



A Place for Everyone — All Are Welcome

A Place for Everyone — All Are Welcome is the theme of our capital appeal as we seek to make our place more welcoming and accessible. The mission of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church is to know, live and share Christ by practicing wholehearted hospitality, life changing sacred practices, grateful service and joyful witness. As our Welcome Statement says: "We aspire to be a spiritual home for all God's people, without exception, without regard for age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, financial or family status, physical or mental abilities." We want our place to be a place for everyone, where all are welcome.

Our place — our building — is our center of mission. It enables us to be a visible presence in our neighborhood, provides a welcoming space for meaningful worship, a center for community service, and a gathering place for our neighbors. As we seek to welcome all people, it is important that our church building embody this invitation, providing a hospitable and comfortable space for all who gather here.

A Place for Everyone — All Are Welcome capital appeal is for the purpose of making our building more welcoming and accessible by:

- Enlarging and increasing accessibility of restrooms to meet the needs of all persons.
- Expanding and updating our kitchen — the heart and center of our church home — so that it can be the vibrant hub of our fellowship and service to members and the community.
- Increasing the accessibility of our building entrances to demonstrate that our welcome and invitation really is to all people without exception.

The goal of **A Place for Everyone — All Are Welcome** capital appeal is to receive gifts totaling **\$600,000** over the next three years.

A Place for Everyone — All Are Welcome capital appeal is a means by which by we can celebrate 75 years of mission and ministry in this place and embrace our value of wholehearted welcome hospitality to all.

**Join us on Sunday February 16
for the official kickoff of
A Place for Everyone — All Are Welcome
Information Session at 9:15am**
led by your Capital Appeal Team
Lee Paulsen, Janette Coppa,
Ross Blanchard, Nancy Metier-Mohni,
Emily Robins, Robin Kenney

*The Capital Appeal Prayer Team led by
Nancy Metier-Mohni invites all of us to
enter into a season of prayer. The team will
publish and post weekly prayers for us to
include in our personal devotions and group
gatherings.*

A message from your Minister for Faith Life

January is almost over, wasn't it just Christmas? and Lent will be here in a few short weeks. Certainly it has been such a joy to participate in the generosity that flows from the people at St. Stephen's. The gifting of pajamas to Grant Wood School children, the household and personal items given to the Kabongo family, and the celebration of Three Kings Day was such a tangible sign of God's love in and around us. It was a great privilege and pleasure help deliver these items you all so generously donated. Thank you.

In January it was fun to share an "Escape Room" with many of the high school youth. I found I had zero skills in solving the clues but enjoyed seeing the young men work cooperatively trying to solve the challenges.

I must express my appreciation that more people are signing up, signing on and using REALM. As I often need to communicate with whole groups of you, as opposed to emailing or messaging individuals, it's so wonderfully functional to send group communications! I would also like to encourage you to fill out your profiles, get a profile photo on there. I am still struggling with names and I think we all can and will enjoy being able to match names to faces.

Shout out to the Young Adults A.K.A. Youngins at Stephens for having their inaugural event. For those who think they fit into being a 'young adult' seek the facebook page 'Youngins at Stephens', contact me or Alex Long to get tuned into what might be happening.

"For grace is given not because we have done good works, but in order that we may be able to do them." - Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

- *Marilee Torres*

An Update On How We Communicate @ St. Stephen's



Hello! My name is David Zorn, I am your communications coordinator at St. Stephen's (For a year this month)!

I am taking a bit to catch everyone up to date on how we are changing some of the ways we do signups, hospitality, and otherwise how we are transmitting information to the congregation.

The important thing to note is, not *much* is changing. Hospitality in particular has been a topic of conversation for myself and the staff, and I am excited to find ways to help the signup and organization process easier. **We are NOT getting rid of SignupGenius.** We will still be using it as a means to get people signed up for long term, multiple person events such as Family Promise, Hospitality, Luncheons, or special events.

Things like Facebook or Realm will not be used to sign people up for events with multiple positions needed. They will be used to notify people of events, or even link them TO the signup genius. If you ever have questions, let me know at sslcommcoord@gmail.com, or come visit me in the office.

-David Zorn

Keeping Track of Your Favorite Hymn Requests

Way back in September at our Ministry Fair you filled our hymn suggestion box with the names of 35 hymns. Here are the ones that we have already sung at least once since then:

Built on a Rock (ELW 654) - sung October 27, 2019

Borning Cry (ELW 652) - sung November 3, 2019

Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones (ELW 424) - sung November 3, 2019

Precious Lord Take My Hand (ELW 773) - sung November 3, 2019

Shall We Gather at the River (ELW 423) - sung November 10, 2019

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name (ELW 634) - sung November 24, 2019

Name Above All Names (W&P 100) - sung November 24, 2019

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light (ELW 815) - sung November 24, 2019 & January 12, 2020

God is Here (ELW 526) - sung November 17, 2019 , scheduled February 16, 2019

Build Up (DRMA 6) - sung 12/8/19

Morning Has Broken (ELW 556) - sung January 19, 2020

Lift Every Voice and Sing (ELW 841) - sung January 19, 2020

On Eagles' Wings (ELW 787) - sung January 26, 2020

Lord Listen to Your Children Praying (ELW 752) - sung January 12 through February 23, 2020

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee (ELW 836) - sung February 2, 2020

The Church Song (W&P 135) - sung February 2, 2020

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound (ELW 779) - scheduled February 9, 2020

How Great Thou Art (ELW 856) - scheduled February 16, 2020

As you might guess there are still a number of hymns that have yet to be scheduled. Check in here each month to see which hymns have been added to this list.



