

Vision of St. Stephen

April 2021



St. Stephen Lutheran Church
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All is well....

Anxiety and fear are what we know best in this fantastic century of ours. Wars and rumors of wars. From civilization itself to what seemed the most unalterable values of the past, everything is threatened or already in ruins. We have heard so much tragic news that when the news is good, we cannot hear it.

But the proclamation of Easter Day is that all is well. And as Christian, I say this not with the easy optimism of one who has never known a time when all was not well, but as one who has faced the Cross in all its obscenity as well as in all its glory, who has known one way or another what it is like to live separated from God. In the end, his will, not ours, is done. Love is the victor. Death is not the end. The end is life. His life and our lives through him, in him. Existence has greater depths of beauty, mystery, and benediction than the wildest visionary has ever dared to dream. Christ our Lord has risen.

Frederick Buechner, The Magnificent Defeat, p. 81

Even in the midst of an unprecedented (how I have come to loathe that word!) year, Buechner is right. Easter gives us the courage to say, into the very face of loss, pain, and death, that these things cannot and will not ultimately triumph. Love wins. Life wins. God wins. We win as well, because we are God's people.

**Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,**

**till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise.**

Verse 5, Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing, ELW 389

Easter Joy to You,

Beth Ferne Johnson, pastor

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Spiritual Growth

BIBLE 101

Our discussion of An Altar in the World continues as we are about half-way through the book. The author has provided some interesting conversation points for the group to consider. If you'd like to join in, please let Pastor Beth know—each chapter stands alone and can be understood without reading prior chapters. We're meeting on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 by zoom.

ZOOM COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Our next coffee and conversation will be held on Saturday, April 17th at 10:30 over Zoom. The login information will be shared through one call now earlier that week. You're most welcome to join in, see each other, and share a little of what's been happening in your life.

WALK UP COMMUNION CONTINUES

You're invited to drop in on Wednesdays from 3-6 p.m. for communion. Lately the weather has been so nice that we've been able to celebrate communion outside, under the covered entrance to St. Stephen. Hopefully spring temperatures will settle in and we can continue to be outside.

Youth and Family

CATECHISM

Catechism classes will be held by Zoom on April 11th and 25th. We will be discussing our 2 sacraments, Baptism and Communion. Our four young people are preparing for their confirmation on May 30th!

YOUTH EVENT

Our next youth event with a Bible story and crafts will be held on April 18th at noon. If you'd like to join in, please let Pastor Beth know and she will be happy to share the zoom login with you and your student!

1st COMMUNION RETREAT

A First Communion retreat will be held on April 7th from 1-3 p.m. Amelia and Elliot Scuralli will be receiving their first communion later that afternoon during our walk-up communion time. Congratulations to you both!

Holy Week & Easter

PALM SUNDAY

A community Palm Parade will be hosted on Palm Sunday, March 28th at 12:30. What is a palm parade, you ask? Well, we'll be gathering in the parking lot of Olivet Lutheran on Monroe Street. You'll be given a palm branch to wave as you hear about the events of Palm Sunday. Then, with lots of other cars, you'll drive to Sylvania First United Methodist church (across from Plummer Pool). There you'll drive around their front circle driveway while tuning in your car radio to hear and see and ponder as Jesus washes the feet of disciples. Then, in procession, you'll journey to Sylvania United Church of Christ. There you'll park in rows and celebrate Holy Communion together with others in their cars as you reflect on the Last Supper. Then, the group will journey to St. Stephen to remember Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane prior to his arrest. Folks will leave our parking lot with an invitation to attend Good Friday and Easter Sunday worships at the churches involved. If you'd like to help make our prayer portion come to life or explore different ways to invite prayer, please contact Pastor Beth. Thanks!

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April

Join us at 7:00 p.m. for a livestreamed worship service on St. Stephen's Facebook and YouTube platforms. This worship service focuses on the command Jesus gives his disciples that they should love each other, as Jesus himself eats a final meal with them before his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

GOOD FRIDAY, April 2

Sylvania First United Methodist is hosting our annual community Good Friday service. This year things will be a little different. Entitled, "Experience Good Friday", you're invited to drop in anytime between 12-3 p.m. You'll walk through seven outdoor stations, on a self-directed journey. At each station there will be a focus sign inviting you to imagine, a scripture sign helping you to connect through the Bible, and a questions sign offering open-ended queries to ponder. At the beginning of your walk, you'll be invited to take off your shoes. You can either experience the stations barefoot or with disposable flip-flops (provided).

