



# St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

## HOLY COMMUNION

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 17, 2023 • 9:30 am

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 written in Ephesians (2:14)—that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

## Gathering

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Joys & Concerns**

**\*\* Confession & Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be God, the one who forms us,

✙ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

**Amen.**

Let us bow before God in humility,  
confessing our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Steadfast and faithful God,  
**you have revealed the ways of justice,  
yet we fail to follow you.**

**We are overwhelmed  
by the world's violence and suffering.**

We are afraid to risk what we have  
for the sake of others.  
For the harm we have caused,  
known and unknown, forgive us.  
For the unjust demands we place on others  
and your creation, forgive us.  
For the ways we turn away  
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.  
Lead us back to you  
and set us on the right path;  
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
Amen.

Beloved in Christ,  
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.  
God's compassion is beyond compare.  
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.  
In ☩ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.  
Amen.

**\*\* Gathering Hymn**

*Goodness Is Stronger than Evil*

ELW 721

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Goodness Is Stronger than Evil'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the melody and a bass clef staff for the accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in a simple, hymn-like style with quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the treble staff: 'Good-ness is stron-ger than e - vil; love is stron-ger than hate;'. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

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

light is stron-ger than dark - ness; life is stron-ger than death; vic-t'ry is

Oh,

ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Vic-t'ry is

vic - t'ry is ours, vic - t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Oh,

ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.

vic - t'ry is ours, vic - t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.

**\*\* 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.**

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

## \*\* Hymn 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

*Assisting Minister leads the prayer of the day and the assembly responds: Amen.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

\*\* 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 50:15-21 (p. 47)

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

## Psalm

Psalm 103:1-13

*The Psalm will be read responsively.*

- <sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
- <sup>2</sup>**Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all God's benefits—**
- <sup>3</sup>who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your diseases;
- <sup>4</sup>**who redeems your life from the grave  
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**
- <sup>5</sup>who satisfies your desires with good things  
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
- <sup>6</sup>**O LORD, you provide vindication  
and justice for all who<sup>1</sup> are oppressed.**
- <sup>7</sup>You made known your ways to Moses  
and your works to the children of Israel.
- <sup>8</sup>**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- <sup>9</sup>you will not always accuse us,  
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- <sup>10</sup>**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,  
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**
- <sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

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

<sup>12</sup>As far as the east is from the west,  
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children,  
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

**Second Reading**

Romans 14:1-12 (p. 1034-1035)

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**

Matthew 18:21-35 (p. 896)

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you O Lord.**

The Gospel of the 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.**

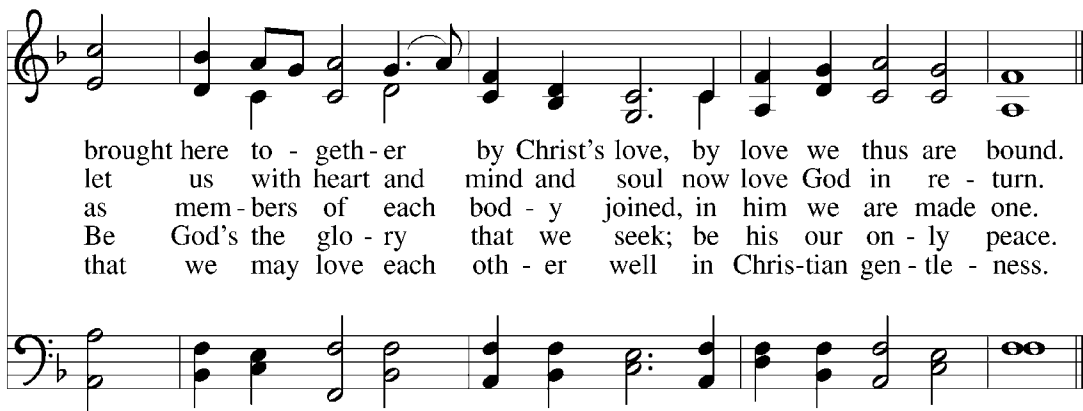
## \*\* Hymn of the Day

*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.

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

**\*\* Apostles' Creed**

Let us love one another, that with one mind we may confess the Holy Trinity, one in essence and undivided.

