

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

+ Second Sunday in Lent
March 16, 2025



You are welcome here! As a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the ELCA, we believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, shared unconditionally and without regard to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic or family status, age, physical or mental abilities, outward appearance, or religious affiliation. We seek racial equality and justice. In this way, we live into the truth (Ephesians 2:14)—that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

Gathering

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

Prelude

Welcome

Joys & Concerns

**** Confession and Forgiveness**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

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

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate One,
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love,
but our lives do not always reflect you
and your love for the world.**

**We do not show others the tender compassion
you have shown to us.**

**We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality
you grant to all people.**

**We oppress others,
even though you have set us free again and again.**

We squander the abundant gifts of the earth.

**Transform our lives
and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide
to welcome the wandering ones home.

In ☩ Christ, your sins are forgiven.

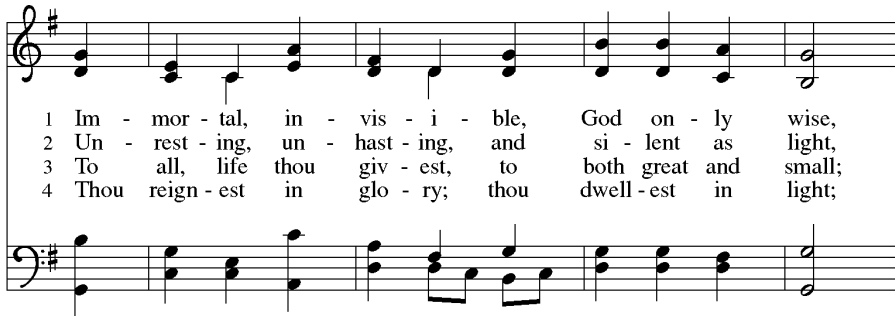
You have a place in God's house forever. **Amen.**

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** Gathering Hymn

Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise


ELW 834



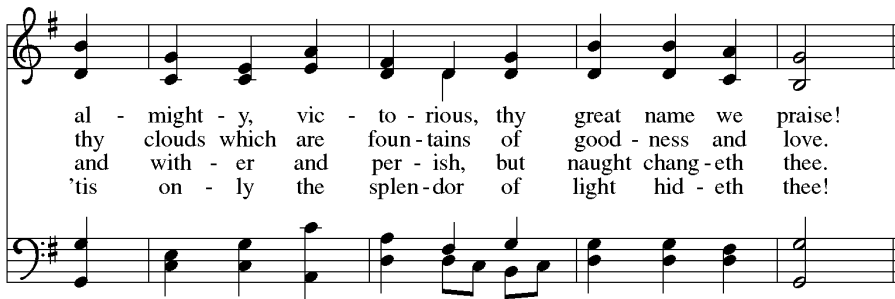
1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light;



in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;



most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
we blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
all laud we would ren - der; oh, help us to see



al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise!
thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824-1908, alt.
Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional; arr. John Roberts, 1807-1876

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

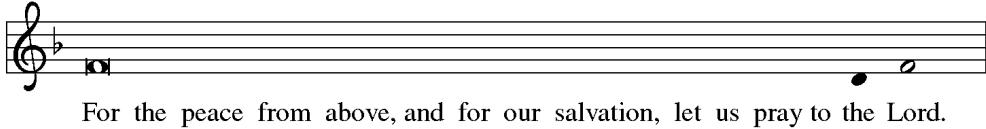
**** Greeting**

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.

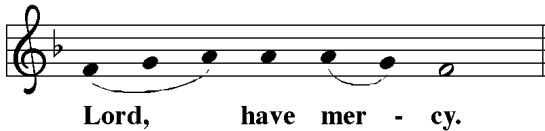
**** Kyrie**



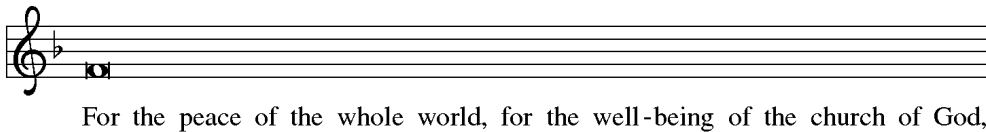
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



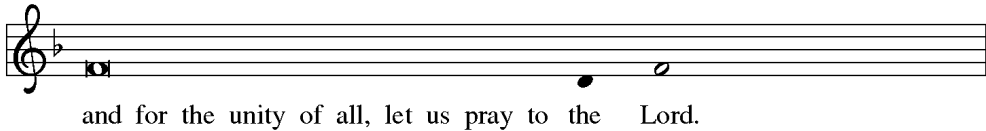
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



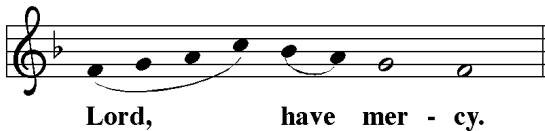
Lord, have mer - cy.



