

# Vision of St. Stephen

## February 2022

Let love and faithfulness never leave you;  
bind them around your neck; write them on the  
tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and  
a good name in the sight of God and man.

Proverbs 3:3-4

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<sup>1</sup>But now thus says the LORD,  
he who created you, O Jacob,  
he who formed you, O Israel:  
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine.  
<sup>2</sup>When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.  
<sup>3</sup>For I am the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.  
Isaiah 43:1-3

Here God doesn't promise the people of Israel that there will never be times of fire, of flood, of feeling overwhelmed. If Isaiah were speaking in the 1960's, he might have said, "God doesn't promise you a rose garden". God doesn't promise that there will not be periods in life when we feel overwhelmed and at the mercy of things beyond our own control.

What God does promise the people of Israel is that they will not be alone in these troubles and disasters. God promises to be with them.

God promises the same things to us as well. At times, it may seem that we are drowning in a fast-moving river or trapped in the middle of a wild-fire, but God promises to be with us as well.

Why? Simply because God created us and loves us. Later in this passage, God calls us "precious" and reminds us that we are beloved.

This passage from Isaiah is a part of God's Valentine card to us. It's a long card, actually more of a story, but the message is this: God loves us. God has always loved us. God will always love us.

The greatest proof of that love is seen in Jesus.

This Valentine's Day and always, may our response to this love be a great big heartfelt sigh of relief. And then, may we respond by caring for and loving ourselves and our neighbors and our enemies.

God's peace to you,

*Beth Ferne Johnson, pastor*

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# Spiritual Growth

## **WORSHIP UPDATES**

Our current worship schedule and mask requirements will continue through Easter Sunday. Wednesday walk-up Communion will also continue until Easter from 4:30-6:00 p.m. Our worship committee will be meeting in March to reevaluate both worship attendance numbers and covid cases in the area.

On Ash Wednesday, March 2, we will be having worship at 7:00 in our sanctuary, with both the imposition of ashes and holy communion.

Our other Lenten Wednesday worship services will be available as a livestream only, with participation of Olivet Lutheran pastors and musicians, as we did last year. Those Wednesdays are March 9 through April 6<sup>th</sup>. More information will be found in our March newsletter.

## **SOUPE BOWL**

We'll be gathering cans of soup and financial gifts for the Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry in the weeks leading up to the Super Bowl. You're invited to bring in cans of soup and set them up in the narthex or to write a check (made out to St. Stephen, with LSS in the memo line) or put some cash in the soup pot on the 13<sup>th</sup> itself! However you chose to participate, it's the hungry families in our community that win!

## **JOY Lunch**

Our JOY Luncheon for next month will be February 15th at 12:00 PM at Betty Lock's house! Please sign up in the Narthex and feel free to ask Betty or Pastor Beth for more information!

## **Salem Lutheran—Syrup vs. Green Beans**

Salem Lutheran may be the oldest Lutheran congregation in the Toledo area, but they are very active in their neighborhood. To help, we've offered to help support them. They asked for two items: cans of green beans to serve at their Tuesday evening meal and syrup for their Saturday morning "Just Pancakes" meal. Starting February 14th we will be collecting these items. Let us know whether you prefer sweet or savory, or breakfast to dinner with a donation of either green beans or syrup. Feel free to "vote" as often and as much as you'd like!



VS.



# Youth and Family

## YOUTH EVENT

We'll be meeting on Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup> for a time of Bible learning, crafts, and fun! Look for an email from Pastor Beth about the time for the event.



## WALLEYE

Be on the look out for more information about the LSS faith and family night. It will take place at a Walleye game in mid to late March! For more information check out: <https://www.facebook.com/events/huntington-center/lss-night-at-the-toledo-walleye/459143232230715/>

# Celebration of Marriage

## CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

We will be honoring those celebrating significant milestone anniversaries on February 13<sup>th</sup>. We'll be remembering them in prayer that Sunday in worship as well as delivering a "porch present" to them that week-end. We're looking for bakers and for delivery drivers to gift these folks with their present on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup>. If you'd like to volunteer, please speak with Janell. Thanks!



# Outreach

## Souper Bowl

Souper Bowl Sunday is February 13th. We're doing our part to support Lutheran Social Services and their food pantry. We're looking to gather cans of soup and monetary donations! We are collecting the cans on the circular table in the Narthex and there is also a soup pot to drop any envelopes. Thank you so much for your generosity and support!



## 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 different to people in need in our community!



## Feed Your Neighbor

Our bin is continuing to generate donations! As we move past the holiday season, please keep this vital ministry in mind and all non-perishable food items are greatly appreciated! Feed Your Neighbor!



## LWR Quilting

There will be an afternoon of quilting on Monday, February 21, from 12 PM to 4:00 PM. Please eat lunch before you come as we will not be having a lunch break. If you have any questions or concerns you can reach out to Libby Boldt, 419-356-6244, or [Lboldt@bex.net](mailto:Lboldt@bex.net)





# Church Finances

## **ONLINE GIVING**

For those who are comfortable using technologies to contribute, Vanco services provides us with a smart phone app (Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement) that we can use to make our donations. You can use this app to make a one time gift to St. Stephen or an ongoing gift. If you have any questions please contact the church office!

## **2021 GIVING STATEMENTS**

The year end giving statements will be available for pick up in the Narthex starting on January 30! Please review your statement, and if there are any issues don't hesitate to contact Janell in the office! If you need your statement mailed to you, please contact Janell as well.

