

*September 5, 2021*  
*Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost*



**ST. STEPHEN**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church

\*Congregation is invited to stand as able  
Please be aware that video cameras are in use during our hybrid (combined) Worship Service and that images are being shared with the online participants.

James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophenician woman in today's gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don't deserve the goods meant for God's children? Or was he speaking out of his human worldview, but transcended those limits when she took him by surprise with her reply? Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings a need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

**Our Mission**

We respond to Christ's love by feeding those who hunger in body, mind, and spirit.

**Prelude**

*"Menuetto"*

by Franz Joseph Haydn

**Gathering**

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

**\*Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God, our provider,

**help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn?**

**Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.**

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, † the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

**\*Gathering Hymn**

“My God, How Wonderful Thou Art ”

Hymn#519

1 Open your ears, O faithful people,  
open your ears and hear God's word.  
Open your hearts, O royal priesthood,  
God has come to you.

*Refrain*

God has spoken to the people, hallelujah!  
God has spoken words of wisdom, hallelujah!  
God has spoken to the people, hallelujah!  
God has spoken words of wisdom, hallelujah!

2 They who have ears to hear the message,  
they who have ears, now let them hear;  
they who would learn the way of wisdom,  
let them hear God's word. *Refrain*

Text: Hasidic traditional; Willard F. Jabusch, b. 1930, English version  
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**\*Apostolic Greeting**

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

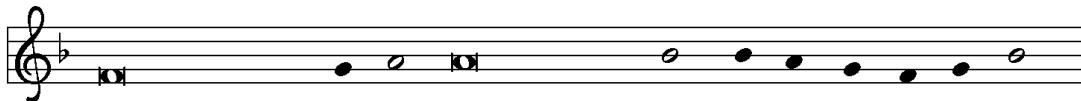
**\*Kyrie**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



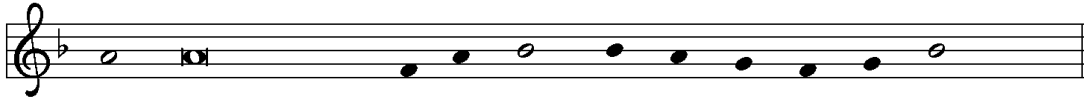
For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal-vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



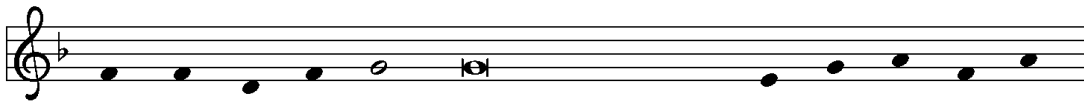
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of



God, and for the uni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



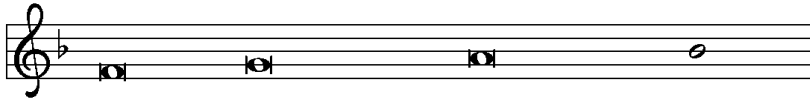
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

**\*Canticle of Praise**



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the

high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - mighty God and Fa-ther,

we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

*Refrain*

Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace

to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the

high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:

have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right

hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

*Refrain*

Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace

to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the  
high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.  
3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a -  
lone are the MostHigh, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly  
Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.  
*Final refrain*  
Glo - ry to God in the high - est.  
A - men, a - men.

**\*Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Gracious God, throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Word**

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

**The First Lesson**

**Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23**

*The sayings in the book of Proverbs impart the collective wisdom of centuries. Speaking of wealth and poverty, these particular verses teach that those who are blessed by God should honor the poor, for they are within God's special care.*

A reading from the book of the Proverbs, the 22nd chapter.

<sup>1</sup>A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,  
and favor is better than silver or gold.

<sup>2</sup>The rich and the poor have this in common:  
the LORD is the maker of them all.

<sup>8</sup>Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity,  
and the rod of anger will fail.

<sup>9</sup>Those who are generous are blessed,  
for they share their bread with the poor.

<sup>22</sup>Do not rob the poor because they are poor,  
or crush the afflicted at the gate;

<sup>23</sup>for the LORD pleads their cause  
and despoils of life those who despoil them.

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

### Psalm

### Psalm 125

<sup>1</sup>Those who trust in the LORD are <sup>l</sup> like Mount Zion,  
which cannot be moved, but stands <sup>l</sup> fast forever.