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

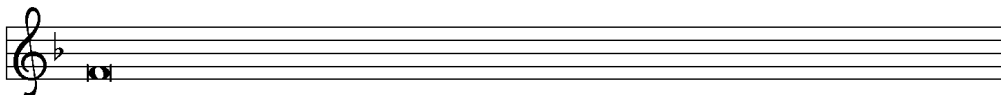


and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

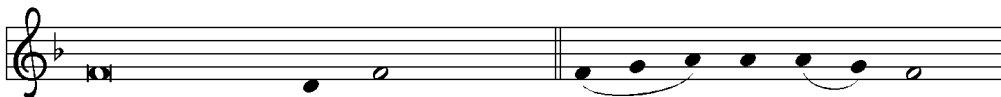


Lord, have mer - cy.

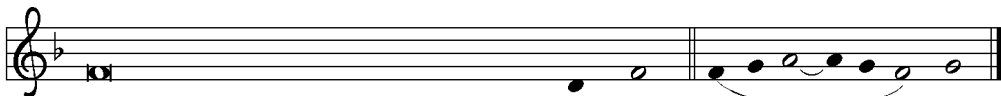
**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

** Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Word

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

First Reading

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 27

¹The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

²**When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh —
my adversaries and foes — they shall stumble and fall.**

³Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;
though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

⁴**One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: to live in the house of
the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to
inquire in his temple.**

⁵For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.

⁶**Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.**

⁷Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!

⁸**“Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, LORD, do I seek.**

⁹Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help.
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

¹⁰**If my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will take me up.**

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

¹¹Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

¹²Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence.

¹³I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁴Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

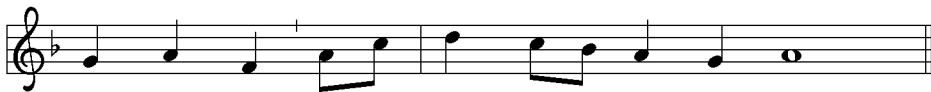
**** Gospel Acclamation**



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and



mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in



stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

**** Gospel**

Luke 13:31-35

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.
The Gospel of the Lord.

Glory to you O Lord.
Praise to you O Christ.

**** Gospel Acclamation**

Please see gospel acclamation above.

Sermon

The Rev. Susan Loney

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

**** Hymn of the Day**

Thy Holy Wings

ELW 613

1 Thy ho - ly wings, O Sav - ior, spread gent - ly o - ver me,
2 Oh, let me nes - tle near thee, with - in thy down - y breast
3 Oh, wash me in the wa - ters of No - ah's cleans - ing flood.

and let me rest se - cure - ly through good and ill in thee.
where I will find sweet com - fort and peace with - in thy nest.
Give me a will - ing spir - it, a heart both clean and good.

Oh, be my strength and por - tion, my rock and hid - ing place,
Oh, close thy wings a - round me and keep me safe - ly there,
Oh, take in - to thy keep - ing thy chil - dren great and small,

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

and let my ev - 'ry mo - ment be lived with - in thy grace.
 for I am but a new - born and need thy ten - der care.
 and while we sweet - ly slum - ber, en - fold us one and all.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903, sts. 1, 3; Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, st. 2; tr. composite
 Music: BRED DINA VINGAR, Swedish folk tune; arr. hymnal version
 Text © 1983 Gracia Grindal, Selah Publishing Co., Inc., agent. www.selahpub.com.
 Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

** 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 People

Each portion of the prayer ends with:

Response: God in your mercy, receive our prayer.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

Meal

God feeds us at the table of mercy and grace.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Offering

Each week we give thanks to God for what God has given us: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. A financial gift to St. Stephen's supports the work of the congregation in our community.

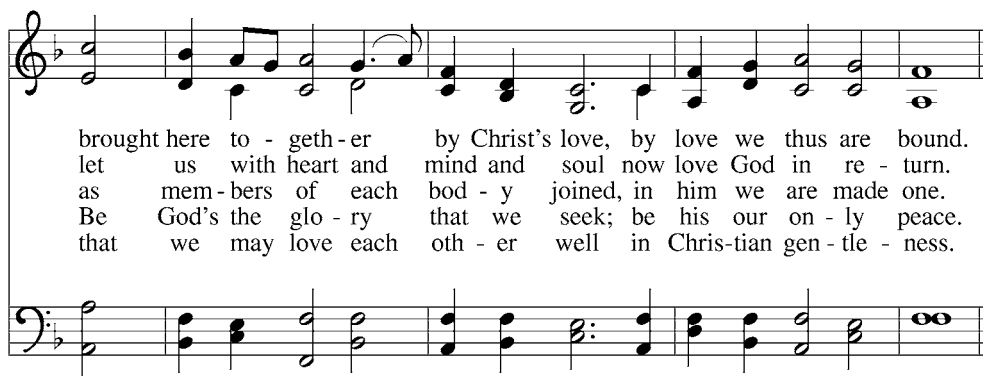
** Offering Song

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;
4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.
5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.
Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.
that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, alt.
Music: TWENTY-FOURTH, attr. Lucius Chapin, 1760–1842
Text © 1960 World Library Publications, 3708 River Rd., Franklin Park, IL 60131-2158. All Rights Reserved.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

