



Sunday, March 30, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Lent

The psalm sets the tone this day: "Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!" Happy are those who have "become the righteousness of God" in the merits of Christ Jesus. Happy are those for whom the forgiveness of God has "rolled

away . . . the disgrace" of former times. Happy is the father at the return of his prodigal son. Happy are we that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Rejoice!

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. *Hymns can be found in the back of this bulletin.*

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

270 South Broadway + Hicksville NY 11801

Church Office: 516-931-0710 (*email ststephenoffice@msn.com*)

Mason Griffin, Minister of Music

Barbara Barcavage, Church Council President (ststephenstreasurer1@gmail.com)

Church Website www.ststephenshicksville.com

Join us on Facebook: St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Hicksville, NY 11801

+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Pause for silent reflection

A 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.**

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

A 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.**

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

ENTER IN SILENCE

GREETING

A 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,



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

Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A Let us pray. God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C Amen.**

+ **WORD** +

FIRST READING: Joshua 5:9-12

A reading from Joshua.

⁹The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain.

¹²The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

...The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 32

The psalm for the day is read responsively

¹Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

²**Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

⁴**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸**I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

⁹Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

10

Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.

¹¹Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way.

¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. ...The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.



Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

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

¹Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³So he told them this parable: ^{11b}“There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’” ²⁰So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²²But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’” ...The gospel of the Lord. C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* (ELW 807)



1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end-less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan-d'ring from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good-ness prove.
he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre-cious blood.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

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 Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ. As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love. God, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth. Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family. Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all. God, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God of boundless love, receive with open arms any in need of compassion. Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. God, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded. Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all. God, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died (*especially*). We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **CAmen.**

PEACE

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

A Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

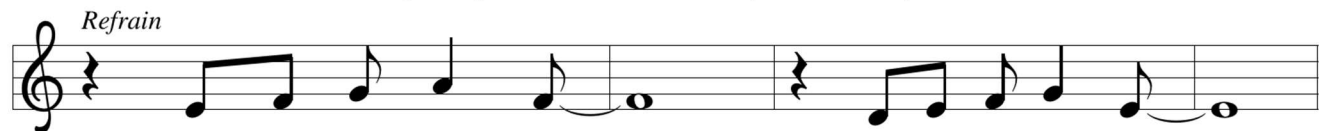
ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

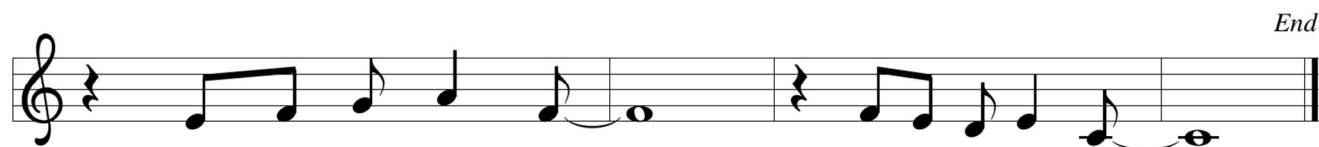
+ MEAL +

OFFERING

OFFERING SONG: *Change My Heart, O God* (ELW 801)



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray. God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

C Our Father...

+ SENDING +

BLESSING

A The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant us to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **C Amen.**

A The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **C Amen.**

A The God of all grace + bless us now and forever. **C Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *Sent Forth by God's Blessing* (ELW 547)



1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,
2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing,



the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave.
the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face—



The sup - per is end - ed. Oh, now be ex - tend - ed
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,



the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.
em - brac - ing God's chil - dren, the whole hu - man race.



The seed of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls
With your feast you feed us, with your light now



reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.
lead us; u - nite us as one in this life that we share.



Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us
Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing



to work for your king - dom and an - swer your call.
give hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Remember the poor. C Thanks be to God.

Comments from the Cloud of Witnesses

If it were just anyone telling us this story of the good and kindly father, we could only laugh. We could only say, “How do you know there is a God who seeks me, who takes interest in my lostness, who, indeed, suffers because of me?” But this is not just “anybody.” This is Jesus himself who is speaking. And he is not merely telling us about this father: the Father is in him. Does he not seek out the lost? Is he not the very voice of the Father’s heart that overtakes us in the far country and tells us that incredibly joyful news, “You can come home. Come home!” The ultimate theme of this story is not the prodigal son, but the Father who finds us. The ultimate theme is not faithlessness of human beings, but the faithfulness of God.

~ *Helmut Thielicke*

Upcoming Commemorations

John Donne, poet, died 1631

Thursday, March 31, 2022

After finishing his education at Oxford University, Donne seemed headed for a career in the English public service. But a series of circumstances led him into the ordained ministry. He is well known as a writer of both secular and sacred poetry.

