

*August 14, 2022*  
*The Tenth Sunday After Pentecost*



**ST. STEPHEN**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church

\*Congregation is invited to stand as able  
Please be aware that video cameras are in use during our hybrid (combined) Worship Service and that images are being shared with the online participants.

You can receive our weekly email/letter with events and information, ways to grow in faith, opportunities for service and worship, as well as ways to support the ministry of the congregation by submitting your email address to [office@ststephenlc.org](mailto:office@ststephenlc.org) or by calling the office at 717-766-2168 and providing your email and/or your mailing address.

The word of God is a refining fire. Jesus is the great divide in human history. He invites our undivided attention and devotion. Today in worship we are surrounded by a great “cloud of witnesses.” In the word and in holy communion we are invited yet again to look to Jesus, “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

**Our Mission**

We respond to Christ’s love by feeding those who hunger in body, mind, and spirit.

**Prelude**

**Gathering**

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

**\*Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love endures forever.  
**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Merciful God,  
**we confess that we have not followed your path but have chosen our own way. Instead of putting others before ourselves, we long to take the best seats at the table. When met by those in need, we have too often passed by on the other side. Set us again on the path of life. Save us from ourselves and free us to love our neighbors.**  
**Amen.**

Hear the good news!  
God does not deal with us according to our sins but delights in granting pardon and mercy. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are free to love as God loves. **Amen.**

**\*Gathering Hymn**

*"Thy Strong Word"*

Hymn#511 vs. 1-3

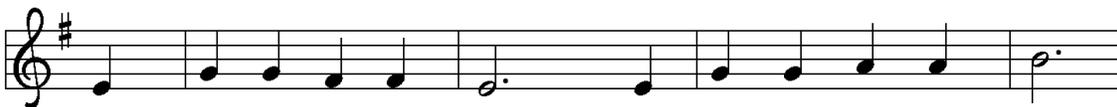
- 1 Thy strong word did cleave the darkness;  
at thy speaking it was done.  
For created light we thank thee,  
while thine ordered seasons run.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise to thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia without end!
  
- 2 Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness,  
dark as night and deep as death,  
broke the light of thy salvation,  
breathed thine own life-breathing breath.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise to thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia without end!
  
- 3 Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous;  
bright with thine own holiness,  
glorious now, we press toward glory,  
and our lives our hopes confess.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise to thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia without end!

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**\*Apostolic Greeting**

The boundless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, and the light of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**\*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!

## \*Canticle 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

Let us pray.

O God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression, and you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed, and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

### The First Lesson

**Jeremiah 23:23-29**

*Because Jeremiah preaches the unpopular message of God's judgment, he suffers rejection. Today's reading distinguishes between the true prophet, like Jeremiah, who speaks God's word, and the false prophet who misleads the people through dreams. One is like wheat; the other like worthless straw.*

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah, the 23rd chapter.

<sup>23</sup>Am I a God near by, says the LORD, and not a God far off? <sup>24</sup>Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD. <sup>25</sup>I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed!" <sup>26</sup>How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back—those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? <sup>27</sup>They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. <sup>28</sup>Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the LORD. <sup>29</sup>Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm

## Psalm 82

<sup>1</sup>God stands to charge the divine council assembled,  
giving judgment in the midst of the gods:  
<sup>2</sup>**"How long will you judge unjustly,  
and show favor to the wicked?**  
<sup>3</sup>Save the weak and the orphan;  
defend the humble and needy;  
<sup>4</sup>**rescue the weak and the poor;  
deliver them from the power of the wicked.**  
<sup>5</sup>They do not know, neither do they understand; they wander about in darkness;  
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.  
<sup>6</sup>**Now I say to you, 'You are gods,  
and all of you children of the Most High;**  
<sup>7</sup>nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,  
and fall like any prince."  
<sup>8</sup>**Arise, O God, and rule the earth,  
for you shall take all nations for your own.**

## The Second Lesson

## Hebrews 11:29--12:2

*The author of Hebrews presents us with rich stories of faith. In a long list of biblical heroes, we find examples of trust in God that enabled them to face the trials of life faithfully. In addition to this "cloud of witnesses," we have Jesus, the perfect model of faithful endurance.*

A reading from the epistle to the Hebrews, the 11th and 12th chapters.

<sup>29</sup>By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. <sup>30</sup>By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup>By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

<sup>32</sup>And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup>quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup>Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. <sup>36</sup>Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup>They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute,

persecuted, tormented—<sup>38</sup>of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup>Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, <sup>40</sup>since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

<sup>12:1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

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 Reading**

**Luke 12:49-56**

*Jesus delivers harsh words about the purifying and potentially divisive effects of obedience to God's call. The way of the cross often leads followers to encounter hostility and rejection, even from those they love.*

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Luke, the 12th chapter. **Glory to You O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] <sup>49</sup>"I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! <sup>50</sup>I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! <sup>51</sup>Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! <sup>52</sup>From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; <sup>53</sup>they will be divided:

father against son  
and son against father,  
mother against daughter  
and daughter against mother,  
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law  
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

<sup>54</sup>He also said to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, ‘It is going to rain’; and so it happens. <sup>55</sup>And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat’; and it happens. <sup>56</sup>You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You O Christ.**

**Sermon**

Rev. Matthew Best

**\*Hymn of the Day**

*“You Are the Way”*

Hymn#758

- 1 You are the way; to you alone  
from sin and death we flee;  
all those who search for God, you find  
and by your grace set free.
- 2 You are the truth; your word alone  
true wisdom can impart;  
you only can inform the mind  
and purify the heart.
- 3 You are the life; the rending tomb  
proclaims your conqu'ring arm;  
and those who put their trust in you  
not death nor hell shall harm.
- 4 You are the way, the truth, the life;  
grant us that way to know,  
that truth to keep, that life to win,  
whose joys eternal flow.

