



Sunday, February 23, 2025
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Mercy. Mercy. Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is fractured and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of

the life-giving Spirit. It is a reflection of God's glory revealed in Christ.

WELCOME! We are glad to have you join us in worship today. Here are a few notes to help you feel more at home participating in our worship.

Worshiping. Today's service is printed in this bulletin. Parts in **bold** indicate responses by everyone in which you are invited to participate.

Communion: *Lutheran Christians believe that the Lord Jesus Christ feeds us with his true body and blood "in, with, and under" the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. All baptized Christians who receive Communion in their own churches are welcome to receive the sacrament. Please note that the darker wine is non-alcoholic and is available from the Lector. Communion will be distributed continuously, in procession. Please come forward as directed by the ushers.*

ST. STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Michelle Burkhardt, Parish Administrator ([email ststephenoffice@msn.com](mailto:ststephenoffice@msn.com))
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+GATHERING+

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C Amen.**

P God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Pause for silent reflection.

P Most merciful God, **C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **C Amen.**

GATHERING SONG: *For the Beauty of the Earth* (ELW 879)



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
5 For each per - fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
for thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our world so free - ly giv'n:

Refrain

Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C And also with you.**

KYRIE

Refrain

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

- 1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
- 2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
- 3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . . for
- 4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the

u - ni - ty of all; for
 hun - gry and the poor; that
 friends and fam - i - ly; for
 wa - ter and the word; that you

this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
 we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
 life and for love, for our work and our play,
 nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,

Refrain



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. C Amen.

+WORD+

FIRST READING: Genesis 45:3-11, 15

A reading from Genesis.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me; do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there, since there are five more years of famine to come, so that you and your household and all that you have will not come to poverty.' " And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him. The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40



The low - ly shall pos-sess the land; they will de -



light in a - bun - dance of peace.

The lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace. (*Ps. 37:11*)

Do not be provoked by evildoers; do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

For they shall soon wither like the grass, and like the green grass fade away.

Put your trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

Take delight in the LORD, who shall give you your heart's desire. R

Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD, and see what God will do.

The LORD will make your vindication as clear as the light and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently. Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

Refrain from anger, leave rage alone; do not be provoked; it leads on-ly to evil. R

For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD shall possess the land.

In a little while the wicked shall be no more; even if you search out their place, they will not be there.

But the lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace.

But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O LORD; you are their stronghold in time of trouble.

You, O LORD, will help them and rescue them; you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen and to each kind of seed its own body.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the physical and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven. As one of dust, so are those who are of the dust, and as one of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the one of dust, we will also bear the image of the one of heaven.

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 6:27-38

P The Lord be with you. **C And also with you.**

P The holy gospel according to Luke. **C Glory to you, O Lord.**

P [Jesus said:] “But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *You Are Mine* (ELW 581)



1 "I will come to you in the si - lence,
2 "I am hope for all who are hope - less,
3 "I am strength for all the de - spair - ing,
(4) am the Word that leads all to free - dom, I



I will lift you from all your fear.
I am eyes for all who long to see. (2) In the
heal - ing for the ones who dwell in shame.
am the peace the world can - not give.



You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice. Be
shad - ows of the night, I will be your light.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and
I will call your name, em - brac - ing all your pain. Stand



still and know I am here. *To stanza 2*
Come and rest in me. *To refrain*
all will know my name. *To refrain*
up, now walk and live! *To refrain*



Do not be a - fraid, I am with you. I have called you each by



name. Come and fol - low me, I will bring you home; I



love you and you are mine."

To stanzas 3 and 4

4 "I

APOSTLES' CREED

A With the whole Church, we confess our faith.

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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A Please respond hear our prayer.

