

Vision of St. Stephen

March 2021

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."

MARK 12:31

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

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"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee."

17, Meditation

Did you read these words in a High School English class? For many, it's where we first encounter these phrases from John Donne, written in 1623. I remember reading them and being struck by the idea that we are all united, all connected.

What I didn't realize, and this may be new to you as well, that John Donne was in the midst of the plague epidemic when he wrote this. In fact, he was sick in bed, afraid for a few days that he, too, was going to die. As he lay in bed, he could hear the church bells in London, tolling to note the death of each person. At times, they would hardly stop. When I learned that, I found these words even more interesting.

For a whole year now, we have ourselves been in the midst of an epidemic. And in that time, we have been encouraged to think of others as well as ourselves, to wear masks, keep distance, avoid large gatherings, etc. We have been doing this to protect ourselves, but also to protect those around us. I remember at first thinking the Facebook post was kind of cute---"To save the world, your grandparents went to war. To save the world now, all you have to do is sit on your couch and watch movies". But after a year of this behavior, it is proving to be harder than I first thought.

I know that we are all yearning and longing for life to return to "normal". And with the vaccines and people getting their shots, the end is in sight.

Until then, though, I would encourage us to use these days of Lent to buckle down and make sure that we're continuing to be safe and that we're continuing to keep others safe by our own behavior.

I would also encourage us to reach out to others because we need each other. We are all together a part of the whole. We are all connected, part of the body of Christ.

God's peace to you,

Beth Ferne Johnson, pastor

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Spiritual Growth

NEW SERMON SERIES

During the Sundays of Lent, Pastor Beth invites you to explore the different covenant promises God has made with folks throughout history and continues to make with us as well! Tune in each Sunday to our 11:00 online livestream to hear what's next!

LENTEN WEDNESDAY WORSHIPS

Each Wednesday in Lent, we're offering worship at 6:45 p.m. through our Facebook and YouTube pages, just as we do on Sunday mornings. This year, we'll be partnering with Olivet Lutheran for these worship services. As you worship from week to week, you'll hear Pastor Nate Tuff, Pastor Melissa Micham, and Pastor Beth as they lead worship from our location and from Olivet. Our focus is Created for Community. We'll be thinking about what it means to be in community with creation, with one another, with the world, and with God.

BIBLE 101

Through Zoom, we have been meeting to discuss the book, An Altar in the World, by Barbara Brown Taylor. She has some interesting insights to share and the book has provided some good discussion. If you'd like to join in, please contact Pastor Beth for the zoom log-in information. We meet at 7:00 p.m. each Tuesday.

ZOOM COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

We'll be gathering again on Saturday, March 20th by Zoom for a chance to chat and catch up with other members and friends of St. Stephen. Look for the zoom login information to come a few days before our gathering on the 20th at 10:30 a.m.

WALK UP COMMUNION CONTINUES

Yes, some weeks, it's been a bit chilly, but we've been excited to have so many of you stop by each week for communion. Pastor Beth will continue to serve communion each Wednesday from 3-6 p.m.

ASH WEDNESDAY REPORTS

We had 5 cars of people, who were not members of St. Stephen, stop by for Ashes on February 17th. Some of them mentioned how the imposition of ashes was so very important in their life of faith, and they were so happy that we were offering ashes to the community in a socially distanced way.

RESPONSIBLE REOPENING

Our church council is planning for a responsible return to in-person worship once Lucas County transitions back to "orange", from our current "red" status. While on red, our Sunday online worship will continue, available on Facebook and YouTube. Once we transition to Orange for 2 Thursdays in a row, that next Sunday (10 days from the first orange Thursday), we will transition to in-person worship, while continuing to provide on-line worship. If you are uncertain or uncomfortable about being in the building for worship, please know that your feelings are completely valid. We will continue to provide an on-line streaming service on Facebook Live and YouTube, just as we have been, so you will be able to worship from home.

Youth and Family

CATECHISM

We'll be meeting on March 7th and 14th by zoom at noon. Please have your Luther's Small catechism books ready as we'll be looking at Luther's explanation to the Apostle's Creed. Thanks!

YOUTH EVENT

We hope to be having our Youth Event on Sunday, March 21st at noon by zoom. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Pastor Beth for the zoom login information. Thanks!

Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY

Would you be willing to make palm crosses at home to be mailed out to members? 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

At the present time, we're planning to livestream our Maundy Thursday worship at 7:00 p.m. on April 1st.

GOOD FRIDAY, April 2nd

At noon, you're invited to attend an outdoor socially distanced worship service at noon at Sylvania First United Methodist church. Pastors from Olivet, Sylvania UCC, and St. Stephen will also be leading. That evening, at 7:00, we will be sharing a livestream prerecorded worship involving pastors, musicians, and locations of the Toledo Area Lutheran Conference.