<sup>2</sup>**The mountains sur- <sup>l</sup> round Jerusalem;  
so you surround your people, O LORD, from this time forth for- <sup>l</sup> evermore.**

<sup>3</sup>The scepter of the wicked shall not hold sway over the land allotted <sup>l</sup> to the just,  
so that the just shall not put their <sup>l</sup> hands to evil.

<sup>4</sup>**Show your goodness, O LORD, to those <sup>l</sup> who are good  
and to those who are <sup>l</sup> true of heart.**

<sup>5</sup>As for those who turn aside to crooked ways, the LORD will lead them away with the <sup>l</sup>  
evildoers;  
but peace be <sup>l</sup> upon Israel.

### The Second Lesson

### James 2:1-17

*Faithful Christians do not show partiality to the rich and powerful of the world, especially at the expense of the poor and weak. Likewise, faith does not pay mere lip service to God's will. Instead, a living Christian faith expresses itself in acts of compassion and mercy for those in need.*

A reading from St. James' epistle, the 2nd chapter.

<sup>1</sup>My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? <sup>2</sup>For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, <sup>3</sup>and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," <sup>4</sup>have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup>Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? <sup>6</sup>But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who

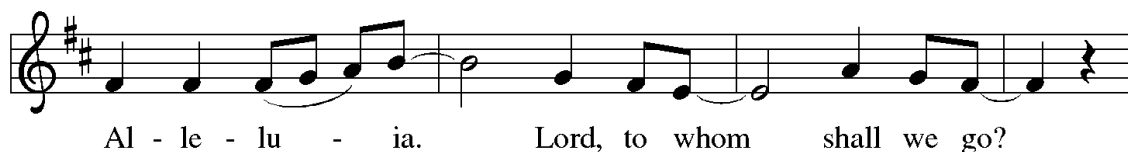
oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup>Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

<sup>8</sup>You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>9</sup>But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup>For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. [<sup>11</sup>For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup>So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup>For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.]

<sup>14</sup>What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? <sup>17</sup>So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

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

### Gospel Acclamation



### Gospel Reading

**Mark 7:24-37**

*In Mark's gospel, encounters with women usually signify turning points in Jesus' ministry. Here, a conversation with a Syrophenician woman marks the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.*

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark, the 7th chapter. **Glory to You O Lord.**

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, <sup>25</sup>but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup>Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup>He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." <sup>28</sup>But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." <sup>29</sup>Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." <sup>30</sup>So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

<sup>31</sup>Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup>They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup>He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his

tongue. <sup>34</sup>Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” <sup>35</sup>And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup>Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup>They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

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

**Sermon**

The Reverend Matthew Best

**\*Hymn of the Day**

*“Healer of Our Every Ill”*

Hymn#612

*Refrain*

Healer of our ev'ry ill,  
light of each tomorrow,  
give us peace beyond our fear,  
and hope beyond our sorrow.

- 1 You who know our fears and sadness,  
grace us with your peace and gladness;  
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts. *Refrain*
- 2 In the pain and joy beholding  
how your grace is still unfolding,  
give us all your vision, God of love. *Refrain*
- 3 Give us strength to love each other,  
ev'ry sister, ev'ry brother;  
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide. *Refrain*
- 4 You who know each thought and feeling,  
teach us all your way of healing;  
Spirit of compassion, fill each heart. *Refrain*

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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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 Intercession**

*Congregational response after each petition:*

AM: ...Lord, in Your mercy, **C: hear our prayer.**

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Holy One, you bring your people together in worship. Enliven your church. Guide all evangelists, preachers, prophets, and missionaries who seek to share your love through word and deed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You provide water for thirsty ground and sunshine to feed hungry plants. Bless all who advocate for healthy forests, unpolluted air, and clean waterways. Inspire all people to show care for the world you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You show no partiality. Increase justice in all nations. Encourage leaders and governments to work with one another for the good of our common world. Unite us in seeking the health, safety, and dignity of all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You accompany those who are most in need. Shelter all fleeing violence or persecution, protect any who are in danger, and sustain them through uncertain and unstable times. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You support the work of your disciples. Continue to nurture the leadership and ministries of this congregation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You embrace all who have died in the faith and brought them into your glorious presence. We thank you for their example and rejoice in their lives. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only 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](http://www.StStephenLC.org) and scroll to the bottom of the page, and click **DONATE**.