**Announcements for the week of
March 30, 2025**

Sanctuary Lamp Candle for March is given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Rudy Eberhardt by the Eberhardt family and in loving memory of Frank O'Brien by the O'Brien family



JOIN US FOR SERVICES!

Palm Sunday ~ April 13 at 9:30 am
Good Friday ~ April 18 at 7:30 pm
Easter Sunday ~ April 20 at 9:30 am

**** PALM SUNDAY READERS NEEDED ****

Our Palm Sunday services call for multiple readers to share the day's story. Be an important part of our service and volunteer!

The sign-up sheet and readings for Palm Sunday are in the Narthex. *When you sign up for a part, please be sure to take the appropriate reading so you can practice before the big day!*

Speak with Barbara if you have questions.

~ Easter Plant Offering and Dedications ~ it's once again time to get your Easter plant offering and dedications in. Forms with complete instructions can be found on the table in the narthex. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 516/931-0710. Deadline: Sunday, April 6th.

~Last call for your March donation of **diapers** in support of Lutheran Social Services.

~Lutheran Social Services has once again invited us to provide **Easter Food Baskets** to their New Life Center. A list of requested food items can be found on the table in the Narthex.

~ Our March newsletter has been delayed. Please send your submissions to Tanya Maurer (tmaurer145@aol.com) as soon as possible.

~ Lutheran Bible Study – Significant Themes of the Lenten Season
Mondays beginning March 10th through April 7th at 7pm

Join zoom meeting [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81976673296?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81976673296?pwd=liImhFtFMUnTUPBo3b8YFZjDtidkUp.1)
pwd=liImhFtFMUnTUPBo3b8YFZjDtidkUp.1
Meeting ID: 819 7667 3296
Passcode: 779639

~ From the Altar Guild:

Our numbers are few; and the Guild would welcome your assistance. We are a small assembly dedicated to arranging the sanctuary for the Sunday services of Holy Communion, festive worship services, and the Services of Word and Light. Don't feel overwhelmed with what you see as our worship space changes with each season or with the task to be done. The work is done as a team of two or with the entire Altar Guild when necessary, and on occasion with assistance from the Property Committee. It is a labor of love and service to the Lord, a small but important charge.

If you are interested, even if you just have questions, you can speak with Lauren, Bill, Beth, or Jane.

~Boy Scout Troop 291 will be holding their **Family Pasta Night** on April 27th at 4:00. Ticket / reservation forms can be found on the table in the narthex.

~ Please join us for the coffee hour in the lobby after worship.

~ 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 30th - April 5th)

Today	Fourth Sunday in Lent
	9:30 am Holy Communion
	10:00 am H.S.S. Yoga
Tuesday	7:00 pm Back to Basics
Wednesday	7:00 pm N.A.
Thursday	7:00 pm Church Council meeting
Next Sunday	Fifth Sunday in Lent
	9:30 am Holy Communion

SERVING AT WORSHIP TODAY

Sunday, 9:30 am

ASSISTING MINISTER:	Beth Feeney
LECTOR:	Brianna Feeney
ACOLYTE:	Sara LaGuarina
USHERS:	John Musi
ACCOMPANIST	Mason Griffin
GREETER:	Maureen O'Brien
AUDIO/VISUAL:	Tyler LaVorgna
ALTAR GUILD:	Lauren & Bill Artus

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
Lauren Artus
Dottie Eberhardt
Jane Ebersberger
Richard Engert
Roger Engert
Pastor Ron Klose
Claire and John Parrett
Ilona Riggers

PRAY FOR OUR FAMILIES

Fred Barrell (brother-in-law of Paul and Susan Portz)
Joe DiSalvo (cousin of Maureen O'Brien)
James Ebersberger (brother of Jane Ebersberger)
Jim Fritz (cousin of Lauren Artus and John Langbehn)
Vicki Maurer (daughter-in-law of Nan and Bob Maurer)
John Peck (nephew of Christel LaVorgna)
Tom Portz (brother of Paul Portz)
Jean Riolo (mother of Christine Carlson)
William Stanton (cousin of Kellie Barone)

PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS

Rich Carlstrom (friend of the Staton family)
Maryellen Collins (friend of the Staton family)
Cheryl Glasini (friend of the Ahlers-Pendas family)
John Judge (friend of Jane Ebersberger)
Jim Lasurdo (friend of the Maurer family)
Ellen Motoi (friend of Maureen O'Brien)
Betty, John & Mary Beth Ott (friends of Jane Ebersberger)
Martina Schmid (former member of the congregation)
John Sheridan (friend of Bob and Nan Maurer)