

Vision of St. Stephen

October 2025



St. Stephen Lutheran Church
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Be strong and courageous! These are God’s instructions to Joshua and his crew as the Hebrew people leave the safety of what they’ve known in their desert wanderings for 40+ years.

As we work through the book of Joshua during the Wednesday morning Bible study, we hear these words repeated many times—Be Strong and Courageous! But what does that look like in a world far removed in time and space from those Old Testament people?

As I think about this, I have collected some other quotes that talk about strength and courage. I invite you also to think about what strength and courage look like to you. If you discover other quotes that speak to you, please share them with me. Perhaps we’ll make a bulletin board display with them.

St. Augustine, “Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage, anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are”.

“The first question the Levite and the priest asked when they saw the wounded man was, “If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?’ The Good Samaritan reversed the question, “If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him? ...That is the question before you tonight. Not, “If I stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to me?’ But ‘If I do not stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to them?’ That’s the question.” Martin Luther King Jr’s, sermon *I see the promised land*, on the Sunday before he died helping with sanitation workers strike in Memphis.

“Nothing worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing that is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history, therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing that we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love”. Reinhold Niehbur

“Our acts of daily faithfulness and perseverance are part of a larger arch of courage and resilience through which the power and the grace of God are at work. The stories we tell and the moments we remember may be about the decisive moments, but what matters most is how those moments inform the living of each hour”. Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde

“Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days, for the living of these days”. Line from the hymn, God of Grace and God of Glory, ELW 705

Peace, Pastor Beth

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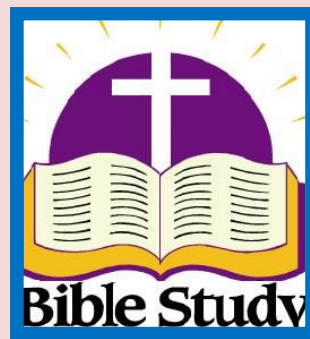
Spiritual Growth

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Our Wednesday Bible study began a focus on the Old Testament book of Joshua in mid-September. We'll continue our discussion on this book throughout the month of October.

CHOIR REHEARSAL

Our multigenerational choir has begun practicing after Sunday worship—but it's not too late to join in! We plan to sing for Reformation Sunday, October 26th.



GATHERING SPACE

Nancy Pfau will be wrapping up her class on Rejuvenating your Spiritual life on October 5th. We'll begin a new topic on Sunday, October 12th, lead by Pastor Beth. Look for more information on this topic in our Sunday bulletin announcements!

"THE CHOSEN" BIBLE STUDY

Our viewing and discussion of season 3 wraps up on October 7th. We'll begin season 4 on Tuesday, January 20, 2026!

REFORMATION/CONFIRMATION DAY

This year, on Reformation Day, October 26th, 3 of our young people will be confirming their faith during our 10:30 a.m. worship service! You're invited to stay after worship for cake and fellowship in the narthex.

NOTICE OF OUR ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual meeting of the congregation will follow our 10:30 AM worship service on Sunday November 9 (around 11:30 AM). This is a chance to see the ministries we've been involved with during the past year! Please plan to stay after the meeting for our chili cook off and fellowship.

ALTAR ANGELS/NEW ALTAR LINENS ARRIVING SOON!

Thanks to a Thrivent grant written by Nancy Pfau, some of our white altar linens will be replaced. The veils that cover the chalice, patten (bread plate), and stack of communion trays have become worn and quite thin after many years of service. Two new ones are being crafted and will arrive around Thanksgiving time. We have also purchased 6 new cloth purificators (napkins) for use on the altar to protect the long white fair linen and to hold the bread during distribution.

We also want to say thanks for our wonderful team of "altar angels", who so faithfully set up, help serve communion, and clean up afterwards. Their work is often hidden from other worshippers, but it is a vital part of each Sunday worship service. We're always looking for others (either individuals or teams) to help with this process. We have folks who do the "behind the scenes" work and others that have the more public role of distributing the wine—so whatever appeals to you—we can make work! Please speak with Pastor Beth or Ruth Moeller if you'd be interested in shadowing a current member to see what is involved.

