

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
August 2, 2020
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

In today's first reading God invites all who are hungry or thirsty to receive food and drink without cost. Jesus feeds the hungry multitude and reveals the abundance of God. At the eucharistic table we remember all who are hungry or poor in our world today. As we share the bread of life, we are sent forth to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.

Prelude

"Andante Tranquillo from Sonata III"

by Felix Mendelssohn

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

Amen.

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,

**we confess that we do not trust your abundance,
and we deny your presence in our lives.**

**We place our hope in ourselves
and rely on our own efforts.**

We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.

We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.

**We fear difference and do not welcome others
as you have welcomed us.**

We sin in thought, word, and deed.

By your grace, forgive us;

through your love, renew us;

and in your Spirit, lead us;

so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

Beloved of God,

by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through ☩ Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Praise and Thanksgiving"

Hymn#689

- 1 Praise and thanksgiving, God, we would offer
for all things living, you have made good:
harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard,
hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood.
- 2 God, bless the labor we bring to serve you,
that with our neighbor we may be fed.
Sowing or tilling, we would work with you,
harvesting, milling for daily bread.
- 3 Father, providing food for your children,
by Wisdom's guiding teach us to share
one with another, so that, rejoicing
with us, all others may know your care.
- 4 Then will your blessing reach ev'ry people,
freely confessing your gracious hand.
Where you are reigning, no one will hunger;
your love sustaining showers the land.

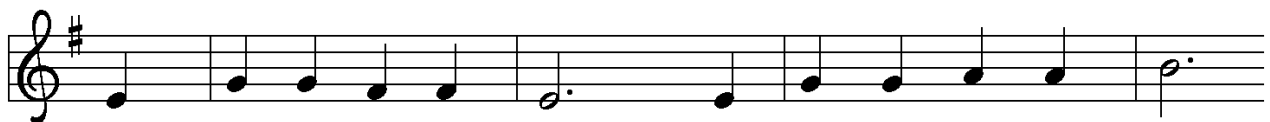
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***Apostolic Greeting**

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**



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Canticle of Praise



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

***Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Word

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

The First Lesson

Isaiah 55:1-5

God invites Israel to a great feast at which both food and drink are free. God also promises to make an everlasting covenant with all peoples, with promises that previously had been limited to Israel. As David was a witness to the nations, these nations shall now acknowledge the ways in which God has glorified Israel.

¹Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
 and you that have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
 Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
 Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
³Incline your ear, and come to me;
 listen, so that you may live.
 I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.
⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
⁵See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
 and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
 because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
 for he has glorified you.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21

⁸The LORD is gracious and full | of compassion,
 slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.
⁹**LORD, you are | good to all,
 and your compassion is over | all your works.**
¹⁴The Lord upholds all | those who fall
 and lifts up those who | are bowed down.
¹⁵**The eyes of all wait upon | you, O LORD,
 and you give them their food | in due season.**
¹⁶You open | wide your hand
 and satisfy the desire of every | living thing.
¹⁷**You are righteous in | all your ways
 and loving in | all your works.**
¹⁸You are near to all who | call upon you,
 to all who call up- | on you faithfully.
¹⁹**You fulfill the desire of | those who fear you;
 you hear their | cry and save them.**
²⁰You watch over all | those who love you,
 but all the wicked you | shall destroy.
²¹**My mouth shall speak the praise | of the LORD;
 let all flesh bless God's holy name forev- | er and ever.**