Sanitizing wipes will be provided at the beginning and the end of the journey for feet. Masks and social distancing are expected.

At 7:00 p.m., a pre-recorded Good Friday service will be available on St. Stephen's Facebook and YouTube channels. John's account of Jesus trial, suffering, and crucifixion are the featured texts. Bishop Daniel Beaudoin will be preaching and pastors from the Toledo area will be providing portions of the worship service.

EASTER, April 4th

Join us for a joyous parking lot worship as we celebrate Jesus' victory over death itself! We are hoping that the weather will co-operate and we will be able to gather outside, as we did in the fall. Since we have lots of space, please invite friends and family to join you for Easter worship. We'll also be livestreaming this worship on Facebook and YouTube so you can worship from home as well.

Outreach

Giving Store

St. Stephen is still collecting clothing and household items for the Giving Store but we could use your help! We have been doing such a good job collecting these items we are in need of more help to deliver the items to Glenwood Lutheran. If you are ever headed near Glenwood Lutheran and would like to help get donations to them, please feel free to call the office or talk to Pastor Beth!



Salem Non-Food Pantry

Our ongoing collection for Salem Lutheran non-food pantry could use an infusion! They are always in need of any baby supplies, natural hair care products, dry laundry detergent, toothpaste and toothbrushes, lotions, and hair styling products! They always appreciate our donations and it really makes a difference to people in need in our community!



Feed Your Neighbor

Donations continue to be delivered to our bin. We are taking about a trunk load full of food to LSS every month. We appreciate your continued support in donations and sharing our "Feed Your Neighbor" mission!



Noisy Offering

We will be collecting the Noisy Offering at our Drive-In worship service on Easter Sunday, April 4! Be sure to bring your loose change to drop off in the soup pot which will be conveniently located! Thank you for your continued support and generosity St. Stephen!

Church Finances

GIVE PLUS

This Easter season we want to thank those individuals and families that support the church throughout the year with their time, talent and financial contributions. To assist everyone in making the consistent offerings that are so important to **St. Stephen Lutheran Church**, we ask you to consider using our Simply Giving automatic, electronic donation program. Please contact **Sally Goetz at 419-654-6264** for more details. ~Sally Goetz

KROGER REWARDS

We are pleased to report St. Stephen is receiving donations from 19 of our households who shop at Kroger and earned \$88.97 for St. Stephen between Nov. 1, 2020 and Jan. 31, 2021. A huge thank you to all who are participating in this program. If you have not already done so, please go online at www.krogercommunityrewards.com, and sign up to have your Community Rewards directed to St. Stephen! Also, every few years, Kroger's requires each household to re-confirm their donation choice, which you can do through the same website. Our organization number is PJ196. If you would like assistance in signing up for this program, please see Marilyn Scuralli or Kathy Aldrich.

Administrative News

LIVESTREAM TIME

Like to learn how to operate our live stream to the congregation and community each Sunday? Please let Pastor Beth know and she'll connect you with our team that's currently running the livestream. Many thanks to John Lock, Jeremy Hopkins, and Jake Bogdan for their help with this ministry!

LITTLE MIRACLES

Little Miracle will not be using the building until the Fall of the 2021-2022 school year at the earliest.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

As always our newsletter deadline for anything you want to be added is the 2nd Tuesday in the month. So for **May 2021** Newsletter please have all your items submitted by **April 13**.



Prayer

APRIL PRAYER NOTES

One of the things I am so grateful for is the ability to read. When you are older and alone and have time on your hands, reading is a joy and a companion. I am reading a Mitford book. That is a series of books by Jan Karon and I read them several years ago. I'm not sure I read this one before but I am enjoying it now. It is "To Be Where We Are" and I think it may be the last book in the series. One of the characters in the book makes the statement, "we do that, don't we? Pray for something, but don't trust God for it." That really jumped out at me and I thought, yes, I do that....probably often. I wonder what that says about our trust in God. Do we really trust or do we just kind of hope He'll do something about our situation? And when the prayer is answered, do we thank God or do we complain that it wasn't answered the way we wanted? I have been wondering about this and praying that I am learning to trust God to answer, not as I want, but as He knows best. Let's pray. ~Betty Lock