WORDS FROM THE ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE:

Pretty Simple, Really

A new year. New congregational/council officers in only a few days (okay, maybe the current ones will stay on, but *new terms*). New Year's resolutions to be kept ... or not.

How about a "new" look at St Stephen's endowment funds? A few people have said they'll give legacy gifts. A few others have made direct contributions. Could contributing to the endowment funds be a new financial discipline this year? Just asking ...

Lyle A Kleman, Chairperson
Endowment Committee
Ashley Hart
Nichole Plagge
DeeAnn Hebrink, *ex officio*
Pr Ritva Williams, *ex officio*



Thank you

**YOUR GENEROSITY
BLESSES
OUR CHURCH
& OUR NEIGHBORS!**

90 pairs of pajamas were delivered to the children at Grant Wood Elementary School.

Jojo, Toche, Hamilton, Monica and Mary Kabongo all received new shoes, cookware, bedding, household items, and gift certificates to HyVee & Good Will.

We packed 800 sacks of food for children in the Cedar Rapids School District on at our second Operation Backpack packing event at the HACAP food reservoir.



*Thank you to
all our
volunteers who
provided
hospitality and
meals from 1/26*

*to 2/2 for our Family Promise
Guests: Sylvain & Gyna Kaveya and
their children Jonathan, Rosa, Maria
and Grace!*

STAY INFORMED!

You can view the **council meeting minutes**, **previous Messengers**, **council members**, **videos of the Sunday sermons**, and more on our website!

Council Meeting Minutes: https://ssluth.com/our_council

Past Messengers: <https://ssluth.com/newsletters>



Practice Discipleship



LIFE CHANGING SACRED PRACTICES



Worship

Sundays 8am & 10:30am

Wednesdays 6:30pm

Intercessory Prayer

Members

Norm Barnes
Ardell Begalske
Jenny Caswell
Jim Daubenmier
Ken Fee
Mary Flecksing
Harriet Hemphill
Ann Kleman
Melanie Munro
Judy Nye
Arlene Ortgies
Larry Ortgies
Steve Thomas
Carol Wightman

Relatives

Tracie Beltz Krousie
Gertrude Lee
Trent Rosberg
Ester Torres
Anna P. O'Connor

Friends

Tina Carlton
Gayle Dickson
Yvonne Jackson
Brent Pahl
Kierra Robinson
Juli Sears

Family and Friends of:

Don Zierath, died Dec. 21, husband of Marian.
Martha Adamson, died Jan 9, mother-in-law of Bill-Rosberg.
Stephen G. Wilson, died Jan 23, mentor of Pastor Ritva.
Toni Lee, died Jan 27, sister of Romeo Williams.

Our Global Mission Partners

The children and staff at the Ebenezer Glenn Orphanage in Haiti.

Serving in the military and/or overseas

Alex Grafft, Army National Guard
Jacob Aune, Marines

Honoring our Loved Ones

To honor a loved one's birthday, anniversary, or other special date, consider sponsoring:

Altar Flowers — the cost is \$25

Keep the eternity lamp lit — the cost is \$10.

Sign up is easy! Go through Signup Genius or check the sign up on the "What What Jesus Sign Up 4" bulletin board. Pay by placing a check in the offering with "flowers" or "eternity lamp" on the memo line, pay at the kiosk in the narthex, or on-line at www.ssluth.com. Take your flowers home after the second service or leave them to be shared with a member who cannot attend.

Bible & Book Studies

Sunday School, Sundays at 9:15am. Children ages 3 through 5th grade are invited to gather in the Children's Place and Room 8, Lower Level.

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Adult Lifelong Learning, Sundays 9:15am in the Fellowship. See bulletin insert for topics and speakers.

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Lyrical Bible Study is a Facebook group, focusing on psalms, poems, and songs in the Bible. To join contact Alex Long at along111361@gmail.com

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Men's Coffee & Study Group — Mondays 8am, at Mr Beans in Marion.

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Women's Bible Study — resumes Tuesday, February 11 at 10am. We will embark on a 6 week study of the Gospel of Mark.

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Confirmation Classes, Wednesdays at 7:15pm for Middle School Youth, gather in Room 9, lower level.

WARM-HEARTED HOSPITALITY

Women's 50+ Luncheon will be returning Tuesday the 11th of February. Bible study starts at 10:00AM and the luncheon begins at 11:30AM.

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Women, Wine & Wisdom Mardi Bras Event — Tuesday, February 25, 5:30PM, @ St. Stephen's RSVP and/or to arrange rides or childcare contact Amy Kuhn at 270-6365 or amykuhn2@aol.com.

