

Staying Connected

Always Connected to God, Each Other and the World

“LET’S SQUASH THIS BOGI!”

Love, Science, the Delta Variant and St. Stephen’s

Communication from St Stephen’s Safety Committee

Science tells us that the **Delta Variant** is on the rise in Dakota County. The amount of this variant is measured by four levels: Low, Moderate, Substantial and High. Surprisingly, Dakota County is ranked **Substantial**. In order to protect the unvaccinated the CDC and MDH recommends masks be worn by everyone inside while in a public place. Also to limit such periods of time.

Love is concern for our neighbor. We don’t want to participate in the spreading of the Delta Variant so St. Stephen’s is now recommending **everyone wear a mask while inside this building.**

Nobody likes this. It seems like a step away from being finished with COVID-19. It has already been a long struggle but these steps are in the right direction. As we limit the spread of the virus we limit its potential to mutate while we protect our neighbors from the variant’s harsh consequences.

- ♥ Masks are recommended for all people while indoors.
- ♥ Please sing during worship! (But only if masked.)

WHAT’S ST. STEPHEN’S UP TO THIS FALL?

Glad you asked. Below are some highlights. Watch for more information as it becomes available.

Men’s Friday Breakfast group continues every other Friday at a new location—the backroom at Café Amore, 879 Smith Ave S., WSP. We will start at 8am so please come a few minutes early to place your breakfast order. Our next scheduled meeting date is **Friday, September 3, 8-9am.**

September 8th | 7-8pm Contemplative Prayer and Study returns to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month via Zoom. We will begin on September 8th using the book “Opening to God: Lectio Divina and Life as Prayer” by David G. Benner. Please order your own book in your favorite format.

Open Forum (new title for adult learning opportunities) will be offered on **Sunday mornings 10:40-11:30am and Wednesday evenings 6-7pm.** Beginning with **Sunday, September 19** with **Meet our New Staff.** We have added three new staff members during these days of Covid. **Hannah Ruikka:** Activity Coordinator of Children, Youth and Family; **Garrett Masters:** Communication and Media Coordinator; and **Bryon Dockter:** Director of Worship. Come and learn about the person behind the role! On **Wednesdays beginning September 29th** join a group of adults led by one of our pastors or the pastor from Salem Lutheran Church, as we look at this year’s curriculum “**Seeking Justice Together**”. You don’t need to have a child in Faith Formation to benefit from this study and you can benefit the youth by your presence and interest in their lives. The focus will be a discussion on the scriptures and their calling in our lives.

Prayer Shawl Ministry returns to Thursdays 10-11am in Room 206 beginning **September 23rd.** Questions should be directed to Rosalie Christensen.



The Well
Wednesday,
August 25 we will
say goodbye to
The Well.

Thank you all for your support of this ministry. We encourage you to get involved in the new **Open Forum hybrid Sundays and Wednesdays and/or the Contemplative Prayer and Study.** Previous Well broadcasts will remain available in our Facebook archives.



**God’s work.
Our hands.**

For many years the ELCA has designated the second Sunday of September as God’s Work. Our Hands. Sunday.

Congregations are encouraged to participate in some act of service on that day. This year on **God’s Work. Our Hands Sunday, Sept. 12, we will thank our local first responders for their service to our community. Would you be willing to bring some homemade treats, such as muffins or cookies, to church that Sunday?** They will be delivered right after the worship service. In addition, we have also planned another service activity for ALL at **Feed My Starving Children for Wednesday, Sept. 15 from 6-8pm** see the reverse side for more information—we will be joining the Faith Formation youth and families.



Time to register for FAITH FORMATION!

We are excited about what lies ahead and look forward to serving you and your family on your faith journey! Please register as soon as possible as we are busy planning for you and your family. Registration is online. An active link can be found under the **Ministries/Faith Formation tab on our website**. Here's the address: <https://www.ststephenswsp.org/faithformation.cfm>.

The Registration form includes more important information.

**SUNDAY: September 12th during 9:30 am worship service
Teacher and backpack blessings**

Faith Formation kicks off Wednesday, September 15th with a Congregation-wide group activity at Feed My Starving Children—packing meals from 6-8pm

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR A "GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS" ACTIVITY

organized by the combined efforts of our Youth Education Committee and the Missions Committee

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION and THE PEOPLE OF ST. STEPHEN'S will be performing an act of service on **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th at FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN**

(We have reserved all 65 spaces available!)

We will be leaving St Stephen's at 5:30 pm for packing meals from 6-8 PM at the Eagan Feed My Starving Children facility!

Please register on the Feed My Children Website at this address: <https://www.fmsc.org/get-involved/volunteer>

Once on the registration page, go to the bottom right and look for the box labeled "Looking for a specific group" enter code **Z6V4G9** and follow the directions to get registered. This is a family service time so please register your whole family. For safety reasons, children under 5 are not allowed in the packing area. In addition, **masks must be worn by all** and well as **NO jewelry** (including earrings). Acceptable masks include multi-layer cloth, non-medical disposable, or N95. All masks must fit snugly and completely cover your nose and mouth. Please note that plastic face shields worn alone, neck gaiters, and bandanas are not acceptable. A mask with a face shield is acceptable. **It's all us that night. PLEASE COME AND HELP!**

Faith Formation Classes will begin Wednesday, September 22!

St Stephen's and Salem Lutheran will work together to provide Faith Formation opportunities for our youth and families.

SUNDAY MORNING:

Wee Wonder (Ages 1-3 with their parents/guardians) will meet on SUNDAY MORNING at 10:40 AM. **Class will start Sunday September 19th.**

Youth Group (Grades: 9th-12th) will meet on SUNDAY MORNING at 10:45 AM. **Beginning September 26.**

WEDNESDAY:

The general Wednesday night schedule will be: 6:00-6:20pm Large Group learning and singing; 6:25-7:00pm Small group learning (there will be an adult class offered at this time for parents/guardians).

Pre-school (4 year old) through 5th grade will meet on Wednesday night at St. Stephen's. Each class will be led by FAITH FORMATION leaders. Faith Formation will be starting on **September 15th**. There will be the potential to ZOOM into class, if necessary, but we are looking forward to being IN PERSON this year!

Confirmation age classes (6th, 7th, 8th grades) will meet on Wednesday night at St. Stephen's. Each class will be led by FAITH FORMATION leaders. Faith Formation will be starting on **September 15th**. There will be the potential to ZOOM into class, if necessary, but we are looking forward to being IN PERSON this year!

THE 3rd WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH WILL BE ACTIVITY WEDNESDAY.

We strongly encourage you to make Wednesday Night a family night—1 1/2 hours a week to begin or continue faith building with your family. A church can help to plant the faith seeds, but the faith seeds are nurtured and grown at home—we at St. Stephen's and Salem Lutheran want to help you be the strongest family you can be!



ST STEPHEN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

PLEASE NOTE: Links included in the eUpdate are not active—watch for a separate email that contains resources available and active links all in one handy document.

Thank You for your Support of our St. Stephen's Ministries ♥

By Mail | Online thru St Stephen's website | GIVE+Text (Text 844-907-2702) | GivePlus Vanco Mobile App

Connecting to God, each other and the world

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