

August 10, 2025
9th Sunday after Pentecost



ST. STEPHEN
Evangelical Lutheran Church

*Congregation is invited to stand as able, responses in **bold**.

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 or by calling the office at 717-766-2168 and providing your email and/or your mailing address.

Jesus says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is God's promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the "little flock" of which we are a part in today's assembly. Faith, God's baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.

Announcements

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**

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,
you free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life.
Amen.

You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of ✙ Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.
Amen.

***Gathering Hymn**

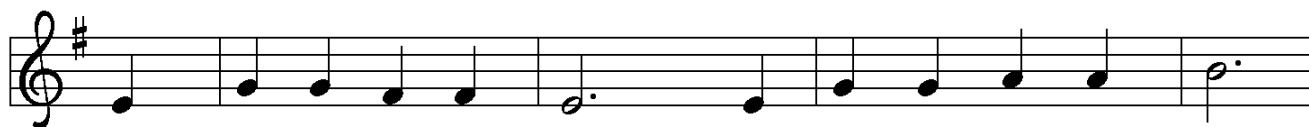
"Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun"

Hymn#557

***Apostolic 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** (Cantor)



- 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!

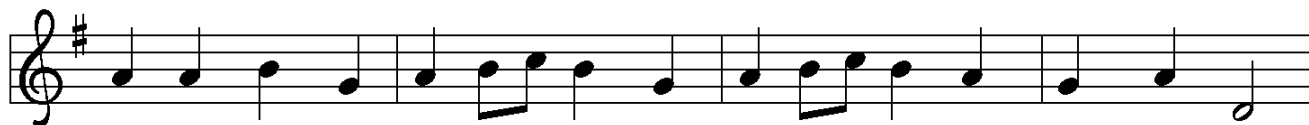
***Canticle of Praise**



- 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.

Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Word

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

The First Lesson (Lector)

Genesis 15:1-6

God promises childless and aging Abram that a child of his own will be his heir and that his descendants will number as many as the stars. Abram trusts God's promise, and through this faith he is considered righteous.

A reading from the Book of Genesis, the 15th chapter.

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴ But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵ He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

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

Psalm (Cantor)

Psalm 33:12-22

- ¹² Happy is the nation whose God ¹ is the LORD!
Happy the people chosen to ¹ be God's heritage!
- ¹³ **The LORD looks ¹ down from heaven,
and sees all ¹ humankind.**
- ¹⁴ God sits firmly en- ¹ throned and watches
all who dwell ¹ on the earth.
- ¹⁵ **God fashions ¹ all their hearts
and observes ¹ all their deeds.**
- ¹⁶ A king is not saved by the size ¹ of the army,
nor are warriors rescued by ¹ their great strength.
- ¹⁷ **The horse gives vain ¹ hope for victory;
despite its great strength it ¹ cannot save.**
- ¹⁸ Truly, your eye is upon those who fear ¹ you, O LORD,
upon those who wait for your ¹ steadfast love,
- ¹⁹ **to deliver their ¹ lives from death,
and to keep them alive in ¹ time of famine.**
- ²⁰ Our innermost being waits for ¹ you, O LORD,
our helper ¹ and our shield.
- ²¹ **Surely, our heart rejoic- ¹ es in you,
for in your holy name we ¹ put our trust.**
- ²² Let your lovingkindness, O LORD, ¹ be upon us,
even as we place our ¹ hope in you.

Abraham and Sarah exemplify the vision of faith that people of God enact in every age. Their hope and trust in God's promise allowed them to face an unknown future and to receive the promise of God.

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews, the 11th chapter.

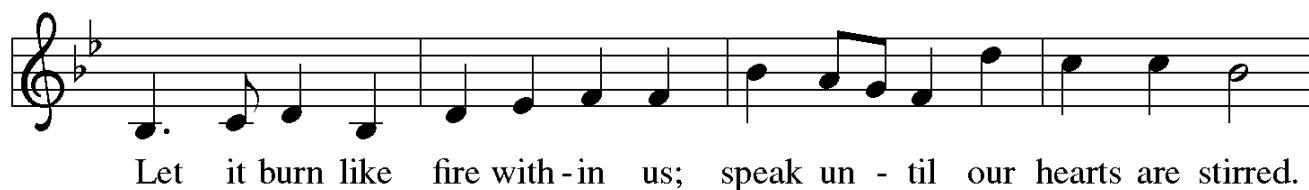
¹Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, “as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.”

¹³All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, ¹⁴for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

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

***Gospel Acclamation**



***Gospel Reading**

Luke 12:32-40

Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.

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

[Jesus said:] ³² "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵ "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; ³⁶ be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. ³⁷ Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

³⁹ "But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

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

Sermon

Rev. Carol Bowman

***Hymn of the Day**

"How Great Thou Art"

Hymn#856

***Apostles' 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**

AM: In solidarity with all creation, we join our voice to the voice of the whole church and pray for the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

Keep the heart of your church set firmly in you so that, with lamps lit and attentive to Christ's call at any time or place, your people are ready to respond with faithful action for the sake of the world. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Worlds were prepared by your word. Speak healing and protection upon the earth, especially where life and habitats are threatened. Guide the work of astronomers and all who teach us about the stars and galaxies. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You know the actions and deeds of the nations. Turn humanity away from instruments of war and violence. Fashion the hearts of world leaders to work for peace. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be on those in need. Assure all who are afraid or experiencing great uncertainty that your promises are sure. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Calm the fears of migrants and refugees who set out, not knowing where they go. Provide shelter, sustenance, protection from harm, and welcome. Bless the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and other means of support and advocacy. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We celebrate the ancestors in the faith who built their lives on your promises and died having seen them only from a distance. Sustain us in our hope of things not seen. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Trusting in your lovingkindness, we place our prayer and hope in you, in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

***Peace**

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us show a sign of that peace!

Offering

(Please refer to the back of the bulletin for various options to give.)

Anthem

***Doxology**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

***Offertory Prayer**

Let us pray.

Creator God, in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful. Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

(Zoom participants—please prepare your elements for communion.)

***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.

Preface

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. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. 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.

Thanksgiving at the Table

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 betrayed, 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**

The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

***Communion of the Faithful**



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 Blessing**

Mothering God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.
Amen.

***Post Communion Cantic**

"Now, Lord"

Hymn#201

***Post Communion Prayer**

Let us pray.

Mothering God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Sending

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

***Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

"Lead Me, Guide Me"

Hymn#768

Dismissal

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

We thank our choir members and worship helpers who served today.



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.

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.

There are several ways to make your offering:

Go to 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.

Set up regular electronic offerings by contacting our office manager, at 717-766-2168, Monday through Wednesday from 9am – 2pm, or by email at 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.

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



Via PayPal: Enter 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.

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