The Second Lesson

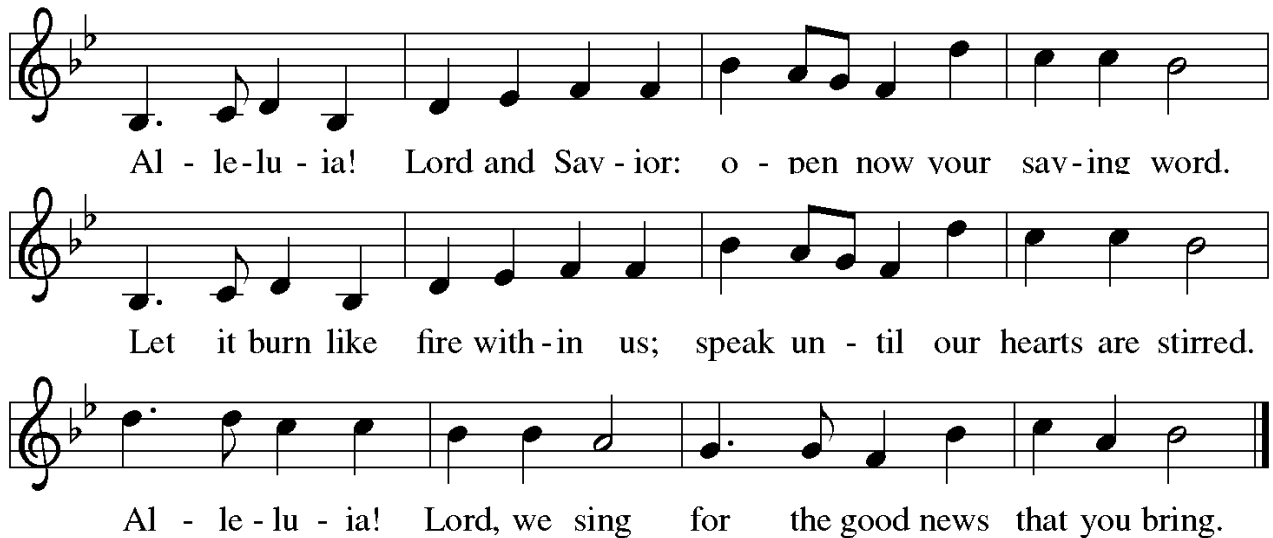
Romans 9:1-5

This begins a new section in Paul's letter in which he will deal with the place of Israel in God's saving plan. He opens by highlighting how Israel's heritage and legacy include being God's children, having God's covenants, being given God's law, participating in worship of God, and receiving divine promises.

¹I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—²I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; ⁵to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God**

*Gospel Acclamation



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.

Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.

Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

*Gospel Reading

Matthew 14:13-21

After John the Baptist is murdered, Jesus desires a time of solitude. Still, his compassion for others will not allow him to dismiss those who need him, and he is moved to perform one of his greatest miracles.

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fourteenth chapter.

Glory to You o Lord.

¹³Now when Jesus heard [about the beheading of John the Baptist], he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the

villages and buy food for themselves.”¹⁶ Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.”¹⁷ They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.”¹⁸ And he said, “Bring them here to me.”¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.²⁰ And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Matthew Best

***Hymn of the Day**

“Break Now the Bread of Life”

Hymn #515

- 1 Break now the bread of life,
dear Lord, to me,
as once you broke the loaves beside the sea.
Beyond the sacred page
I seek you, Lord;
my spirit waits for you,
O living Word.

- 2 Bless your own word of truth,
dear Lord, to me,
as when you blessed the bread by Galilee.
Then shall all bondage cease,
all fetters fall;
and I shall find my peace,
my All-in-All!

- 3 You are the bread of life,
dear Lord, to me,
your holy word the truth that rescues me.
Give me to eat and live
with you above;
teach me to love your truth,
for you are love.

Text: Mary A. Lathbury, 1841-1913, alt.
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***Apostles Creed**

AM: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us profess our faith, using the words of the Apostles Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

***Prayers of the Church**

Congregational response after each petition:

Lord in Your mercy, **C: Hear our prayer.**

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

You take resources that appear to be meager, bless them, and there is enough. May your church trust that what you bless and ask us to share with the world is abundantly sufficient. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Your bountiful creation offers sustenance and life for all creatures. Protect this abundance for the well-being of all. Reverse the damage we have caused your creation. Replenish ground water supplies, provide needed rains in places of drought, and protect forests from wildfires. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You offer yourself to all the nations and peoples of the earth, inviting everyone to abundant life. Bring the prophetic vision to fullness, that all nations will run to you and that nations who do not know you will find their joy in you. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Hear the anguish of tender hearts who cry to you in suffering and satisfy their deepest needs. Bring wholeness and healing to those who suffer in body, heart, soul, and mind. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You offer freely the fullness of salvation. Give our congregation such a welcoming heart, that our words and actions may extend your free and abundant hospitality to all whom we encounter. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You gather your saints as one, united in the body of Jesus. Bring us with all your saints to the heavenly banquet. We remember with love and thanksgiving the saints we have known. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

***Peace**

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us show a sign of that peace!

Offering

The offering, whether in person or through digital means, is an act of worship. Worship, at its core, is a reverent love and devotion accorded to God. We give because God loves us first, and we are called to love God and neighbor as a result. The offering is one way we show our love of God.

To assist you in this act of worship, there are several ways to make your offering:

Go to www.ststephenlc.org and scroll to the bottom of the page, and click donate.

