



# St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

## HOLY COMMUNION

Fourth Sunday in Lent  
March 19, 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.

Masks are not required for those who are fully vaccinated and boosted. If you are wearing a mask, you may lower it to receive communion.

## 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 the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who journeys with us these forty days,  
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

**Amen.**

Let us acknowledge before God and one another  
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God,

**we confess to you our faults and failings.**

**Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;**

**we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;**

**we spoil rather than steward your creation;**

**we cause hurt though you call us to heal;**

**we choose fear over compassion.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,**

**as we seek to follow in your way of life.**

**Amen.**

Hear the good news....and revives in you the spirit's power.

Amen.

**\*\* Gathering Hymn**

*Let My Spirit Always Sing*

ACS 1020



1 Let my spir - it al - ways sing, though my heart be  
2 Though my bod - y be con - fined, let your word en -  
3 Let your wis - dom grace my years, choose my words and  
4 Let my spir - it al - ways sing, to your Spir - it

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

win - ter - ing,            though the sea - son   of   de - spair  
 gage my mind,            let the in - ner eye   dis - cern  
 chase my fears,           give me wit to wel - come change,  
 an - swer - ing,           through the si - lence, through the pain

give no sign that you are there,    God to whom my  
 how much more there is to learn,    see a world be -  
 to ac - cept, and not es - trange,    let my joy be  
 know my hope is not in vain,    like a feath - er

days be - long,    let there al - ways be a song.  
 com - ing whole    through the win - dow of the soul.  
 full and deep    in the knowl - edge that I keep.  
 on your breath    trust your love, through life and death.

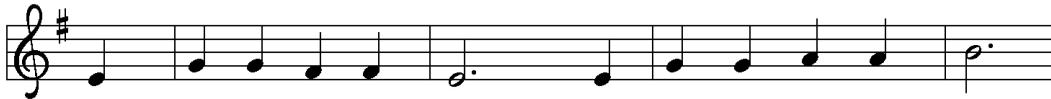
**\*\* Greeting**

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.**

**\*\* 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!

**\*\* 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**

1 Samuel 16:1-13 (p. 257)

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm**

Psalm 23

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.

<sup>3</sup>You restore my soul, O LORD,  
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup>**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

## **Second Reading**

Ephesians 5:8-14 (p. 1067)

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

**\*\* Gospel Acclamation**



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

**\*\* Gospel**

John 9:1-41 (p. 976-977)

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

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

**\*\* Gospel Acclamation** *Please see above.*

**Sermon**

The Rev. Mark Walters

**\*\* Hymn of the Day**

*Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness*

ELW 843

1 Praise the One who breaks the dark - ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;  
2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;  
3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;

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

praise the One who frees the pris-'ners, turn-ing blind-ness in - to sight.  
 praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.  
 Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.

Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal-ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,  
 Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;  
 Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.

calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.  
 from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.  
 Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

\*\* 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.
	God, in your mercy,	hear our prayer.

# Meal

## **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of 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.**

## 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

Take My Life That I May Be

ELW 685

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: 1 Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee; 2 Take my hands and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love; 3 Take my voice and let me sing al - ways, on - ly, for my King; 4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, not a mite would I with - hold; The second system also has a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: take my mo - ments and my days; let them flow in cease - less praise. take my feet and let them be swift and beau - ti - ful for thee. take my lips and let them be filled with mes - sag - es from thee. take my in - tel - lect, and use ev - 'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart, it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure store;  
take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.

\*\* 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 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.**

**\*\* 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

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide,...in your holy church, both now and forever.

Amen.

## \*\* Lord's Prayer

*As we pray the Lord's Prayer together, we invite you to choose which version and language in which to pray. Several versions are printed on the laminated card for you.*

### Invitation to Communion

#### 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. The ushers will invite the assembly from the front row to the back row to come to the chancel to receive communion from the pastor via the center aisle. Once you receive your communion, please use the side aisles to return to your pew. Please be sure to discard your cups in the trash bin on your way out of the church - please do not leave used communion cups in the pews or pew racks. If you prefer juice, please let the assisting minister know.*

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

## Communion Hymn

*To You All Hearts Are Open*

ACS 1012



The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a repeat sign. The lyrics are: "To you all hearts are o - pen, to you all de - sires known. To you there are no se - crets, al - might - y God; we come to you." The third staff includes a triplet of eighth notes and is marked "Last time" above the final measure.

## Communion Blessing

### Post Communion Prayer

Together, let us pray.

**Embodied God,**

at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,

empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors

and touch the world with your love.

Amen.

## Announcements

\*\* 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.*

## \*\* Blessing

## \*\* Sending Hymn

*I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*

ELW 611



1 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Come un - to me and rest;  
2 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Be - hold, I free - ly give  
3 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "I am this dark world's light;



lay down, O wea - ry one, lay down your head up - on my breast."  
the liv - ing wa - ter, thirst - y one; stoop down and drink and live."  
look un - to me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."



I came to Je - sus as I was, so wea - ry, worn, and sad;  
I came to Je - sus, and I drank of that life - giv - ing stream;  
I looked to Je - sus, and I found in him my star, my sun;



I found in him a rest - ing place, and he has made me glad.  
my thirst was quenched, my soul re - vived, and now I live in him.  
and in that light of life I'll walk till trav-'ling days are done.

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

## **\*\* Dismissal**

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.  
Thanks be to God.

## **Postlude**

*Chancel flowers are given by Chuck & Carol Landry in honor of Cheryl'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. Mark Walters

**Music Director:**

Claudio Espejo

**Assisting Minister/Lector:**

John Gordon

**Usher:**

John Rodammer

**Altar Guild:**

Sally Dudderar

**Camera:**

Mike Lehm

**Ministers:**

The people of St. Stephen's

**Pastor F. Mark Walters** (lvtheos@gmail.com 410-739-5365)

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# CONCERTS AT ST. STEPHEN'S



## *Classical Selections for the Piano*

Claudio Espejo, piano  
Sunday, March 19 | 4 pm

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
1301 N Broom St | Wilmington DE 19806  
ststeph.org | 302-652-7623

Free to the community  
Donations appreciated