EASTER, April 4th

We hope the weather will be glorious and we'll be able to worship outside in our parking lot, as we were doing last summer and fall. Regardless of the weather, our 11:00 a.m. worship will also be available livestreamed on our Facebook and YouTube channels as well.

Outreach

Souper Bowl

St. Stephen collected \$740 for Lutheran Social Services of Northwest Ohio's food bank. Across the United States, we were one of 1,259 groups that collected \$3,062,027 for charities in their local area!! Thanks to all who contributed!! We're looking forward to enjoying some great soups next year at this event, so please be perfecting those recipes!



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

Our bin is generating a donation about every 3-4 days. So far, canned corn has been the most popular item shared with the LSS Food pantry. As we move past the holiday season, please keep this vital ministry in mind! Feed Your Neighbor!



Celebration of Marriage



Thank you to everyone who helped make our celebration of marriage a success! Joe Kahl, Marty McKelvey and Corrie Schuppenies all helped with delivering treats baked by Ruth Moeller and Vivian Johnson, all assembled with the help of Joni Tolles! Those who were celebrated are listed here: Herb & Pat Hoehing, , Ray & Marilyn Hendricks, Ken & Sue Marvin, Rich & Jackie Cornell, Tom & Netta Schmidt, Joe & Jettie Sansbury, Jim & Kay Bork Dan & Cathy Gustafson, Bill & Sandy Markin, Tom & Nancy Pfau, Steve & Kathy Ziegler, Tony & Michelle Tebary and Richard & Corrie Schuppenies.

Outreach

Lutheran Disaster Relief is present and active in Texas

"I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2).

Dear friends,

The last year has been full of changes and challenges for all of us. Now we are again witnessing a devastating disaster amid the ongoing pandemic. As neighbors in Christ, we have an opportunity to share God's hope, healing and renewal with each other.

Beginning Feb. 14, a polar vortex descended over the United States. Subfreezing temperatures and heavy snow swept across the country, impacting millions of people. The harsh conditions severely impacted Southern states, such as Texas, which lack the infrastructure to handle the freezing temperatures and record-setting snow and ice. This has led to power, food and water shortages throughout the region. At its peak, 4.5 million homes and businesses in Texas were without power. With bursting pipes and broken water systems, around 10 million Texans are facing water disruptions. As temperatures rise, melting ice and snow is expected to cause more water damage.

Lutheran Disaster Response is collaborating with the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, the Southwestern Texas Synod, the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, and Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response. Congregations are already conducting relief efforts such as supplying water, food and generators to those in need and opening their doors to serve as shelters. Long-term recovery may include repairing water-damaged homes, disaster case management and supporting vulnerable populations.

Please give today. Your gifts ensure that our church will be able to provide help and hope for those whose lives have been devastated by the severe storms in Texas. Gifts designated for "U.S. Severe Storms" will be used entirely (100%) for direct response.

Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support for those whose lives have been impacted by severe winter storms and subfreezing temperatures in Texas. Doing this we reflect Christ's light and hope to our neighbors in their time of need. For updates on this and other disasters, follow Lutheran Disaster Response on [Facebook](#).

With gratitude for your partnership,

The Rev. Daniel Rift

Director, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response Funding

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

In Loving Memory



Phyllis Anderson

Phyllis A. Anderson, 85 years, of Toledo, OH passed away Thursday, February 11, 2021 in Ebeid Hospice, Sylvania, OH. The daughter of Albert and Anne (Lewandowski) Kilmon she was born February 13, 1935 in Hammond, IN.

Phyllis had worked as a medical assistant in health care. She enjoyed crocheting and making special wraps and blankets for children in need. She also liked working puzzles often gluing them together for wall hangings.

When Phyllis wasn't teaching her children to be kind and loving she was supporting her husband of 46 years, The Rev. Marvin G. Anderson during his ministry to congregations in MI, MN, and FL. She married Marvin on October 16, 1954 in Calumet



Elaura Maple

Elaura Jane Maple, 93, of Toledo, OH, passed away Sunday, February 21, 2021 at Oakleaf Village, Toledo. She was born October 8, 1927, in Toledo, OH, to William and Elida (Carlisle) Foster, who both preceded in death. Elaura raised a son and daughter along with being a secretary for Continental Peet Co. for over 25 years. She was an active member of St. Stevens Lutheran Church in Sylvania for many years enjoying the fellowship with other parishioners. Elaura was a proud grandma and enjoyed being involved with their various daily activities and events and loved playing cards with her friends

especially the game Hand and Foot or Euchre. She is survived by her loving children, Terri (Mike) Bryson, Scott (Angie) Maple; grandchildren, Collin and Carly Maple; Chris and JoAnn Bryson; great-granddaughter, Charleigh; siblings, Linda (Ron) Hays, Kenneth (Sue) Marvin. A graveside service at Ottawa Hills Memorial Park will take place this Spring with a date yet to be decided.

