



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Worship Service with Holy Communion
Sunday, December 27, 2020 ■ 9:30 a.m.

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
First Sunday of Christmas
Worship Service with Holy Communion



Welcome to the Nativity of our Lord and the Festival of Christmas ...

As we've passed through the season of Advent and reflected, lamented and prepared for the coming of Christ, on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day we celebrate! For unto us a child is born. Unto us a Son is given. God's word has become flesh. God's promise of a Messiah is fulfilled. Salvation unto us has indeed come. The appointed Psalms for these days are Psalm 96 and Psalm 98 ... both beginning with "O sing to the Lord a new song ... " and goes on "... sing to the Lord, all the earth" and "... for he has done marvelous things". So, these days and throughout the season of Christmas we sing, we celebrate, and we praise God, we tell of his salvation throughout all the ends of the earth ...

**For Christ is come.
In Christ, the Word of God is made flesh.
Christ is our Salvation.**

Within our worship here at St Stephen's during this season, we have selected music and text that many of us have sung and heard for years. And yet, it's new and fresh every time we hear it, just as it is for those hearing it for the first time. As we sing these carols and songs, and hear the message of the Angels and the Shepherds, let us raise our voices anew, proclaim the good news, the glad tidings of great joy ...

**A Savior is born, Jesus Christ the one who has come and is here,
has come again this eve and this day. AMEN!!**

Bryon Dockter, Director of Worship

WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP

Prelude

Reflection on "The First Noel"

Ben D.

Welcome

Singing Bowl

Silence is kept for reflection.

* Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth,
our light and our salvation.
Amen.

Just as God's work of creation never ends,
so the gifts received in baptism are renewed every day.
Let us give thanks together for the life given in baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for the waters of life:
for water to bathe in, water to drink,
for waters to play in and waters that inspire wonder,
for water that gives life to our planet.

We give you thanks, O God, for the waters of life.

We give you thanks, O God, for the waters of this place:
for water from our tap, for rain and snow,
for all local water sources—Mississippi, Minnesota and St. Croix Rivers

We give you thanks, O God, for the waters of this place.

We give you thanks for your salvation through water:
for delivering Noah and his family through the floodwaters,
for leading your people Israel through the sea into freedom,
for preserving your prophet Elijah through the time of drought,
for guiding your people across the Jordan into a new land,
for quenching the Samaritan woman's thirst with living water.

We give your thanks for your salvation through water.

We give you thanks for the life of all the baptized,
and for all who gather here;
for godparents and baptismal sponsors,
for children and grandchildren,
for our brothers and sisters in Christ
whom we have never seen but to whom we are bound.

We give you thanks for the life of all the baptized.

We give you thanks for life in Christ through your Holy Spirit:
for our entry into Jesus' death through these waters,
for our new birth into a life of freedom and service,
for our calling to be your people,
sent out for the life of the world.

**We give you thanks, blessed and holy Trinity
now and forever. Amen.**

WE GIVE OUR PRAISE

* Hymn

"The First Noel"

ELW #300 vs. 1, 2

**The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain

**Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain***

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* Greeting

For Unto Us a Child is Born. Unto Us a Son is Given.
The Word has become Flesh. Salvation Unto Us has Come.
The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all.
And also with you.

* Hymn of Praise

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

ELW #288 vs. 1

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866
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* Children’s Sermon

Tracy Westman

* Prayer of the Day

Almighty God,
you wonderfully created
the dignity of human nature
and yet more wonderfully restored it.
In your mercy, let us share
the divine life of the one who came
to share our humanity,
Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

WE HEAR GOD’S WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 61:10—62:3

10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
2 The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

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

1 Praise the LORD!
 Praise the LORD from the heavens;
 praise him in the heights!
 2 Praise him, all his angels;
 praise him, all his host!
 3 Praise him, sun and moon;
 praise him, all you shining stars!
 4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
 and you waters above the heavens!
 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 for he commanded and they were created.
 6 He established them forever and ever;
 he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.
 7 Praise the LORD from the earth,
 you sea monsters and all deeps,
 8 fire and hail, snow and frost,
 stormy wind fulfilling his command!
 9 Mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars!
 10 Wild animals and all cattle,
 creeping things and flying birds!
 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the earth!
 12 Young men and women alike,
 old and young together!
 13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 for his name alone is exalted;
 his glory is above earth and heaven.
 14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
 praise for all his faithful,
 for the people of Israel who are close to him.
 Praise the LORD!

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

Gospel Acclamation**"Angels We Have Heard on High"****ELW #289 Refrain Only***Refrain*

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

The Holy Gospel according to St Luke,
Glory to you, O Lord

*** Gospel****Luke 2:22-40**

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), 24 and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." 25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 27 Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 29 "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; 30 for my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." 33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling

and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." 36 There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. 39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, O Christ.

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

ELW #289 Refrain Only

Refrain

**Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.**

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
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Sermon

Pastor John

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

Hymn

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

ELW #295 vs. 1

**Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.**

Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348-413; tr. composite
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* Prayers of Intercession

Petition response Leader: ... Lord, in your mercy,

“Away in the Manger”

ELW #278 vs. 3

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

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Reception of New Members

ELW Page 234-235, 237

I present **Chris and Linda Becker, Kerry Frid, Jim Hoban, Bhakti Rabanus, and Jim Lamont** who desire to make public affirmation of their baptism.

Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you for these sisters and brothers,
whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism.
You have called them to yourself, enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit,
and nourished them in the community of faith. Uphold your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth.
We ask this in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

I ask everyone to profess their faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Response: *I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Response: *I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: *I renounce them.*

Let us confess our faith together.

Do you believe in God the father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

Chris and Linda, Kerry, Jim, Bhakti and Jim you have made public profession of your faith.

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,
to hear his word and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

If so, please answer:

I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

[Video recording]

People of God, do you promise to support and pray for one another in your life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. **Amen.**

Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Let us rejoice with these sisters and brothers in Christ.

We rejoice with you in the life of baptism.

**Together we will give thanks and praise to God
and proclaim the good news to all the world.**

[Screen shot pictures of new members]

Introductions made by Pastor John

* Sharing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

*We invite you to share the peace with those with you
and with us with "thumbs up" or comments on our Facebook page.
Text someone you care about.*

Offering [Invitation to support ongoing ministries of St. Stephen's]

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

ELW #294 vs. 3

What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him—
give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894
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* **Words of Institution**

* **Lord's Prayer**

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 Word is revealed in a manger,
In simple bread and wine.
Come meet Christ in this meal.

Communion is Received

ELW Page 112

The body of Christ, given for you
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

"In a Lowly Manger Born"

ELW #718 vs. 1, 3

In a lowly manger born,
humble life begun in scorn;
under Joseph's watchful eye,
Jesus grew as you and I;
knew the suff'rings of the weak,
knew the patience of the meek,
hungered as but poor folk can;
this is he. Behold the man!

Then, to rescue you and me,
Jesus died upon the tree.
See in him God's love revealed;
by his passion we are healed.
Now he lives in glory bright,
lives again in pow'r and might;
come and take the path he trod,
son of Mary, Son of God.

Text: Kō Yūki, 1896-1985; tr. composite
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The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Strengthens you and keeps you in his grace
Today, tomorrow and forever. **Amen.**

*** Prayer after Communion**

We give you thanks, gracious God,
that you have once again fed us from your very self
with the body and blood of Christ.
Through this mystery, send us forth
to proclaim your promise to a world in need,
through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

WE GO INTO THE WORLD

*** Blessing**

Almighty God,
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,
proclaimed joy through the angels,
sent the shepherds with good news,
and led the magi by a star,
bless you this day † through the Word made flesh.
Amen.

Hymn

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

ELW #290 vs. 1, 2

Refrain

**Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. *Refrain***

**The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain***

Text: African American spiritual,
refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.
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*** Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.
Thanks be to God.

*** Postlude**

Celebration of “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Ben D



Jesus said ...

"My Father's House shall be a house of prayer."

Please include the following people in your prayers this week: **Dorrie, Steve, Sara, Delores, Marge, Merwin, Loren, Jerry, Hedy, Diane, Sarah, Ed, Laura, Lois, Blaine, Frances, Nicole, Dolores, Dan., the Szczepaniak Family, Tony, T.J. Adam.**

Each week different families will be included in special prayers. Please hold in your prayers: **Phyllis, Betsy, Bill and Jane, Deborah, Barbara.**

Each week different missions that St. Stephen's supports through our Sunday offerings are included in our prayers. This week we offer prayers for **Lutheran World Relief: Fairly Traded Coffee and Chocolate.** Supporting Fair Trade reflects our faith—it improves the lives of farmers, families, and communities around the world. Benefits to farming communities include access to clean water, health clinics, and schools. Fair trade also helps stop child labor, human trafficking, and slavery in the cocoa farming industry.

We also offer prayers for our **brothers and sisters in Christ in the villages of Iwonde and Ihimbo, Tanzania.**

We pray for **residents and staff of group homes and care facilities, and all healthcare workers.**

We pray also for those away from home serving in the military: **Ben, Nick, Jeremy, Matthew, Zachary, Sam, Troy, Tricia, Adam, Nick, Peter D. J., Christopher, Gene, Sam, Andrew.** (Please help us keep our military member listing up to date. Thank you.)

St. Stephen's invites you to add your prayer requests to our daily prayers. We hope that this list is placed inside everyone's Bible or devotional material. All prayer requests will be listed for three weeks. Please contact the church office if additional time is needed.

Leaders in Today's Service

Pastor The Rev. Dr. John Snider
Christian Music Leader Ben D.
Lectors Zach Molumby, Gary Westman
Audio Visual Ministry Keith and Jessica Gregory
Prayer Chain Rachel Circle, Mary Circle, Kathy Ericson, Abby Vavra
Altar Guild Lori Ritt
Outdoor Street Sign Jerry Thoreson



Today's Altar Flowers

Happy Sweet 16 Birthday Samantha!

Given by: Kimberly Richter



ST STEPHEN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Senior Pastor John Snider | Associate Pastor of Discipleship Tim Thompson
1575 Charlton Street ■ West St. Paul, MN 55118



Bulletin Acknowledgements

Liturgical texts, prayers: Sunday and Seasons.

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