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GRATEFUL SERVICE

Quilting Ministry — Barbara Kuslar recently completed 13 quilts that will be delivered to Lutheran Services in Iowa! If you would like to help contact Barbara at 319-826-3794.

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Operation Backpack Pickup/Delivery Opportunity

We are looking for persons who have a vehicle with large cargo capacity and who are available during daytime weekday hours to pick up food packages from the HACAP Food Reservoir, 1515 Hawkeye Dr. Hiawatha and deliver to Grant Woods Elementary School. Interested? Contact MFL Marilee Torres at 241-1978 or mflmarilee@gmail.com.

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Family Promise will continue using Signup Genius in the future! Look for signup invitations in your email as the year progresses.

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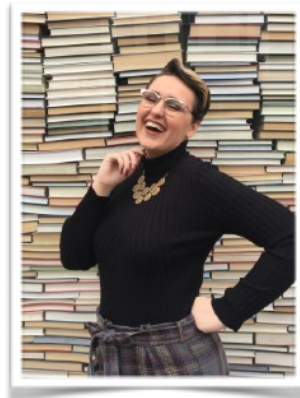
JOYFUL WITNESS

Choir and Cantor Rehearsals, Wednesdays, 7:15pm. Join us as we learn liturgies, hymns, and anthems for Sunday worship.

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An Introduction to a new member!

Harper Folsom



Harper recently moved to Hiawatha from her hometown of Manchester. She's currently attending COE College!

"I've attended St Stephen's on and off since 2016, but now that I live in the area I'm excited to settle in, volunteer, and become involved in the community. I'm very passionate about volunteerism, and I think St Stephen's puts a lot of good into this world."



Celebrating Toni Lee's Life

Our member Toni Lee died January 27 after a long fought battle with cancer.

Please lift up Romeo & Patti Williams (her brother & sister-in-law), their extended family, and all who knew and loved Toni in your prayers.

February 2020, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

Happy Valentine's Day from LSI!

"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19

Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) mission is about love: responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. We give thanks for all the ministry partners, both individuals and congregations, who help share this love for Iowa children, families, and adults!

We see this love in newly adopted children and their families, in teens who learn to trade self-harm for self-worth, in Iowans with disabilities who are growing their independence and confidence, in new parents who are raising strong and healthy families, and in so many other moments of joy. You can help carry out our mission of hope and healing by giving a gift and showing love to the Iowa families we serve. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for the love you share and create through LSI. Happy Valentine's Day!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and [Facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa).

"I Feel Like a Parent Now."

When Harmony learned she was pregnant for the first time, she was excited, but apprehensive. She didn't know what to expect when raising her first child.

Harmony's mother, Lois, helped her enroll in LSI's Early Childhood Services, which provide parenting education and resources to families of young children across Iowa. While she was pregnant, Harmony participated in prenatal programming, which helped her maintain a healthy pregnancy and ensure she had everything she needed when her baby was born.

When her daughter, Aya, arrived in October of 2018, Harmony and Lois began participating in LSI's Parent Education Program, where they now attend regular classes and connect with other families in their community.

And at home, they receive weekly visits from their LSI Parent Educator, Amy. Each week, Amy brings resources for Harmony and age-appropriate toys for Aya. They work together to monitor Aya's development, and Amy is teaching the family what to expect as Aya begins hitting her developmental milestones.

"LSI helps you learn how to raise your baby and how to learn about being a parent," Harmony says. "Before, I felt like I was trying to swim, but I was drowning. I feel like a parent now."

St. Stephen's January Events

Three Kings Day Celebration (Jan 5)

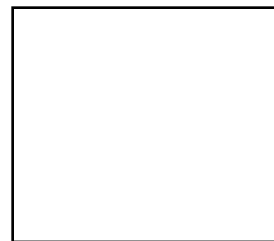


The Youth Group Did an Escape Room! (Jan 22)



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, ELCA
610 31st St. SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-3021

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Staff Directory

Pastor
Office Administrator
Music Director
Piano Accompanist
Premises Keeper
Council President
Communication Coordinator

Rev. Dr. Ritva Williams
Sherry Mercil
David Haas
Leslie Hyland
Debbie Polk
DeeAnn Hebrink
David Zorn

pastorritva@gmail.com
office@ssluth.com
music@ssluth.com
lesliehyland@gmail.com
(319) 329-7655
dhebrink@yahoo.com
sslcommcoord@gmail.com

Sunday Morning Schedule

8:00am First Worship Service
9:00am Coffee & Fellowship
9:15am Learning Hour
10:30am Second Worship Service

Wednesday Evening Schedule

6:30pm Worship



**St. Stephen's
Lutheran Church, ELCA**
To Know, Live, and Share Christ.
ssluth.com • 319-364-2637

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church (ELCA) is a **Reconciling in Christ** congregation that welcomes diversity, which enriches, nurtures, and challenges our life and ministry.

***Come and join us as
we know, live, and
share Christ
together in love.***