Text your offering dollar amount to 717-685-6947. Text "help" for options.

Use Engage from your smart phone or Internet connected device at <https://engage.suran.com/sslc/> or QR code below:



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](mailto: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. Jesus, Bread of life,  
you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what  
has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive  
here, your body for the life of the world.

**Amen**

### **Meal**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

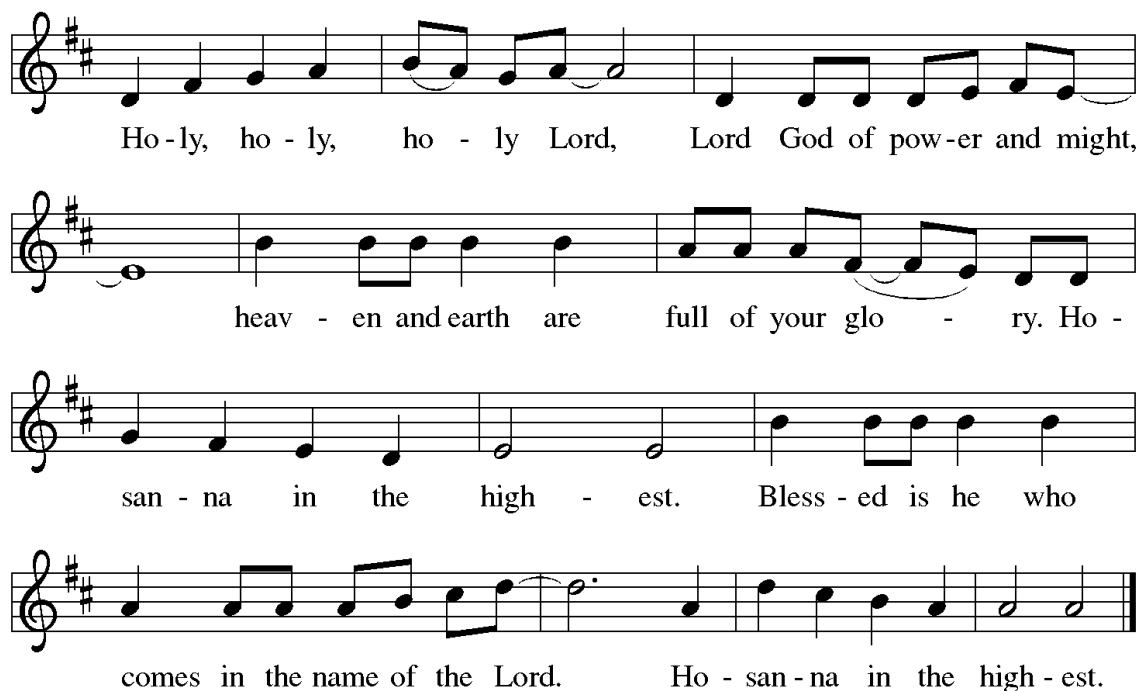
### **\*The Great Thanksgiving**

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. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow - er and might,  
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was handed over, 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.

Again, 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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

**\*Invitation to Communion**

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.  
Come!

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.

Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948  
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**\*Post Communion Prayer**

Let us pray. Jesus, Bread of life,  
we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in  
this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray.  
**Amen.**

**Sending**

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

**\*Blessing**

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ☩ be upon you now  
and forever.  
**Amen.**

**\*Sending Hymn**

*“O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate “*

Hymn#722 vs. 1-3

- 1 O Christ, your heart, compassionate,  
bore ev'ry human pain.  
Its beating was the pulse of God;  
its breadth, God's vast domain.  
The heart of God, the heart of Christ  
combined in perfect rhyme  
to write God's love in human deeds,  
eternity in time.
  
- 2 As once you welcomed those cast down  
and healed the sick, the blind,  
so may all bruised and broken lives  
through us your help still find.  
Lord, join our hearts with those who weep  
that none may weep alone,  
and help us bear another's pain  
as though it were our own.
  
- 3 O Christ, create new hearts in us  
that beat in time with yours,  
that, joined by faith with your great heart,  
become love's open doors.  
We are your body, risen Christ;  
our hearts, our hands we yield  
that through our life and ministry  
your love may be revealed.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., b. 1923

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**\*Dismissal**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

*“Concluding Voluntary!”*

by R.G. Thompson

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