A Surprising God, you call us to love our enemies and to show kindness in the face of cruelty. Let our actions be a shining witness of your overwhelming grace for all. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A As animals hibernate and fields lay dormant, let them be a reminder that life and faith are not static but always changing and growing. May we, with all creation, trust that the ending of one thing promises life in a new way. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A We pray for leaders and policymakers who work to reduce violence in our nations, cities, and towns. Give your wisdom and discernment amid heated arguments and differing viewpoints. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A We pray for the victims of abuse and violence. Provide safe shelter and new beginnings to those experiencing domestic violence and dangerous situations. Enfold with love all who seek your healing care (*especially*). God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A Empower our faith communities to be signs of your gracious love. Bless the local ministries of parish nursing and caregiving, that they will be a voice for those in need in our communities. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A We give thanks for the enduring witness of those who have died before us (*especially Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna*). May their lives in you provide a witness of your everlasting grace. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **C Amen.**

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always. **C And also with you.**

P Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS WEEK’S BIRTHDAYS

Christel LaVorgna 2/24

Allison Agarenzo 2/27

BIRTHDAY SONG

He who began a good work in you 2x

Will be faithful to complete it (clap 3x)

Will be faithful to complete it (clap 3x)

He who started the work will be faithful complete it in you!

+MEAL+

OFFERING: *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful* by Marty Haugen

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the

brim our cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the

seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.

Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the

prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,



and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

P The Lord be with you. **C And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts. **C We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



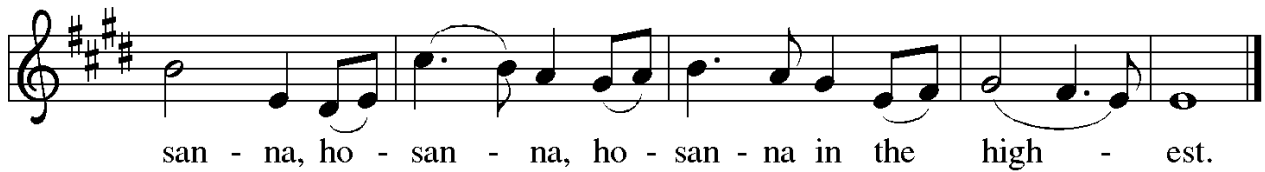
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -



san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -



est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.

P We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age: the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

P In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. C **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us. And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast. C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we who share in Christ's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light. C **Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

P Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

C **Our Father, who art in heaven...**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
 mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
 world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
 world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

SONG DURING COMMUNION: *One Bread, One Body* (ELW 496)

Refrain

One bread, one bod-y, one Lord of all; one cup of
 bless-ing which we bless, and we, though man-y
 through-out the earth, we are one bod - y in this one Lord.

- | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Gen - tile | or Jew, | ser - vant | or free, |
| 2 | Man - y | the gifts, | man - y | the works, |
| 3 | Grain for | the fields, | scat-tered | and grown, |



Refrain

wom - an or man, no more.
 one in the Lord of all.
 gath - ered to one for all.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

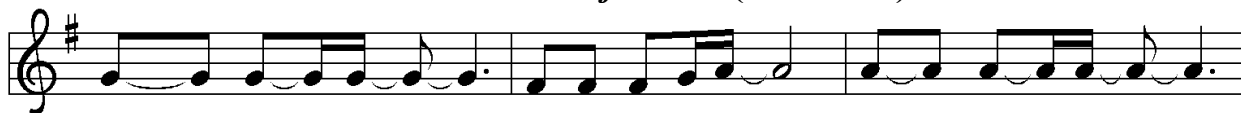
P Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **C Amen.**

+SENDING+

BLESSING

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace. **C Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me* (ELW 860)



1 I'm so glad I'm so glad
 2 Sa - tan had me bound, Je - sus lift - ed me. Sa - tan had me bound,
 3 When I was in trou - ble, When I was in trou - ble,



Je - sus lift - ed me. I'm so glad Je - sus lift - ed me,
 Sa - tan had me bound,
 When I was in trou - ble,



sing - ing glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me.

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Share the good news. **C Thanks be to God.**

Upcoming Commemorations

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, died 156 ~ Sunday, February 23, 2025

Because he is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, as well as the important early church fathers Irenaeus and Ignatius, Polycarp serves as a vital link in church history. He was burned at the stake at age 86 for refusing to renounce his faith.

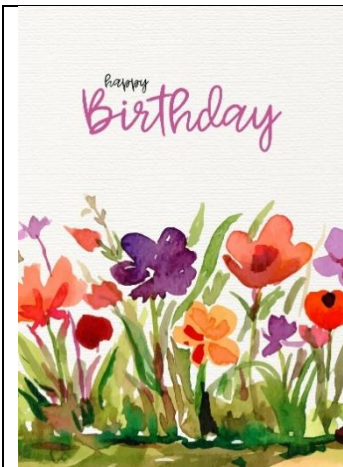
Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, died 1921~ Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Born in Norway and trained there as a deaconess, Fedde was asked to come and minister to the poor and to seamen in New York City. She established the Deaconess House in Brooklyn as well as Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis.