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Jill—Comfort, Strength & Peace
Joel—Strength and Recovery
Jamie—Healing and Insight
Hanna C.—Strength and Healing
Chelsey—Healing & Peace
Lila & Lib—Peace & Comfort
Sarah's Family—Comfort & Healing
Linda—Cancer
Zachary—Answers and Comfort
Richard—Work
Ryan—Peace & Success
Noah—Strength and Understanding
Jeff—Guidance & Understanding
Lyndsey—Healing and Comfort
Chesney's Family
Mark D—Healing & Comfort
Holt Family—Healthy Family
Julie—Patience, Peace & Guidance
Kathleen—Comfort & Healing
Joan—Healing & Comfort
Nora—Continued Healing
Phillips Family—Healing
Karen—Healing
Jan—Health and Comfort
COVID Sufferers

Fun

ALL IN GOOD FUN



THE ORIGINAL ROCK



...AND ROLL

BIBLE QUIZ

When Jesus died there was darkness in the land that lasted how long?

(Answer page 8)

- A. 1 Day
- B. 3 Hours
- C. 1 Week
- D. 12 Hours

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

2020 Council Members

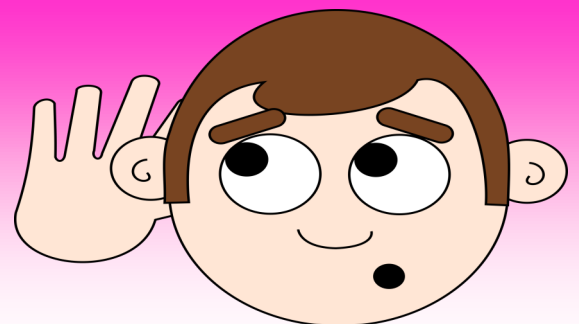
<i>President</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Vice President</i>	Joe Kahl
<i>Secretary</i>	Corrie Schuppenies
<i>Treasurer</i>	Libby Boldt

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>	Joe Kahl
<i>Staff Support</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Stewardship/Evangelism</i>	Beth Madden
<i>Technology</i>	John Lock
<i>Youth & Family Ministry</i>	Corrie Schuppenies
<i>Social Ministry</i>	Joan Haddox

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Hearing assistance equipment for up to 8 users available for anyone who needs help hearing the service better. Please ask Jeremy Hopkins or anyone who uses the equipment for assistance.



Steve's Bulletin Board

Need Help?

Need help registering for Covid-19 vaccine? Please call the church office and we'll help you fill out the form that is being requested by the Lucas County Health Department.



Thrivent T-shirts are available on the round table located in the Narthex! All are free and there are many sizes to choose from!

The Word In Season

Word in Season

The Word in Season for April, May and June are now at the church! If you can't make it to the building to pick one up, call the office and Janell can send you one!

Bible Quiz Answer:

B. 3 Hours

April Celebrations

Baptismal Birthdays

4/1 Barb Davis
4/1 Tricia Kunkel
4/1 Sandy Markin
4/1 Sharon Mason
4/5 Amy Chauvette
4/6 Betty Lock
4/6 John Lock
4/17 Bill Markin
4/22 Marsha Grouls

Birthdays

4/7 Pat Hoehing
4/7 Bryan Huffman
4/10 Tom Davis
4/11 Cathy Gustafson
4/12 Tom Pfau
4/13 Kayla Marchant
4/19 Larry Golba
4/21 Joanne Johnson
4/29 Jenny Troutman

April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Online Worship	2 12:00 PM UCC Outdoor Worship 7:00 PM Good Friday Online Worship	3
4 Easter 11AM Drive-In Worship/ Online Worship	5	6 7:00 PM Bible 101	7 1:00 PM 1st Communion 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion	8	9	10
11 11AM Online Worship 12 PM Catechism	12	13 Newsletter Deadline 7:00 PM Bible 101	14 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion	15	16	17 10:30 Coffee and Conversation
18 11AM Online Worship 12 PM Youth Event	19 7:00 PM Council Meeting	20 7:00 PM Bible 101 LWR Quilting	21 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion	25	26	24
25 11AM Online Worship 12 PM Catechism	26	27 7:00 PM Bible 101	28 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion	29	30	31