**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:            Merciful God,                            **Receive our prayer.**

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



# Meal

## \*\* 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 things that God has given us: our selves, our time, and our possessions. A financial donation to the church is never a requirement, but is freely given to support the work of the congregation in the community. For your convenience, St. Stephen's offers the opportunity to give on-line through text message. Type "Funds" to 302-257-6155 to make any donations.*

## \*\* Offering Song

*I Come with Joy*

ELW 482



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and  
2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are  
3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion  
4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er  
5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in  
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in  
ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and  
near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -  
done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



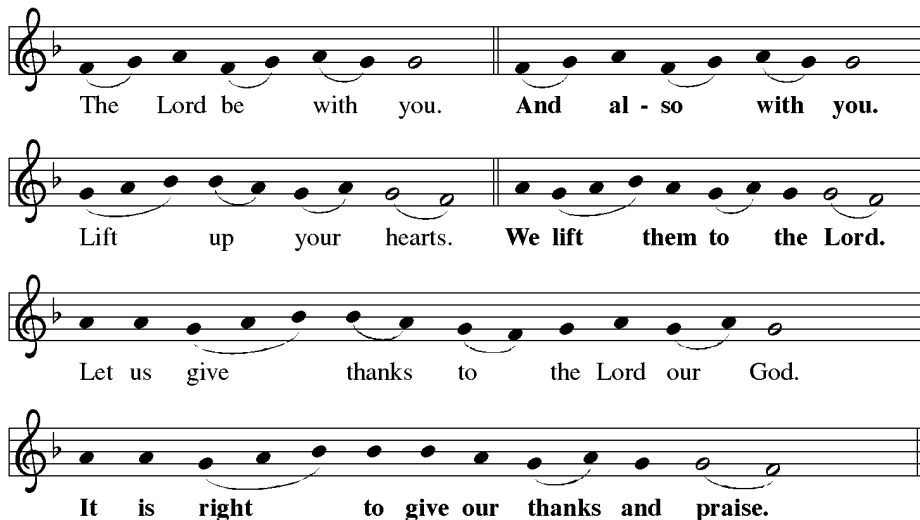
love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.  
Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.  
strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.  
live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.  
love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

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

## \*\* Offering Prayer

*Assisting Minister leads the offering prayer and the assembly responds: Amen.*

## \*\* Dialogue



The Lord be with you. **And al - so with you.**

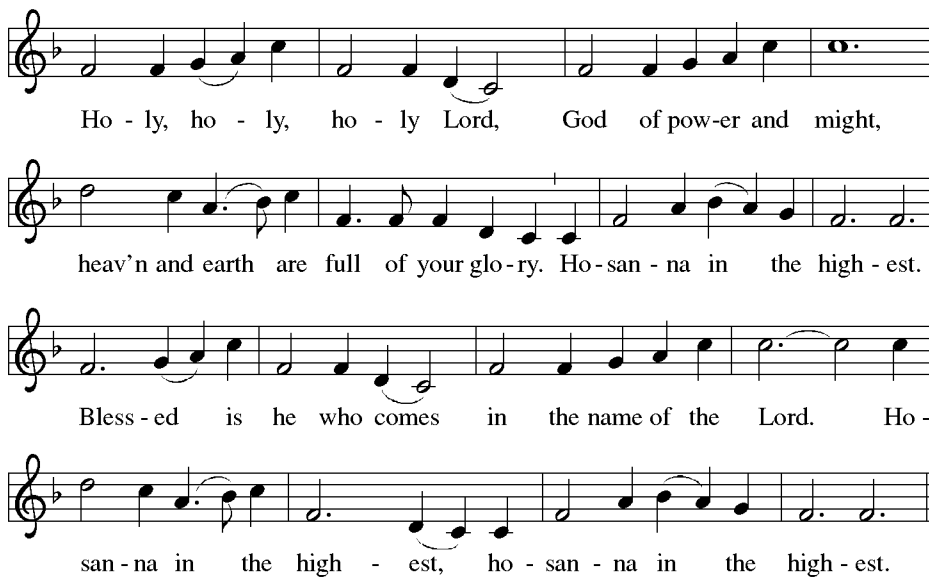
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## \*\* Preface

## \*\* Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,

heav'n 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, **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**

Honor, praise, glory and thanksgiving...we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Gathered as your people, meeting in Jesus' name, and preparing ourselves to feast upon Jesus' very body and blood, we plead with all creation:

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Send your Spirit upon this meal, the body and blood of Jesus, that we overflow with your selfless love. Turn us to face our neighbors, that by us and through us your love may be known in the world. Again, we beg:

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All honor and praise and glory to you, God of creative, dirty hands, God of holy, wounded hands, God who strengthens and guides our hands, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **\*\* 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**