Text: George W. Doane, 1799-1859, alt

**\*Apostle's Creed**

AM: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us profess our faith, using the words of the Apostle's 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 Intercession**

*Congregational response after each petition:*

AM: ...Merciful God **C: receive our prayer.**

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

*A brief silence.*

Arise, O God, and sustain your church. We pray for all who dedicate their lives to serving your people. Renew our commitment to our siblings in faith around the globe, and bless the work of our ecumenical and interfaith partners. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Arise, O God, and sustain your creation. We pray for all places affected by natural disasters. Transform the devastation of floods and fires into fertile ground for new life and growth. Fill heaven and earth with your life-giving Spirit. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Arise, O God, and sustain the nations. We pray for all elected officials. Kindle in them a desire to administer your justice. Strengthen their resolve to defend those who are vulnerable and to stand publicly against all forms of oppression. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Arise, O God, and sustain those who are oppressed. We pray for people harmed by racist discrimination, ableist discrimination, and all people discriminated against based on their gender identity or sexual orientation. Rescue us from all systems that degrade our fellow human beings. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Arise, O God, and sustain this assembly. We pray for this community, celebrating with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep. In our joy and in our tears, be near us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, we remember the saints who have gone before us. May we run with perseverance the race set before us until we find our rest in you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

**Amen.**

**\*Peace**

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us show a sign of that peace!

## **\*Offering**

The offering, whether in person or through digital means, is an act of worship. Worship, at its core, is a reverent love and devotion accorded to God. We give because God loves us first, and we are called to love God and neighbor as a result. The offering is one way we show our love of God.

To assist you in this act of worship, there are several ways to make your offering: Go to [www.StStephenLC.org](http://www.StStephenLC.org) and click on the DONATE button (or the Giving tab for more options.) Text your offering dollar amount to 717-685-6947. Text "help" for options.

**Use Engage** from your smart phone or Internet connected device at <https://engage.suran.com/sslc/> or QR code below:

**Via PayPal:** Enter [PayPal@StStephenLC.org](mailto:PayPal@StStephenLC.org) and then the amount you want to pay. . Use "Add a note" to provide designation (otherwise, it will go to the General Fund).



Select giving fund(s) and enter amount(s).  
Furnish any additional information in "Gift Memo" box on the submit screen.

Set up regular electronic offerings by contacting Kevin, our office manager, at 717-766- 2168, Monday through Thursday from 9am – 2pm, or by email at [office@StStephenLC.org](mailto:office@StStephenLC.org).  
Mail in your check, made payable to St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Our address is  
30 W. Main St., PO Box 266, New Kingstown, PA 17072.

The offerings are used to carry out the ministry of the church, to share the Good News, to provide pastoral care, to worship as a community, and to create an environment where Jesus encounters people and their lives are transformed. All of these things continue to take place. Thank you for your generosity.

### **\*Offertory Prayer**

Let us pray. God of abundance:  
you have set before us a plentiful harvest. As we feast on your goodness, strengthen us to labor in your field, and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all, in the name of Jesus.  
**Amen.**

### **Meal**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

## **\*The Great Thanksgiving**

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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was handed over, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.

### \*Invitation to Communion

In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy.  
Come to the banquet.



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.

### \*Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray. Life-giving God,  
through this meal you have bandaged our wounds and fed us with your mercy. Now send us  
forth to live for others, both friend and stranger, that all may come to know your love. This we  
pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

### **Sending**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

### \*Blessing

The God of peace,  
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you, comfort you, and show you the path of life this day  
and always. Amen.

**\*Sending Hymn**

*"Lead On, O King Eternal!"*

Hymn #805

- 1 Lead on, O King eternal!  
The day of march has come;  
henceforth in fields of conquest  
your tents will be our home.  
Through days of preparation  
your grace has made us strong;  
and now, O King eternal,  
we lift our battle song.
  
- 2 Lead on, O King eternal,  
till sin's fierce war shall cease,  
and holiness shall whisper  
the sweet amen of peace;  
for not with swords loud clashing,  
nor roll of stirring drums,  
but deeds of love and mercy  
the heav'nly kingdom comes.
  
- 3 Lead on, O King eternal:  
we follow, not with fears,  
for gladness breaks like morning  
where'er your face appears.  
Your cross is lifted o'er us;  
we journey in its light;  
the crown awaits the conquest;  
lead on, O God of might!

Text: Ernest W. Shurtleff, 1862-1917

**\*Dismissal**

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

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