** Offering Prayer

Gracious Provider,
you set your immense treasures among us,
opening your heart to the world.
As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,
deepen our commitment to sharing those
treasures with others,
through our Savior, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

** Dialogue

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

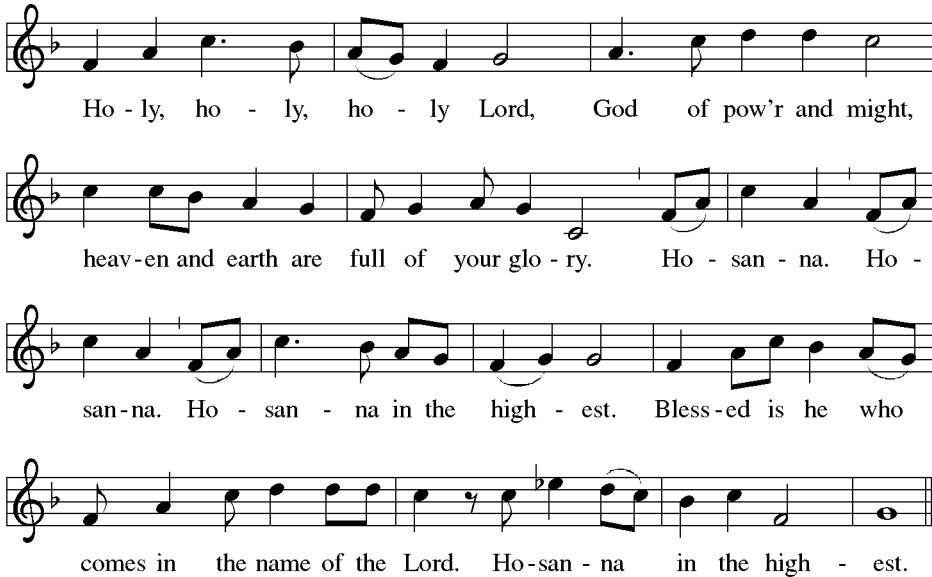
And also with you.

We lift them to the Lord.

**It is right to give our thanks and
praise.**

** Preface

** Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** Thanksgiving at the Table

...we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

** 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.

** Invitation to Communion

Lamb of God



** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

Communion

Holy Communion is a free gift of God's grace and love. Everyone is welcome to share in this meal. Come forward, take an empty cup from the table, then kneel or stand along the Communion rail. If you require GF wafers, please tell the minister. Our chalices contain red wine and amber-colored juice. As you return to your seat, place your used cup in the receptacle at the end of the first row of pews. If you wish to receive words of blessing, simply tell the minister.

Communion Hymn

As the Grains of Wheat

ELW 465

Refrain



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were



gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from



all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.



1 As this cup of bless - ing is shared with - in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when

Refrain



may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: AS THE GRAINS, Marty Haugen

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** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

**** Communion Blessing**

**** Post Communion Prayer**

Together, let us pray.

Generous Host,
you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities,
that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom,
in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Announcements

Sending

We are sent into the world to serve.

**** Blessing**

God our tender parent,
God the crucified one,
God the reconciling Spirit,
✚ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

**** Sending Hymn**

All Who Love and Serve Your City

ELW 724



1 All who love and serve your cit - y, all who
2 In your day of loss and sor - row, in your
3 In your day of wealth and plen - ty, wast - ed
4 For all days are days of judg - ment, and the
5 Ris - en Lord, shall yet the cit - y be the

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**



bear its dai - ly stress, all who cry for peace and
day of help - less strife, hon - or, peace, and love re -
work and wast - ed play, call to mind the word of
Lord is wait - ing still, draw - ing near a world that
cit - y of de - spair? Come to - day, our judge, our



jus - tice, all who curse and all who bless,
treat - ing, seek the Lord, who is your life.
Je - sus, "You must work while it is day."
spurns him, of - f'ring peace from Cal - v'ry's hill.
glo - ry. Be its name "The Lord is there!"

Text: Erik Routley, 1917–1982

Music: NEW ORLEANS, Paul D. Weber, b. 1949

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Music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

** Dismissal

Go in peace,

To Love, To Invite, To Serve.

God is gracious and merciful.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

*Chancel flowers are given by Michele Torchia & Rick Feltman
in Honor of Saint John de Brebeuf, Jesuit and Martyr, Patron Saint of Canada*

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Participants in Today's Service

Pastor:

The Rev. Susan Loney
pastor@ststeph.org

Music Director:

Claudio Espejo

Assisting Minister/Lector:

Ann Dransfield

Camera:

John Gordon

Altar Guild:

Carol Landry

Ministers:

The people of St. Stephen's

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Text the word "welcome" to 855-965-5200 to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

May God go with you today and every day.

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