# Administrative News

## **WANTED: SUNDAY MORNING GREETERS**

We need greeters for our Sunday morning worship. Pastor Beth has been standing near the door, welcoming folks and directing visitors to our bulletin table, but she has to go into the sanctuary to prepare for worship around 10:55. Often, visitors arrive in this 5 minutes before worship and 5 minutes into the start of worship. If you'd like to greet folks, help them with a bulletin, and direct them towards the sanctuary, your work would be much appreciated! Please sign up on the bulletin board for a Sunday that works for you. If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Beth or Marilyn Scuralli.

## **THANK YOU**

Marty McKelvey has retired from sign duty. For many years, he created very interesting phrases, came over, and physically changed our church sign to include the new phrase. Over the years, neighborhood people have told me how much they have enjoyed reading our sign. Thank you, Marty, for a job well done!

## **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

As always our newsletter deadline for anything you want to be added is the 2nd Tuesday in the month. So for **March 2021** Newsletter please have all your **items submitted by February 8.**



# Prayer

## FEBRUARY PRAYER

### *A Thankful Prayer*

*My Lord, my God Creator of every new sunrise,  
You allow me each day to open my eyes to see it.*

*You give me another opportunity to breathe,  
limbs to move, food to eat, cloth to wear,  
and a mind to think. I do thank you.*

*I give thanks to you for my family, my church family,  
and for those who are going through.*

*I know that you are the answer to all of our problems.*

*When I look into the dawning of the day,  
or the star light at night, I see You, the Creator.*

*I give you thanks for loving me,  
and for your grace and mercy.  
This is my prayer of thanksgiving.  
Thank you, thank you, Lord. Amen.*

*by Barbara Burns, January 21, 2014*

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

*Jill—Comfort, Strength & Peace*

*Joel—Strength and Recovery*

*Chelsey—Healing & Peace*

*Noah—Strength and Understanding*

*Those with Cancer—Healing*

*Roger Jr.—Pancreatic Cancer*

*Greg—Healing & Comfort*

*COVID Sufferers*

*Haiti Survivors*

*Afghanistan Refugees*

*Purney Family*

*Imber Family*

# Fun

## **ALL IN GOOD FUN**



## BIBLE QUIZ

Which is NOT a fruit of the spirit?

(Answer page 8)

- A. love
- B. gentleness
- C. humility
- D. Self-control

### **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

## **2022 Council Members**

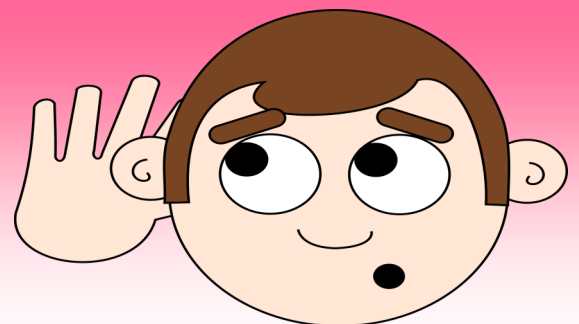
<i>President</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Vice President</i>	Joe Kahl
<i>Secretary</i>	Beth Madden
<i>Treasurer</i>	Bob Housel

## **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 &amp; Family Ministry</i>	Angela McCoy
<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

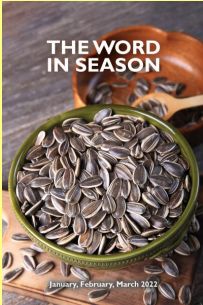
A memorial service for David Purney, Lisa Hopkin's father, will be held February 19 at 11 AM at Toledo Memorial Park. Please keep the Purney family in prayer!

## Easter Flowers



Sue Kahl is working on a source for Easter flowers for the altar for this year! Please be on the look out for more info in the "This Week" pamphlet as we get closer and closer to the Lenten season.

## THE WORD IN SEASON



## Word in Season

The Word in Season for January, February and March 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:

C. humility

# February Celebrations

## Baptismal Birthdays

2/1 Jim Boldt  
2/8 Kathie Tefft  
2/8 Lynn Tefft

## Birthdays

2/2 Mollie McCoy  
2/3 Dave Aldrich  
2/5 Nancy Pfau  
2/7 Michelle Tebary  
2/19 John Lock  
2/23 Tricia Kunkel  
2/25 Joan Paxton  
2/28 Jeremy Hopkins



# February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:00 PM Bible 101	2 4:30 PM Walk Up Communion	3	4	5 10:30 Coffee and Conversation  *McCoy Rental
6 11AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship 12 PM Youth Event	7	8 Newsletter Deadline 7:00 PM Bible 101	9 4:30 PM Walk Up Communion	10	11	12 10:30 Coffee and Conversation  *COM Porch De- livery
13  Souper Bowl Sunday Celebration of Marriage 11AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	14	15 12:00 PM Joy Lunch 7:00 PM Bible 101	16 4:30 PM Walk Up Communion  7:00 PM Coun- cil Meeting	17	18  *Lock Rental	19 10:30 Coffee and Conversation  11:00 Purney Memorial Service
20  11AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	21  12 PM LWR Quilting	22 7:00 PM Bible 101	23 4:30 PM Walk Up Communion  7:00 PM Park- inson's Support	24	25	26  10:30 Coffee and Conversation
27  11AM In-Sanctuary/Online Worship	28					