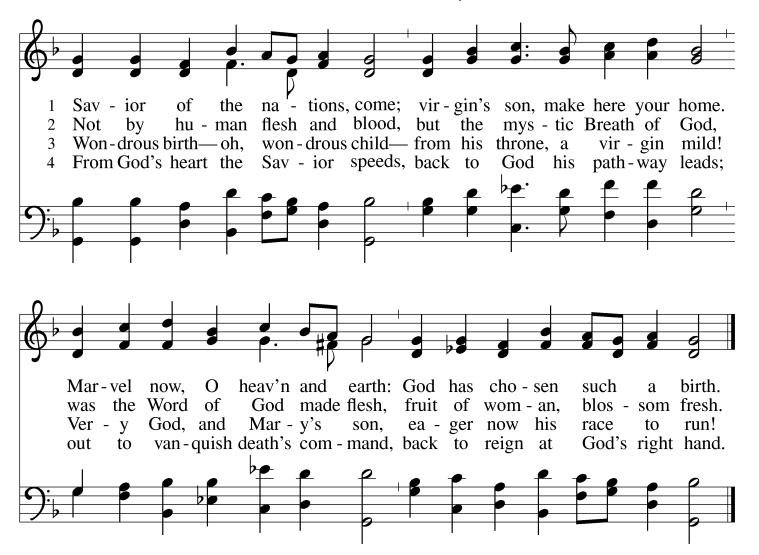
- 5 O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. *Refrain*
- O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
   O Sun of justice, now draw near.
   Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
   and death's dark shadow put to flight. Refrain
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one: refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

# My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord



Text: Stephanie K. Frey, b. 1952, alt., based on the Magnificat Music: ICH HEB MEIN AUGEN SEHNLICH AUF, Heinrich Schütz, 1585–1672 Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

# Savior of the Nations, Come



- 5 Now your manger, shining bright, hallows night with newborn light. Night cannot this light subdue; let our faith shine ever new.
- 6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord, virgin's son, incarnate Word!To the holy Trinity praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524 Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

# No Wind at the Window

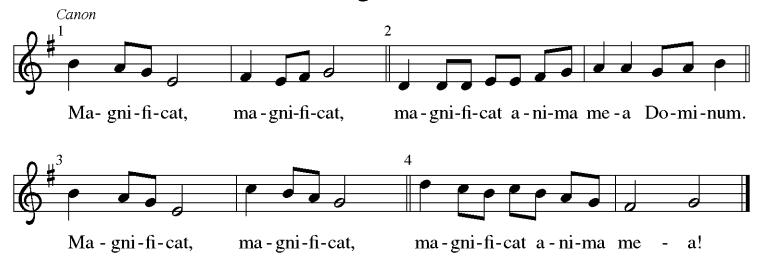


Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

Music: COLUMCILLE, Irish melody; arr. John L. Bell

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# Magnificat



Text: Luke 1:46; Taizé Community
Music: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
Text and music © 1978 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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# Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



- 1 Come, thou long-ex pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
- child, and 2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; find our let in thee. us rest born to reign in us for - ev - er, gra-cious king-dom bring. thy now



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art, e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all By thine own our hearts a - lone;



Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835

# As We Gather

#### **Restrooms & First Aid**

- ❖ A gender-neutral, family restroom and a Women's restroom can be found in the hallway behind our Worship Space.
- ❖ Additional Men's and Women's restrooms can be found on the lower level of the church building.
- ❖ A first aid kit and an A.E.D. can be found hanging on the wall in the hallway behind our Worship Space.

#### **Live-streaming**

❖ We regularly live-stream our services and cannot guarantee that you will not appear on our YouTube channel. Sitting in the East Wing or the NE section of the Worship Space will minimize your chances of being on screen. We can also bring communion to you if you inform an usher of that desire.

# **Parents! Thanks for bringing your children** to worship.

- ❖ Did you know that intergenerational worship is the single most important activity encouraging children's faith formation? (See vibrantfaith.org)
- ❖ When parents and children need to take a break for a few minutes, there's a play area (aka "prayground") with toys and books in the East wing of the Worship Space.
- ❖ Age-appropriate activity bags are available in the Gathering Space ask an usher for assistance.

#### Assistance is Available for You:

- **An induction loop** is provided for the benefit of hearing aid users. To use, please switch your hearing aid to "T."
- **❖ Large print** worship materials are available ask an usher.

<u>Health Update</u>: We always encourage you to monitor yourself for symptoms of illness and to worship from home if you are experiencing any. We have masks and hand sanitizer available for use in our building should you require.

# **What's Happening Today**

<u>Flowers this morning</u> are given today by Sandy Reed-Bryant in celebration of her grandson, Harrison Bryant's, 3rd birthday.

<u>Christmas Caroling</u>. We will go Christmas Caroling today **Sunday**, **December 22 starting at 2:30 PM**. Please arrive at the church at 2:30 PM we will then Carol from 3-5pm once we have our established groups and rides. Groups of carolers will then visit Brookdale, The Landing and a couple of families of our congregation, singing to them.