Activities



SOUP POTLUCK

As the leaves turn and start to fall, what's better than a warm bowl of delicious soup—and fellowship! Our annual soup potluck will be held after worship on October 12th. Please sign up on the bulletin board!

JOY CLUB

Would you like to go to lunch on Tuesday, October 21st? Women will be heading to Georgio's Grill, 5577 Monroe Street, Toledo. Please sign up on the narthex bulletin board!

FUN FRIDAY

Our youth will be having a Fun Friday on November 14th from 7-10. As part of this time of games, crafts, and snacks, the group will be making some Christmas ornaments! We're inviting youth from Olivet Lutheran and Sylvania First United Methodist to join us!

BOOK GROUP

Our book group meets on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00 for discussion. The book we've selected to read in October is "The Measure" by Nikki Erlick. We will meet to discuss it on October 23rd!

PRAIRIE WORK DAY

A crew for the Zoo and Outdoor Sylvania will be coming to our prairie on Saturday, October 4th to thin out some of our abundant tickweed sunflowers! While we don't have the time we are meeting yet, we'll announce it when we do. Any help you can provide would be most welcome as we strive for more plant diversity in our prairie.

SAVE THE DATE

Congregational Annual Meeting, November 9th after worship

Chili cook-off after our annual meeting

Kerry Clark concert, November 15th

November 30th, 1st Sunday in Advent

December 14—cookie exchange

Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry cleaning day—January 24

LWR Update

We are so blessed to have a dedicated group of St. Stephen members and community friends who arrive each month, typically on the 4th Monday of the month, ready to work and to enjoy each other's company. If you've ever popped over during a workday, you'll find the narthex and classrooms transformed by the buzz of conversation and the noise of sewing machines, electric scissors, and the hiss of irons! Together this group of people wash fabric, iron fabric, cut fabric, design the quilt pattern, stitch the squares together (first in columns, then the columns to each other), select a backing fabric that matches, pin the 3 layers of the quilt (back, warm batting, and top), tie the 3 layers together at each intersection where 4 blocks of fabric come together, trim the batting and bottom layer to remove excess, clip the quilt edges so that the bottom layer wraps around the other 2 layers, and then sew the edges! In addition, we have people that shop for the sheets that are needed for the bottom layer, wash them at home, and rip out the seams so that the fabric is the correct size! This year our group created 53 quilts from start to finish! Many thanks to all who contributed funds to ship these quilts and kits to their final destination. Several Thrivent Action teams were written to purchase supplies, in August Linda Blaesing wrote one for the batting and thread that goes into these quilts.

This year is the first time we've collected items for the LWR school kits. It may seem strange to us, but in many countries around the world, public education does not exist. So, families must provide supplies, uniforms, and tuition for their children to attend class. The 59 school kits we assembled will help families with these expenses. If a family is struggling to provide these items, the daughters in the family are typically the ones who remain at home, missing out on education. We plan to collect the specific items needed again next summer for the school kits—we did have some extra items donated that we're saving to give next year's collection a jumpstart! The cloth drawstring bags were purchased with a Thrivent Action team.



Outreach

Project Piki Piki

In August, we kicked off Project Pikipiki—a NWOHio synod campaign to provide motorcycles to the 170 evangelists in the Dodoma Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, one of our companion synods. Currently, many evangelists spend huge chunks of their day walking from place to place, which detracts from the time they could spend in ministry. We are so excited to share that St. Stephen members and friends have contributed more than \$4,800---3 motorbikes that will be matched by our synod's Global Mission Board—so that means 6 evangelists will be much more effective in their work, supported in spirit and in body, by these gifts! So far congregations across the synod have contributed \$43,000—almost 27 piki pikis! This is not the final number as some churches will be focusing on this project later this year and into Lent 2026.