George Herbert, hymn writer, died 1633 ~ Saturday, March 1, 2025

An excellent scholar, Herbert served briefly in the English parliament, then became a parish priest. He was known for devoted care of his parishioners, as well as for writing poetry and hymns, including "Come, my way, my truth, my life." He died at age 40.

**Announcements for the week of
February 23, 2025**



Tanya Mauer 3/3
Vicki Maxey 3/12
Lori Schiliro 3/19
Ryan Back 3/21
Neil Tingwall 3/22
Jennifer Ruiz 3/23
Lynn Browning 3/24
Brenda Beck 3/31

Susan & Paul Portz 3/8



~ Welcome Pastor Anderson and thank you for leading us in worship this morning.

~ Don't forget that February (& March) are **DIAPER** month. Sizes 3, 4 and 5 are most needed. You can also donate adult diapers if you have any. Remember, we hope to be able to fill the back of our delivery truck!

~ The Gardening Group will start meeting again soon. Heritage Farm and Garden will be offering various workshops in February and March. We plan on attending the following: March 8th at 1:00 pm – The ABC's of Pruning Shrubs and March 15th at 1:00 pm. Get Your Garden Ready for Spring. We need to each register individually on Heritage's website: (heritagefarmandgarden.com). We'll carpool from church so, let either Lauren or Barbara know if you'll be attending.

~ We welcome items for our newsletter but please have them by Wednesday, February 28th.

~ Please join us for the coffee hour.

~ A chart on the lobby bulletin board allows us to designate weekly Sunday service altar flowers or the monthly sanctuary lamp candle as special memorial/in honor of gifts. Use the envelopes provided to forward the gift (\$25.00 for flowers; \$15.00 for candle). Be sure to include information concerning who is being honored/memorialized by your gift as well as your name, address and telephone number. You may also contact the church office at (516) 931-0710

PARISH CALENDAR THIS WEEK (March 3rd - March 9th)

Today	Last Sunday after Epiphany
	9:30 am Holy Communion
	10:45 am Council Meeting
	10:00am H.S.S
Tuesday	7:00 pm Back to Basics
Wednesday	7:00 pm N.A.
Next Sunday,	First Sunday in Lent
	9:30 am Holy Communion

SERVING AT WORSHIP TODAY

Sunday, 9:30 AM

ASSISTING MINISTER:	Jane Ebersberger
LECTOR:	Jaclyn Shurman
ACOLYTE:	Grant Sedlak
USHERS:	Rick Mosebach
ACCOMPANIST	Mason Griffin
GREETER:	Ilse Zeeck
AUDIO/VISUAL:	Tyler LaVorgna
ALTAR GUILD:	Beth Feeney & Jane Ebersberger

PARISH PRAYER LIST

If you would like to have your name or your friend or family member's name added to the Prayer List, please call the office. Please remember to keep the office updated.

PRAY FOR OUR CONGREGATION

Vinny Aiello
Bill Artus
Kevin Barcavage
Dottie Eberhardt
Roger Engert
Vicki Maxey
Rick Mosebach
Ilona Riggers

PRAY FOR OUR FAMILIES

Joe DiSalvo (cousin of Maureen O'Brien)
James Ebersberger (brother of Jane Ebersberger)
Jim Fritz (cousin of Lauren Artus and John Langbehn)

John Peck (nephew of Christel LaVorgna)

William Stanton (cousin of Kellie Barone)

PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS

Rich Carlstrom (friend of the Staton family)

Cheryl Glasini (friend of the Ahlers-Pendas family)

John Judge (friend of Jane Ebersberger)

Ellen Motoi (friend of Maureen O'Brien)

Sarah Motyka (friend of the Maurer family)

Megan Mudd (friend of the Staton family)

Betty, John & Mary Beth Ott (friends of Jane Ebersberger)

Martina Schmid (former member of the congregation)

John Sheridan (friend of Bob and Nan Maurer)