# **Upcoming**

<u>Committee chairs, Council officers and staff: Annual Reports for 2024</u> are due to the church office no later than <u>Monday</u>, <u>December 23</u>. Please send your annual reports electronically to Parish Administrator Hollie Jones

A note from the financial secretary: All donations for 2024 must be received by Sunday, December 29. Any donations that come in after that date will be credited to 2025. And if you procrastinated it's not too late to turn in an estimate of giving card for 2025. Questions—you can reach me at finsec@saintstephenlutheran.net Karen Nester, Financial Secretary. For Vanco users - If you have increased your giving in 2025, don't forget to add your new donation on the Vanco website. If you need assistance, please let me know.

<u>Have Fun and Support our St. Stephen Preschool</u> during our annual Winter Carnival Sunday, January 12, 2:00 – 4:00 PM. Would you like to bake a festive cake or cookies! See the insert and mark the white sheet if you're able to help!

<u>Preschool & Church Office Closed</u>. The Church Office will be closed **December 24 - January 2** and the Preschool will be closed from **December 23 - January 3.** Pastor Jon is always available via cell phone should you need!

<u>Performing at the 10:00 Christmas eve service:</u> Gilbert Lopez & Alexandra Lopez Gilbert is a 14-year veteran of choral music education in the public school system. In his career, he has taught thousands of students the value of choral music. He received his Bachelors Degree in Music Education from the nationally recognized School of Music at Florida State University. In his free time, he performs with the Williamsburg Choral Guild.

**Alexandra** is a graduate of Florida State University. She has been teaching for 15 years students from grades PreK to 12th. This is her first year teaching high school choir and she is loving it! She is a canter and chorus member at King of Glory Lutheran Church. In her free time, she performs with the Williamsburg Choral Guild.

#### Advent and Christmas Sunday & Midweek services

- ❖ 7:00 PM Dec 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve (Worship featuring sermon, choirs, and Holy Communion)
- ❖ 10:00 PM Dec 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve (Contemplative Worship Service with Holy Communion)
- ❖ 9:45 AM Dec 29<sup>th</sup> Service of Lessons and Carols w/Holy Communion

## St. Stephen Calendar Dec 22-29, 2024

Our worship service is available on our website <u>www.saintstephenlutheran.net</u>, click on "Worship with Us" and "Services."

## SUNDAY, Dec 22- Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 AM Worship – Holy Communion (live-streamed on our YouTube channel)

9:45 AM Christmas Choir Rehearsal (Worship Space)

11:00 AM Worship – Holy Communion (live-streamed on our Facebook page)

2:30 PM Meet at church for Caroling

#### MONDAY, Dec 23

10:00 AM Staff Meeting (Pastor's Office)

1:30 PM Bible Study (Library/Conference Room)

## TUESDAY, Dec 24

Church Offices Closed until Jan  $2^{nd}$ 

**7:00 PM** Worship – Holy Communion

10:00 PM Contemplative Worship- Holy Communion

# WEDNESDAY, Dec 25

7:00 PM AA Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

# THURSDAY, Dec 26

# FRIDAY, Dec 27

# SATURDAY, Dec 28

5:30 PM AA Meeting (Library/Conference Room)

5:30 PM Al-ANON Family Meeting (Gathering space)

## SUNDAY, Dec 29 – Lessons and Carols

9:45 AM Worship – Holy Communion (live-streamed)

# **Leading our Worship and Hospitality Today**

Acolyte/Crucifer	(9:45) David Nelson
	(9:45) Diane McCurry
Audio-Visual Team	(8:30) Nancy Carter and Tim Judy (11:00) Charles Osborn
Bread Baker	
Communion Assistants	(9:45) Harvey Nelson and David Nelson
Flower Delivery	Diane McCurry
Greeters/Hosts	
Lectors	(8:30) Linda Baumgarten, (11:00) Gretchen Osborn
Preacher	Pastor Jon Nelson
Tellers	Carol Brown, Beth Grant, Stan York
Ushers	(8:30) Bill Dichtel and John McCurry (11:00)

# St. Stephen Lutheran Church

612 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185 <u>www.saintstephenlutheran.net</u> (757) 229-6688

# Love God, Love People, Form Faith.

(St. Stephen Lutheran Church Vision Statement)

All of Us, Called Through Our Baptisms

Pastor Jon Nelson (320-295-8861)

Karen Ives – Director of Music (757-229-6688)

Hollie Jones – Parish Administrator (757-229-6688)

Jessica Kimball -Preschool Director (757-229-6688)

Peninsula Pastoral Counseling Center (757-873-2273; counselors are in Williamsburg on Thursdays)

Doing Ministry in the World Pastorjn@saintstephenlutheran.net

MusicDir@saintstephenlutheran.net

Preschool@saintstephenlutheran.net

# Welcome to St. Stephen Lutheran Church! Please fill this out and drop it in the offering plate or give it to an usher.

Dec 22, 2024

For guests and members with changes:
Address (Home)
City/StateZip
Γelephone #
E-Mail Address
Guests Only:  [ belong to
Church Address
Please check as many as pertain:
Member
First time guest
Regular guest
Guest (out of town)
Student at William & Mary
Looking for a church home
Desire to speak with pastor
Would like more information about Stephen Ministry
Would like a Stephen Minister to contact me
Any comments? Please be sure your name is above, so we may respond, if necessary.

# **Prayer Requests**

Please <b>add</b> to the prayer list in this month's bulletin and next month's <i>Quill</i> :
Name:
Please <b>remove</b> from prayer concerns:
Name:
I/We need a name tag:I will bake/bring a festive cake for the Winter carnival  I will bake/bring festive cookies or deserts for the Winter carnival