

HE WILL
BAPTIZE YOU
WITH THE
HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE

LUKE 3:16

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians from every tradition. Welcome to all who have no church home, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. Welcome to new visitors and old friends. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation and marital status, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners and questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate and sorrow, rejoice and recover. This is a place where lives are made new. Welcome on this day.

Music “See Amid the Winter’s Snow” John Goss

“The Blessed Son of God” R.. Vaughan Williams

Choir Introit — ”God Welcomes All”
Good News Singers

The Gathering

Advent Wreath Lighting

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath
That marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
Strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord’s coming in glory.
Enlighten us with your grace,
That we may serve our neighbors in need.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
Whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen.

*Opening Hymn

“Prepare the Royal Highway” #264

1. Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!
Let ev’ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory,
Foretold in sacred story: REFRAIN

REFRAIN

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s Word!

2. God’s people, see him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God’s promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! REFRAIN

3. Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev’ry nation
Its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
Their voices join your singing: REFRAIN

4. His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav’n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness so abounding; REFRAIN

*Greeting

P: The steadfast love of God, the life of Jesus Christ
and the power of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

Kyrie *“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”* # 257 vs. 1 - 2

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O Wisdom from on high
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
Teach us your will and guide our way.

REFRAIN

Hymn of Praise

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

#270 vs 1 & 3

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

REFRAIN

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn king!”

Hail the heav’n born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris’n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth

REFRAIN

*Prayer of the Day

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us Pray.

Celebrate, Page 1

The Word of God

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Celebrate pg. 1

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

Celebrate pg. 3

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand as you are able)

Gospel Acclamation

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

#289 vs. 1

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o’er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains

G l o — r i a . . . i n e x c e l s i s D e o

G l o — r i a . . . i n e x c e l s i s D e o

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Luke, the 3rd Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O God.

*Gospel Reading

Luke 3:7-18

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Rev. James Lapp

*Hymn of the Day

“ On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry”

#249

1. On Jordan’s banks the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!
2. Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin;
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.

3. We hail you as our Savior, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without your grace we waste away
Like flow'rs that wither and decay.
4. Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
And make us rise to fall no more;
Oh, let your face upon us shine
And fill the world with love divine.
5. All praise to you, eternal Son,
Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore,
And Holy Spirit, evermore.

The Communion Meal

*Passing of the Peace

P: May the peace of God be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Offering — We honor and worship God by returning some of
the gifts with which we have been blessed.

Music “No Wind at the Window”
 Good News Singers

Offertory

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” Red #283 vs. 1

O come, all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant

O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold him
Born the King of angels

REFRAIN

O come, let us adore him
O come, let us adore him
O come, let us adore him
Christ the Lord

Offering Prayer

P: Creator God, you made the whole world,
Even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us.
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food, that we may live in expectation
For the advent of your Child, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

*Great Thanksgiving

P: May God be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....

*Words of Institution

*Lord's Prayer

**C: 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**

**P: Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.
Share in the feast of salvation.**

(You may be seated)

Holy Communion

*Guests: You are welcome to come forward to receive
Communion as part of this church family! The wine is red. The
grape juice is white. Children are always welcome to come forward
and receive a special blessing if they have never communed be-
fore.*

Lamb of God

"Love Has Come" Red #292 vs. 1 & 3

**Love has come a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
Hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high!**

(Hymn continued)

Love has come and never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us,
Hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Communion Hymn

“Christ Our Peace” ACS #1037

Christ, our peace, you break down the walls that divide us;
Christ, our peace, come, make us one body in you.

The Sending

*Communion Blessing

P: May this Holy Communion of our Lord Jesus Christ
Strengthen you and keep you in God’s grace now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Prayer after Communion

P: Generous God, We thank you for the gift of life,
For the bread of salvation.
We thank you for coming among us,
For leading us into peace.
We thank you for showering us with mercy,
For sending us into the world.
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
As we feed the hungry in your name. **C: Amen.**

*Blessing

P: May God direct your ways in peace,
Make you abound in love for one another and for all,
And strengthen your hearts

as we wait for the coming of Christ
Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
Bless you now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

*Closing Hymn

"Hark, the Glad Sound!"