Euchre for ALS

Would you like to play euchre and support a good cause? St. Stephen is hosting a Euchre party on Thursday, October 23th from 1-4 p.m. See Ruth Moeller to RSVP for this fundraiser to help fund research and help with ALS! This event helps to raise money to benefit Paul's Crew, a team for the Walk to Defeat ALS fundraiser supporting the ALS association that serves Northern Ohio.

LSS Food Pantry Collection

From now until October 12th, we're collecting boxed mashed potatoes and fruit cocktail for the Lutheran Social Services food pantry! All donations are welcome! A Thrivent Action Team is also supporting this collection. Thank you Rich Cornell!



SAFS Holiday Collection

Are you interested in helping local families this holiday season? Following tradition, St Stephen has the opportunity to assist families with Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and Christmas gifts. We will be having a special monetary collection starting now to donate money through November 9th for SAFS. SAFS will then purchase gift cards for families. Please leave your offering in the collection box by using the envelopes provided or simply mark SAFS on your check memo. Please make checks out to St Stephen. Below describes how the donations will be used.

\$25 per person for Thanksgiving meal / \$25 per person for Christmas meal

\$50 per person for Christmas gifts

Financial News

Noisy Offering

On the first Sunday of each month, we have our noisy offering, inviting you to empty out your loose change into the coffee can. Here's where that money goes: In October, it's shared with Salem Lutheran Church in the Vistula neighborhood of Toledo. This money is given without designation, so that Salem can use it in whatever way is most helpful for them. The October donations are combined with September, November, and December offerings. Offerings over the summer, May through August, are given to Sylvania Area Family Services. Offerings during the winter months, January through April, go to Lutheran World Relief.

Kroger Rewards

By signing up for the Kroger Rewards program and designating St. Stephen as a recipient, you're helping to support our ministry more locally. We receive a quarterly check from this program. January-March, donations help fund expenses for our quilting group here at St. Stephen, purchasing needed supplies that go into the quilts. April-June, donations go to St. Paul Community Center, a Toledo organization that works with our unhoused neighbors, working them into housing. July-September, donations are given to Salem Lutheran Church. Then October-December, the reward check is given to Sylvania Area Family Services.

Administrative News

ANNUAL REPORT

We are beginning work on the annual report. If you have any articles or pictures you would like to include, please e-mail or call the office!

PASTOR BETH VACATION

Pastor Beth will be on vacation from October 2-10, and then from the afternoon of October 15-16. Deacon Jennifer Heinze will be leading worship on October 5th. If you're in need of pastoral care during this time, please contact the church office for a referral to a local Lutheran pastor.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

As always our newsletter deadline for anything you want to be added is the 2nd Tuesday in the month. So for **November 2025** Newsletter please have all your **items submitted by October 14.**



Prayer

MARTIN LUTHER'S THOUGHTS ON PRAYERS

And I am convinced that when a Christian rightly prays the Lord's Prayer at any time or uses any portion of it as he may desire, his praying is more than adequate. What is important for a good prayer is not many words, as Christ says in Matthew 6 [:7], but rather a turning to God frequently and with heartfelt longing, and doing so without ceasing [1 Thess. 5:17].

MARTIN LUTHER



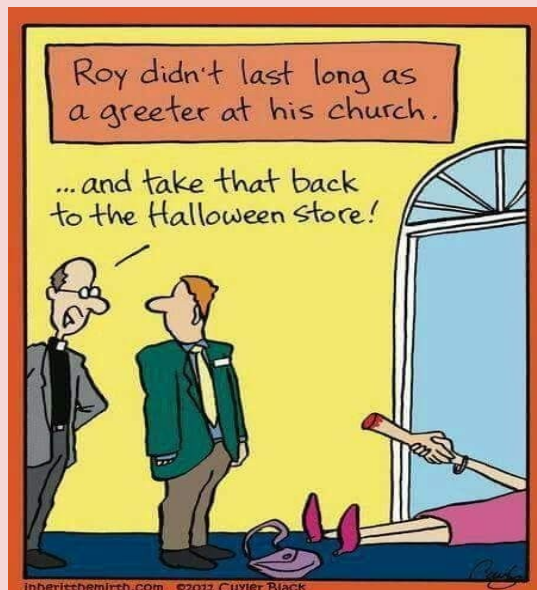
COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Wolf—Stomach Cancer
Laura—Healing & Comfort
Ann—Healing & Comfort
Steve—Healing & Comfort
Alice—Comfort & Peace
Joe —Recovery
Ali—Guidance & Comfort
Mark—Cancer
Peggy—Comfort & Peace
Mark—Comfort & Guidance
Bill—Recovery & Strength
Troy—Healing
Amy—Healing
Diane—Healing & Comfort
Libby—Insight & Peace
Julie R.—Breast Cancer
Izzy—Healing & Comfort

