

September 26, 2021
Eighteenth 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.

Someone who isn't part of Jesus' own circle is casting out demons in Jesus' name, and the disciples want him stopped. They appeal to Jesus, as Joshua did to Moses about the elders who prophesied without official authorization. Like Moses, Jesus refuses to see this as a threat. Jesus welcomes good being done in his name, even when it is not under his control. The circle we form around Jesus' word must be able to value good being done in ways we wouldn't do it, by people we can't keep tabs on.

Our Mission

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

Prelude

“ ”

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

“Oh, Sing to the Lord”

Hymn#822 vs. 1-3

- 1 Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.
Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.
Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.
- 2 For God is the Lord, and God has done wonders.
For God is the Lord, and God has done wonders.
For God is the Lord, and God has done wonders.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.
- 3 So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets,
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

Text: Brazilian folk song; tr. Gerhard M. Cartford, b. 1923, Spanish and English
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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.**

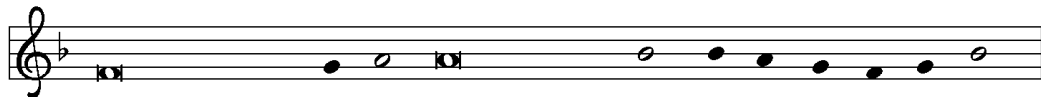
***Kyrie**



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.



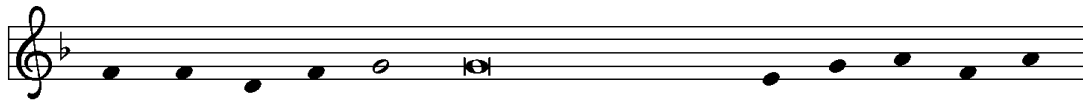
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of



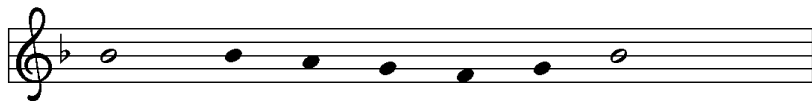
God, and for the uni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



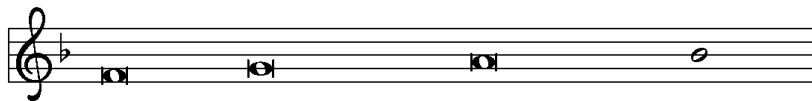
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and



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**

Refrain



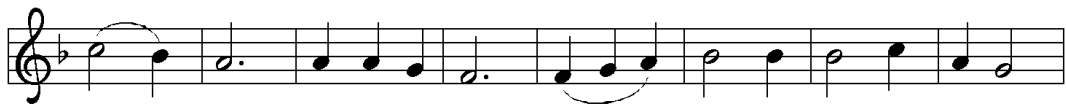
Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



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



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



1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y 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 Most High, 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.

Generous God, your Son gave his life that we might come to peace with you. Give us a share of your Spirit, and in all we do empower us to bear the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Word

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

The First Lesson

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

This book tells the story of Queen Esther, who saves her people, the Jews, from the murderous schemes of Haman, advisor to the Persian king, her husband. Haman is hanged on the gallows he constructed for Esther's cousin Mordecai, and the Jews celebrate the feast of Purim to commemorate this victory over their enemies.

A reading from the book of Esther, the 7th and 9th chapters.

¹[King Ahasuerus] and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther.²On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled."

³Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. ⁴For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.” ⁵Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?” ⁶Esther said, “A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. ⁹Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high.” And the king said, “Hang him on that.” ¹⁰So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

^{9:20}Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, ²¹enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, ²²as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

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

Psalm

Psalm 124

¹If the LORD had not been ¹ on our side,
let Isra- ¹ el now say;
²**if the LORD had not been ¹ on our side,**
when enemies rose ¹ up against us,
³then would they have swallowed us ¹ up alive
in their fierce ¹ anger toward us;
⁴**then would the waters have ¹ overwhelmed us**
and the torrent gone ¹ over us;
⁵then would the ¹ raging waters
have gone right ¹ over us.
⁶**Blessed ¹ be the LORD**
who has not given us over to be a prey ¹ for their teeth.
⁷We have escaped like a bird from the snare ¹ of the fowler;
the snare is broken, and we ¹ have escaped.
⁸**Our help is in the name ¹ of the LORD,**
the maker of heav- ¹ en and earth.

The Second Lesson

James 5:13-20

Marks of the Christian community include praying for those who are sick and in need, celebrating with those in good health, restoring those who have strayed, confessing sins to one another, and offering forgiveness to each other.

A reading from St. James' epistle, the 5th chapter.

¹³Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have

them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. ¹⁶Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. ¹⁷Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

¹⁹My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, ²⁰you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Word of God. Word of Life. **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.

***Gospel Reading**

Mark 9:38-50

On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus teaches his disciples about ministry that involves service and sacrifice. His disciples are slow to realize that these words apply to them as well as to others.

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark, the 9th chapter. **Glory to You O Lord.**

³⁸John said to [Jesus,] “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” ³⁹But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.

⁴⁰Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

⁴²“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. ⁴³If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,

⁴⁸where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

⁴⁹“For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

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

Sermon

The Rev Richard Jorgensen

Hymn of the Day

"Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service"

Hymn#712 vs. 1-3

- 1 Lord, whose love in humble service
bore the weight of human need,
who upon the cross, forsaken,
worked your mercy's perfect deed:
we, your servants, bring the worship
not of voice alone, but heart;
consecrating to your purpose
ev'ry gift which you impart.

- 2 Still your children wander homeless;
still the hungry cry for bread;
still the captives long for freedom;
still in grief we mourn our dead.
As you, Lord, in deep compassion
healed the sick and freed the soul,
by your Spirit send your power
to our world to make it whole.

- 3 As we worship, grant us vision,
till your love's revealing light
in its height and depth and greatness
dawns upon our quickened sight,
making known the needs and burdens
your compassion bids us bear,
stirring us to ardent service,
your abundant life to share.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984

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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.

We pray for the church and its ministry. Bless the newly baptized and encourage them in their journey of faith. Sustain all members of the body of Christ in lives of prayer, service, and worship. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for natural wonders of your creation. Restore damaged forests, waterways and natural habitats and lead us to be good stewards of what you have provided. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those in authority. Give them wise minds and compassionate hearts. Strengthen in them a desire to protect the vulnerable and care for those underserved. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are struggling with cancer, dementia, or any other disease. Provide them with peace and resilience for the days ahead. Sustain caregivers with energy and patience. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the worship leaders of this congregation: musicians, readers, acolytes, and ushers. Bless us through their ministry and grant them the passion to continue in their service. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all your saints, those we have loved and known and those from every time and place. Continue to guide us by their example and reassure us of your promised salvation. 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 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 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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The Body and Blood of Christ given and shed for you

***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

“The Spirit Sends us Forth to Serve“

Hymn#551 vs. 1-3

- 1 The Spirit sends us forth to serve;
we go in Jesus' name
to bring glad tidings to the poor,
God's favor to proclaim.

- 2 We go to comfort those who mourn
and set the burdened free;
where hope is dim, to share a dream
and help the blind to see.

- 3 We go to be the hands of Christ,
to scatter joy like seed
and, all our days, to cherish life,
to do the loving deed.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

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***Dismissal**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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