#239

**Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris'ners to release,
In Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.**

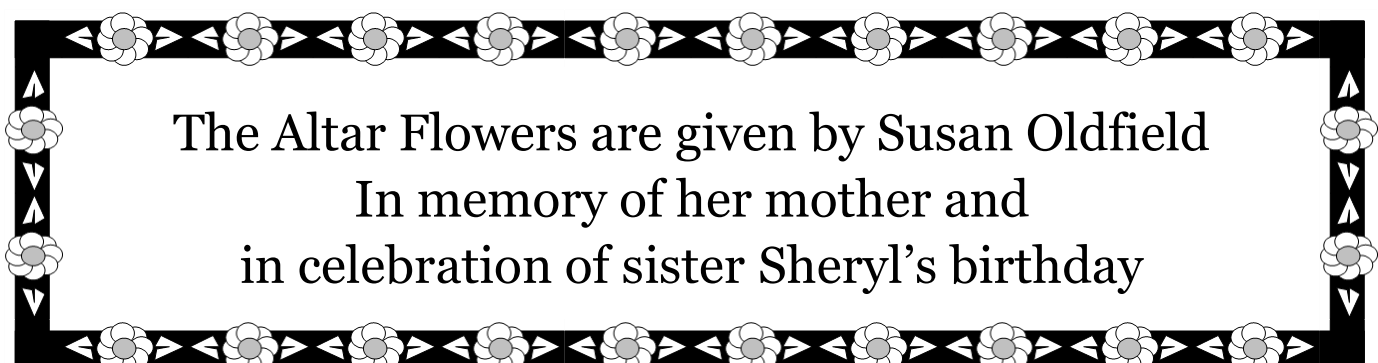
**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.**

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Music "In Dulci Jubilo" Old German Tune



Sign up for 2025 Flowers

Weekly — Readers & Coffee Hosts needed
Christmas Eve - ushers & readers needed



Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM: Trace Hull, Linda, Scoutmaster Scott, Family of Ryan Fairrington, Connie & Family of Paul Cunningham, Glosier family, Julie Mouw & Family of Marty Lundin, Unemployed, George Webber, Michelle & Family, Family of Travis, Boci, Isaac & Marissa, Chris Powers, Gloria, Jack & Kim Sanford, Lucia, Dennis Lewis, Beth & Family of Barbara Stiles, Marta's parents, Adrienne, Gary & Louse Matz, Friends in Tel Aviv, family of Barbara

Klapper, family of Lauren Patrick, Patrick & Family, Moore family, Brown Family, Family of Sandra Barker, Nick, James, Beth Mills, Mary D., Tom, Galahad, Susan O., Debbie, Sam, James, Michael Lee, Nate Barker, Grandpa Dennis, Bob & Shirley Salter, Monica & Family, Lurline Moore, Beth Butler, Jen, Robbin, Maria Mendoza, Ila & Reina, Francisco, Margot Wilson, Michael, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, Tim Oldfield, Sierra, Julie R., Rosie, Janet, Sue, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, James, Taiyo, Marissa, Isaac, Alvarado family, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Sandi Csik, Janica Paustian, James, John, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Allen, Sandy, Levi & Alexandria, Gary & Marjie Toops, Paul Paustian, Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Nancy, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Will, Aaron Johnson, Sal, Katarina, Stephanie Jager.

LONG TERM: James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Carla Brown, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit and family (Ethiopia), April McCalmont, Marty Nehring, Miller Mouw, Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Bobbie Erickson, Mike, Susan Anderson, Jan Wagner, Richard C., Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Karin, Will, Chris, Pearl Runquist, Volpi & Robe Family, Cabel, Noah, Esdras, Immigrant families, The Homeless, People of Ukraine, People of Palestine/Israel, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, S.S. Senior Housing, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family, men & women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.