Church Finances

GIVE PLUS

With social distancing and limited abilities to come together to worship at church, our ability to contribute to St. Stephen has been impacted. For those members who are comfortable with using new technologies to contribute, there is a smart phone app to make our donations. For complete instructions on how to use GivePlus, please see the St. Stephen website!

SIMPLY GIVING

Have you been thinking about setting up a recurring deduction from your checking or savings account for your church? Simply Giving is your source to do so. You can designate a set amount each week, semi-monthly or monthly through this program. It's really easy to manage and you don't have to think about writing a check or using the "Give Plus" option every week to make your donation to St. Stephen. Just give me a call at 419-654-6264 and I will mail you the enrollment form. Return it to me and I will process it through Vanco Solutions, the designated Thrivent company who handles the program for them. ~Sally Goetz

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 **April 2021** Newsletter please have all your items submitted by **March 9**.



Prayer

MARCH PRAYER NOTES

I looked out my window at a field of white as far as the eye could see....pure clean white....and thought to myself God made all things beautiful. Then, I saw a couple of men wearing bright green vests walk through the yard and place some bright orange flags at the border of my yard. That made me think of all the people who still have to go out and work even when the weather makes it difficult.....service people (like these men), teachers, doctors, nurses, emergency personal, and many others. In that moment, I felt that “gentle reminder” which we often get from God, to say a prayer for all of those people. Sometimes, I think how blessed we are because there are all of these people willing to go to work even when it would be so much easier to stay home and be safe. When I saw we had some more snow this morning, I was reminded again of those people and said a prayer for them..... a prayer of gratitude and a prayer for their safety. Won't you join me? 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
Eddie—Healing
Jan—Health and Comfort
COVID

Fun

ALL IN GOOD FUN

Q: What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?

A: *Absolutely Ruthless*

BIBLE QUIZ

What does Jesus say the meek will inherit?

(Answer page 8)

- A. Riches
- B. The Earth
- C. Fruit of the Spirit
- D. Everlasting Life

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

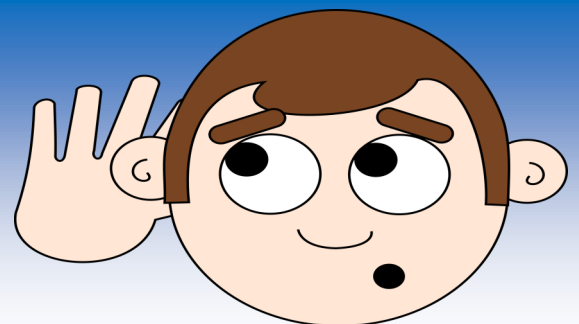
<i>President</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Vice President</i>	Joe Kahl
<i>Secretary</i>	Corrie Schuppenies
<i>Treasurer</i>	Libby Boldt/Sharon Mason

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.

THANK YOU!

St. Stephen Lutheran's 2021 Collection

raised:

\$740 and 35 food items

Thanks to your efforts this year, more dollars have been raised, more lives have been changed and the nation has seen the impact of people working together to help those in need. Thank you for working to transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving.



February 7, 2021

Alison Reese
Alison Reese
Executive Director
Souper Bowl of Caring

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:

B. 365

February Celebrations

Baptismal Birthdays

3/1 Jim Bork
3/1 Linda McDonough
3/12 Chase Mercer
3/17 Ken Marvin
3/24 Stephanie Russell
3/24 Beth Madden
3/31 Sally Goetz

Birthdays

3/1 Betty Lock
3/2 Joe Kahl
3/3 Matthew Cook
3/3 Rick Ritzenhaler
3/3 Annetta Schmidt
3/4 Chase Mercer
3/6 Jessica Klimesh
3/9 Jim Bork
3/9 Amy Chauvette
3/9 Sally Goetz
3/14 Sue Kahl
3/18 Tony Tebary
3/25 Kathy Aldrich
3/25 Beth Ferne Johnson
3/26 Carrie Smith

3/28 Garry Ward
3/29 Beth Madden

Anniversaries

3/6 Rick & Michele
Ritzenhaler
3/7 Kevin & Carrie
Smith

March 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7:00 PM Bible 101	3 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion 6:45 Lenten Worship	4	5	6
7 11AM Online Worship 12 PM Catechism	8	9 Newsletter Deadline 7:00 PM Bible 101	10 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion 6:45 Lenten Worship	11	12	13
14 11AM Online Worship 12 PM Catechism	15 7:00 PM Coun- cil Meeting	16 7:00 PM Bible 101	17 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion 6:45 Lenten Worship	18	19	20 10:30 Coffee and Conversation
21 11AM Online Worship 12PM Youth Event	22	23 7:00 PM Bible 101 4:30 PM Quilting	24 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion 6:45 Lenten Service	25	26	27
28 11AM Online Worship 12:30 PM Palm Parade	29	30 7:00 PM Bible 101	31 3:00 PM Walk Up Communion			