



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

HOLY COMMUNION

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
February 23, 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 written in 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: *Let Down*

Christopher Riley

Welcome

Joys & Concerns

**** Confession and 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,
our creator,
our protector,
our wellspring of life.

Amen.

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,
you speak blessing and compassion into the world.
Forgive us for the ways we act
with judgment, cruelty, or indifference.
We ignore the needs of our neighbors;
we resist your call to oppose injustice;
we give in to scarcity and fear;
we assume the worst about one another.
Cleanse us from our faults
and release us from their grasp.
Show us your lovingkindness.
Restore our hearts and repair your world,
that we may live in Christ's ways.
Amen.

God proclaims these words of assurance:
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.
I have called you by name. You are mine."
In † Christ, you are forgiven.
In the Spirit, you are made free.
Refreshed by the waters of mercy,
live anew as beloved children of God.
Amen.

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

**** Gathering Hymn**

Blest Be the Tie that Binds

ELW 656

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;
2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
3 We share our mu - tual woes, our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
4 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;

the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
and per - fect love and friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

The musical score consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.

Text: John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.
Music: DENNIS, Johann G. Nägeli, 1773–1836, adapt.

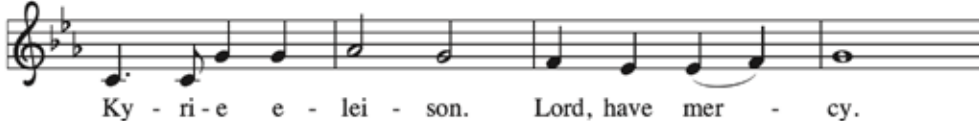
**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** 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



** Hymn of Praise



1 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
2 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
3 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;



yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
yours the ho - san - nas, the dy - ing, re - birth.
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.



Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
Ours the re - joic - ing for na - ture re - claimed;
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;

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

ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.

Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;

yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

**** Prayer of the Day**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father 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 45:3-11, 15

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

¹Do not fret because of the wicked;
do not be envious of wrongdoers,

**²for they will soon fade like the grass,
and wither like the green herb.**

³Trust in the LORD, and do good;
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.

**⁴Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.**

⁵Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.

**⁶He will make your vindication shine like the light,
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.**

⁷Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him;
do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
over those who carry out evil devices.

**⁸Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath.
Do not fret — it leads only to evil.**

⁹For the wicked shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.

**¹⁰Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.**

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

¹¹But the meek shall inherit the land,
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

³⁹**The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;
he is their refuge in the time of trouble.**

⁴⁰The LORD helps them and rescues them;
he rescues them from the wicked, and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

**** Gospel Acclamation**



**** Gospel**

Luke 6:17-26

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

Build A Longer Table

ELW 1062



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.
4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.
Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,
For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,
So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
Christ tears down our fenc - es; all are wel - come here.
None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

Music: NOËL NOUVELET, French carol

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

**** Statement of Faith**

As a sign of our love for each other and God's whole creation, let us proclaim together St. Stephen's Welcome Statement.

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 – that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

**** Prayers of the People**

Each portion of the prayer ends with:

Response: God of grace, receive our prayer.

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 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.

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

**** Offering Song**

Welcome Table

ACS 969

1 I'm a-goin'-a eat at the wel-come ta - ble,
2 I'm a-goin'-a feast on milk . . . and hon - ey,
3 I'm a-goin'-a wade 'cross Jor - dan's riv - er,

I'm a-goin'-a eat at the wel-come ta - ble, some of these days.
I'm a-goin'-a feast on milk . . . and hon-ey, some of these days.
I'm a-goin'-a wade 'cross Jor - dan's riv - er, some of these days.

I'm a-goin'-a eat at the wel-come ta - ble,
I'm a-goin'-a feast on milk . . . and hon - ey,
I'm a-goin'-a wade 'cross Jor - dan's riv - er,

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

I'm goin' - a eat at the wel - come ta - ble, some of these days.
 I'm goin' - a feast on milk . . . and hon - ey, some of these days.
 I'm goin' - a wade 'cross Jor - dan's riv - er, some of these days.

Text: African American spiritual
 Music: WELCOME TABLE, African American spiritual; arr. Mark Hayes, b. 1953
 Arr. © 2003 Augsburg Fortress

**** Offering Prayer**

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens,
 and your abundance to the depths of the seas.
 Bless what we offer to your service:
 our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.
 Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity,
 now and always.
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**

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

**** Holy, Holy, Holy**

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

** 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



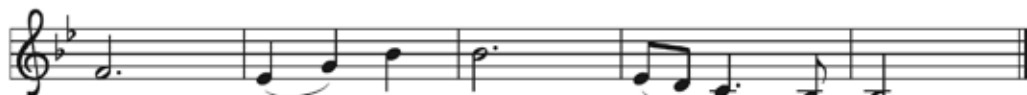
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



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.

** 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

Let Us Break Bread Together

ELW 471

1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;
2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;
3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;

let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.
let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.
let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.

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

Refrain

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing

sun, O Lord, have mer-cy on me.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: BREAK BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

** 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.

Nourishing God,

at this table you have refreshed us
with holy gifts of food and drink.

Strengthen us for service,

and send us out to embody your good news

of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.

In the name of Christ we pray,

Amen.

Announcements

Sending

We are sent into the world to serve.

**** Blessing**

The Spirit of the triune God

✙ bless you with joy,

anoint you with compassion,

and send you in love.

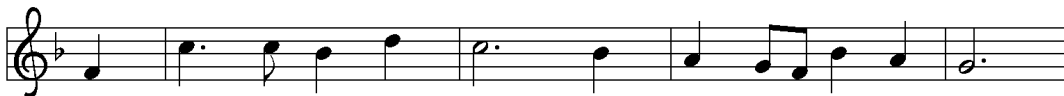
Amen.

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

** Sending Hymn

Oh, Praise the Gracious Power

ELW 651



- 1 Oh, praise the gra - cious pow'r that tum - bles walls of fear
2 Oh, praise per - sis - tent truth that o - pens fist - ed minds
3 Oh, praise in - clu - sive love, en - cir - cling ev - 'ry race,
4 Oh, praise the word of faith that claims us as God's own,
5 Oh, praise the tide of grace that laps at ev - 'ry shore



and gath - ers in one house of faith all strang - ers far and near:
and eas - es from their anx - ious clutch the prej - u - dice that blinds:
ob - liv - i - ous to gen - der, wealth, to so - cial rank or place:
a liv - ing tem - ple built on Christ, our rock and cor - ner - stone:
with vi - sions of a world at peace, no lon - ger bled by war:

Refrain



We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

- 6 Oh, praise the pow'r, the truth,
the love, the word, the tide.
Yet more than these, oh, praise their source,
praise Christ the crucified: *Refrain*
- 7 Oh, praise the living Christ
with faith's bright songful voice!
Announce the gospel to the world
and with these words rejoice: *Refrain*

Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: CHRISTPRAISE RAY, Carol Doran, b. 1936

Text and music from *New Hymns for the Lectionary*, © 1984 Oxford University Press, Inc.

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

**** Dismissal**

Go in peace,
To Love, To Invite, To Serve.
Live in hope.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude: *Etude Toccatina*

Kapustin

*Flowers are given by John Rodammer
in honor of his sister's birthday*

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:

Sally Dudderar

Ministers:

The people of St. Stephen's

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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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St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
1301 N Broom St. Wilmington, DE 19806 302-652-7623
www.ststeph.org office@ststeph.org