The Advent wreath is given to the Glory of God and in memory of Barbara's mother, Kathryn Greso who long ago taught her the meaning and to her old friend Sibbi who taught her how to tie the greens into a wreath.



Help adorn the sanctuary for Christmas Eve! Poinsettias may be donated in honor or in memory of loved ones and will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Call the office. Cost is \$15. Please make the check payable to St. Stephen's, but keep it separate from your regular offering. You may take your plant home after Tuesday, 7pm service to enjoy. Benefits our church ministries.

Holiday Events

Dec. 16 Women's Café Party 6pm off site 476-4700

Dec. 22 Christmas Potluck 11 am

Gary's bringing the Ham, Y'all bring the rest



Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship 7pm

invite a friend to this momentous, joyful service.
Livestream & recorded on the web.



The Season of Giving

This holiday season, we thank everyone who has supported St. Stephen's this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions and look forward to support from all of our members in the year ahead.

If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings or if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to check out our electronic giving options. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions.

For more info. contact Janet Slay 475-5668

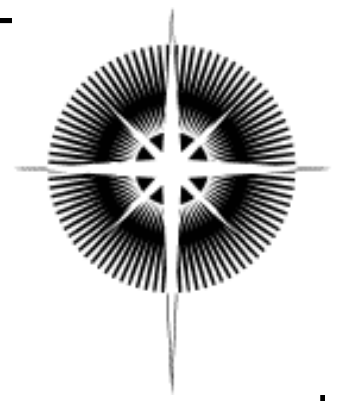
Your 2025 Offering envelopes are here, if you'd like to stop by and pick them up.

“God uses money to confirm direction.”

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight.”*

Proverbs 3:5-6

Give a Gift. Change a Life.



What better way to celebrate the season of Jesus' birth than to give gifts of comfort and joy to those who are in need. Give meaningful gifts that inspire leadership, nourish the hungry and heal the sick.

Lutheran World Relief

provides gifts that improve the lives of people living in poverty around the world. For example: A Goat not only provides a woman farmer with milk to sell, but also helps her build a herd. Coffee seedlings help a farmer grow a lucrative crop that has the potential to significantly improve income. Seeds help farmers grow more and better crops when climate conditions are challenging. Emergency Water delivers immediate, potable water after disaster strikes. **LWR.org/gifts or 1-800-597-5972**

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

stands ready to welcome the most vulnerable refugees who are seeking safety and hope in America. Our gifts are essential in rebuilding their lives. Gifts from "Basic Needs Kit" to "Ready for Work kit" can mean so much to those who have nothing but the clothes on their backs. **LIRS.org or 877-291-7061**

S.P.I.N. Socks for People in Need (box in narthex)

NEW socks are a blessing for many reasons, especially health, but also because they provide comfort and a sense of dignity. Basic white crew socks are appreciated by everyone. But you may also choose socks for women and children. Sponsored by the Association of Faith Communities.

Worship livestream online at www.ststephenslutheran.org

Recorded for you to view anytime.

Please participate by having your worship bulletin and Celebrate ready

Zoom Bible Studies with Pastor Jim on Wednesdays 11am & 7:30pm.

Check your email on Tuesday for the link to the Zoom meeting.

Our Mission Statement

St. Stephen's is a welcoming, healing community who worship God in Christ, nurture people growing in faith, serve others with acceptance and love, invite people to share the joy of the spirit.

Reconciling in Christ

"We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status.

We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ."

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Office Hours: Mon.—Thurs. 12—5:00 pm

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp
Church Musician: Gary Roberts
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens
Custodian: John Hopping
Videographers: Kent Madsen, Barb Rice, Jay Johnston

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