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

## Lamb of God



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

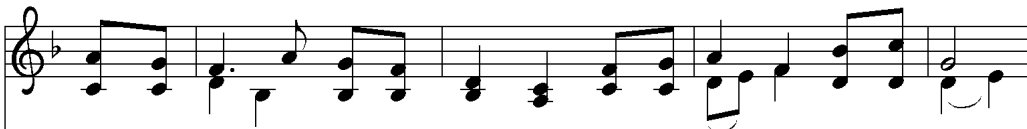
## Communion

*As Lutheran Christians we believe the words of Jesus, "This is my body, this is my blood given for you for the forgiveness of sin." If you desire to receive this gift, you are welcome to commune here. All who do not commune may come for a blessing. Wheat and GF wafers are available as are red wine and white grape juice.*

## Communion Hymn

*By Your Hand Feed Your People*

ELW 469



- 1 By your hand you feed your peo - ple, food of an - gels, heav-en's bread.
- 2 In this meal we taste your sweet-ness, bread for hun - ger, wine of peace.
- 3 Send us now with faith and cour - age to the hun - gry, lost, be - reaved.



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

For these gifts we did not la - bor, by your grace have we been fed:  
 Ho - ly word and ho - ly wis - dom sat - is - fy our deep - est needs.  
 In our liv - ing and our dy - ing, we be - come what we re - ceive:

*Refrain*

Christ's own bod - y, blessed and bro - ken, cup o'er - flow - ing, life out - poured,

giv - en as a liv - ing to - ken of your world re - deemed, re - stored.

**Communion Blessing**

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

# Sending

*We are sent into the world to serve.*

## Post Communion Prayer

Together, let us pray.

Holy Jesus, in this meal you have fed and nourished us  
to work in your beloved world.

Send us now, filled with yourself and strengthened by your Spirit  
to live your life for others. Amen.

## Announcements

### \*\* Blessing

### \*\* Sending Hymn

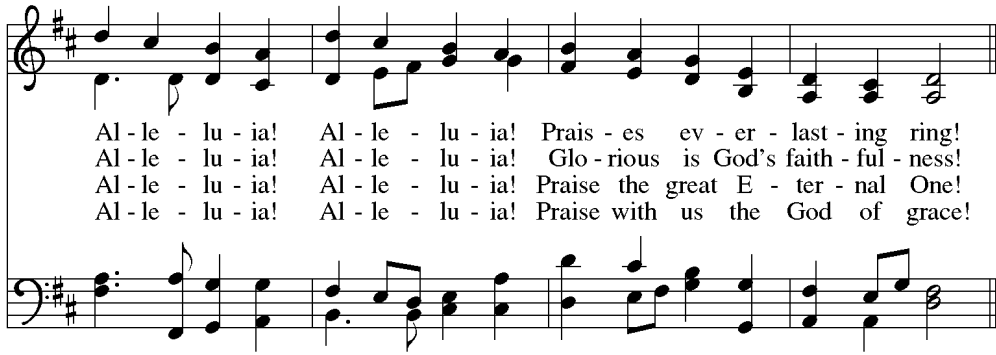
*Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven*

ELW 864

1 Praise, my soul, the God of heav - en; joy - ful - ly your trib-ute bring.  
2 God be praised for grace and fa - vor to our fore-bears in dis-tress.  
3 Frail as sum-mer's flow'r we flour - ish, blows the wind and it is gone;  
4 An - gels sing in ad - o - ra - tion, in God's pres-ence, face to face.

Ran-somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en, ev - er - more God's prais-es sing.  
God be praised, the same for - ev - er, slow to chide and swift to bless.  
but, as mor - tals rise and per - ish, God en - dures un - chang - ing on.  
Sun and moon and all cre - a - tion, all who dwell in time and space.

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



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Prais - es ev - er - last - ing ring!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious is God's faith - ful - ness!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the great E - ter - nal One!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!

**\*\* Dismissal**

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

**Postlude**

*Chancel flowers are given by Chuck & Carol Landry  
 in celebration of Carol's birthday*

*Enjoy today's service? Visit our Facebook page and invite a friend, comment, or leave a review. Please text the word "welcome" to 855-965-5200 to be added to our email list.  
 May God go with you today and everyday.*

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**\*\* 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

**Music Director:**

Claudio Espejo

**Assisting Minister/Lector:**

Michele Torchia

**Usher:**

John Gordon

**Altar Guild:**

Sally Dudderar

**Camera:**

Michael Lehm

**Ministers:**

The people of St. Stephen's

**Pastor Sue Loney** (susan.loney@yahoo.com 302-494-7185)

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