- Text your offering dollar amount to 717-259-2393.
- Use the GivePlus app from your smart phone or device.
- Set up regular electronic offerings by contacting Kevin, our office manager, at 717-766-2168, Monday through Thursday from 9am – 2pm, or by email at office@ststephenlc.org to get set up.
- Mail in your check, made payable to St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Our address is 30 W. Main St., PO Box 266, New Kingstown, PA 17072.

The offerings are used to carry out the ministry of the church, to share the Good News, to provide pastoral care, to worship as a community, and to create an environment where Jesus encounters people and their lives are transformed. All of these things continue to take place. Thank you for your generosity.

***Offertory Prayer**

Let us pray. God of goodness and growth,
all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your 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

Reception of New Disciple

P: We are here in the Name and Life of Jesus, the Christ,

ALL: Struggling to find out how to improve our lives, to find out how to really celebrate a God-created universe.

P: So, we members of this Christian community and those of you about to become members acknowledge the common ground on which we stand before our Lord. In that spirit, let us pray.

P: For Neal Warfield;

ALL: O Lord, hear our prayer.

P: For his entrance into our servant community;

ALL: We give thanks to you, O God.

P: For the faith, hope and love we share that sustains us from day to day;

ALL: We truly rejoice and give thanks.

P: For our relationships with one another that we may build bridges and not walls;

ALL: We plead, O Father, for your guidance and help.

P: In the name of Christ, our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

P: We have spoken our common ground.

ALL: We have prayed our common prayer.

P: Standing before us is a fellow pilgrim — traveler in life — who wishes to join our community. Let us greet Neal in the name of our Lord.

Cong: We open our lives, the doors of our homes, our thoughts, our discoveries; our births and our deaths; our triumphs and our failures; our weaknesses and our strengths. Come, live in Christ with us!

New Disciple: My life so blend with yours in Christ that, like you, I open myself to you. I depend on you, you may depend on me..

C: Let it be so.

P: Having been brought to this moment by the Love and Power of the Holy Spirit, together we acknowledge that as the People of God:

ALL: We are committed to being God's presence in the world with a mission of evangelism and outreach to our neighbors that seeks to spread the Good News in Jesus Christ, inviting others in worship, discipleship, and service. We are committed to read,

study, and meditate upon the Word of God. Our faith is not just a private matter, but is meant to be lived publicly. Through prayer and the Holy Spirit's guidance, we are empowered to respond to those in need.

P: So, the responsibilities of our common Christian life have been mutually accepted. The growth which our God has begun shall continue in our decisions, our elections, our dialogues, our meetings, our social events; so that our lives may be one unlimited act of worship.

Let us pray together:

ALL: Lord God, We are members one of another, and together we form the Body of Christ on earth, to express, state, articulate, make real to others, and to the whole creation, the central truth about the whole of life – that Jesus is Lord. Thank you, Lord, for the church – for all Christians. Thank you for living in our hearts and, through binding us to yourself, binding us to each other. Send us out with a living faith to the world to share the Good News in word and deed. Amen

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***Blessing**

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, ✠ Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love.

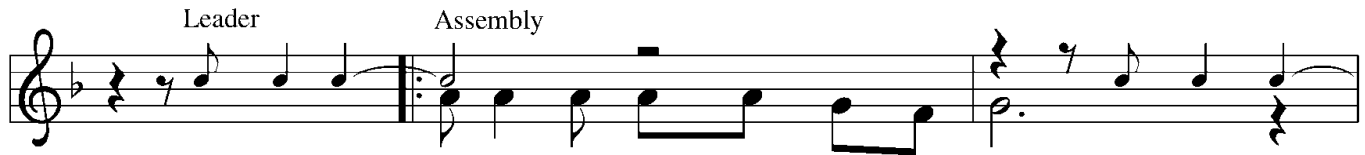
Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

“We Praise Your Name”

Hymn #846

Amen, We Praise Your Name
Amen siakudumisa



Ma - si - thi! A - men si - a - ku - du - mi - sa! Ma - si - thi!
Sing prais-es! A-men, we praise your name, O God! Sing prais - es!



A - men si - a - ku - du - mi - sa! Ma - si - thi! A - men, ba - wo.
A - men, we praise your name, O God! Sing prais - es! A - men, a - men.



A - men, ba - wo. A - men si - a - ku - du - mi - sa! Ma - si - thi!
A - men, a - men. A - men, we praise your name, O God! Sing prais - es!

Text: South African traditional

Music: AMEN SIAKUDUMISA, attr. S. C. Molefe, as taught by Gobingca George Mxadana

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***Dismissal**

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Postlude

“God of Grace”

setting by Paul Manz

St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church is a community of faith inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim boldly the Good News of God's loving and saving presence in the world.

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