All Victims of Trauma and War

Fun

ALL IN GOOD FUN



BIBLE QUIZ

The Reformation helped to spread Lutheranism and what else?

(Answer page 7)

- A. The Plague
- B. Literacy
- C. Catholicism
- D. German Cuisine

ARE YOU OKAY?

If you find yourself in need of emergency supplies or in need of someone to talk to, please don't hesitate to call the church office and we will assist you however we can or direct you to resources that may be able to help.

Council

2025 Council Members

<i>President</i>	Beth Madden
<i>Vice President</i>	Tom Dangelo
<i>Secretary</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Treasurer</i>	Kathie Tefft

Ministry Liaisons were established as follows:

<i>Christian Education</i>	Pastor Beth
<i>Finance</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Prayer, Praise, Worship</i>	Pastor Beth
<i>Property</i>	Tom Schmidt
<i>Staff Support</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Stewardship/Evangelism</i>	Beth Madden
<i>Technology</i>	Tom Dangelo
<i>Youth & Family Ministry</i>	Joan Haddox
<i>Social Ministry</i>	Kathy Aldrich

WHAT IS COUNCIL?

Church council is a group of members that regularly meet to help guide St. Stephen. If you are interested in being a part of council or learning more about it, please reach out to any member or Pastor Beth for more info!

Steve's Bulletin Board

Mark your calendar!
Nov. 9—Annual
Meeting & Chili
Cook Off

LSS Cleaning September 2025!



End of Summer Picnic 2025!



**A Thrivent Action Team provided food for
the picnic and more photos are on the
Narthex bulletin board!**

Bible Quiz Answer:

B. Literacy

October Celebrations

Baptismal Birthdays

10/2	Carol Haddix
10/11	Megan Cook
10/14	Evin McCoy
10/23	Wendy Staup
10/25	Eli Ballard

Birthdays

10/12	Angela McCoy
10/17	Tom Schmidt
10/20	Tina Williams
10/28	Lin McKelvey

Anniversaries

10/3	D&J Paxton
10/4	R&C Schuppenies
10/16	D&W Staup
10/20	D&B Davis

October 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 11:00 AM Bible Study	2	3	4 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation TBA Prairie Day
				Pastor Beth Vacation		
5 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30AM In Sanctuary/Online Worship 11:30 AM Choir Rehearsal	6	7 6:30 PM "The Chosen" Study	8	9	10	11 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
Pastor Beth Vacation						
12 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30AM In Sanctuary/Online Worship 11:30 AM Soup Potluck	13	14 Newsletter Deadline	15 11:00 AM Bible Study	16	17	18 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
19 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30AM In Sanctuary/Online Worship 11:30 AM Choir Rehearsal	20 5:30 PM Council Meeting	21 12 PM JOY Club 3:00 PM Walk-Up Communion	22 11:00 AM Bible Study	23 1:00 PM Euchre for ALS 7:00 PM Book Club	24	25 9:30 AM Coffee and Conversation
26 Reformation Sunday/ Confirmation 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30AM In Sanctuary/Online Worship 11:30 AM Reception	27 7:00 PM Finance Meeting	28 3:00 PM Walk-Up Communion	29 11:00 AM Bible Study	30	31 Reformation Day	