



Steppingstone Newsletter



June, 2023

Highlights



Pastor Jim's Final Wednesday

May 31 (Farewell Picnic: 5:00pm, Service: 6:00pm)



GAP Summer & Community BBQ's

Each Wednesday (BBQ: 5:15pm, Service: 6:00pm)



Graduate Recognition Wednesday

June 7 (Reception: 5:15pm, Service: 6:00pm)



Retiree's Breakfast

Thurs., June 8 (9:00-10:00am) at Maplewood Perkins



Fools for Christ Play "Joseph"

Details on page 8



Christian Singles Lunch Bunch

June 27 (Last Tuesday of each month 11:30am)

CHURCH MATTERS

A Stewardship Message About Money

“Where does my money go?” is a question all of us have asked ourselves at one time or another. Sometimes it can be a literal question, and sometimes just a figurative one. If we worry about it and our income is limited, we have to make smart decisions what we do with the money we have and where it goes.

We have three basic choices for our money: we can spend it, save it, or give it away. Our ability to give and save is made possible by our willingness to say “no” to over-spending, which is hard in a society that encourages lifestyles based on taking spendy vacations and driving new cars and wearing trendy clothes. The concept of “self-limitation” can be hard to live with. It is based too much on the premise of what we need, rather than what we want or can afford.

When our income rises and we don’t raise our lifestyle to reflect our increased buying power, we accept self-limitation, which then frees up more money for giving and saving.

What lifestyle does the Bible suggest? Is God happy if we gather an abundance of new things? Living comfortably is not a sin. Nor is being rich. God doesn’t condemn being rich, but speaks against the self-centered attitude wealth can cause. Living in opulence without regard for others doesn’t please the Lord. However, if you love the Lord and serve him and others with your money and time you are free to live in comfort. Your lifestyle should reflect your relationship with Jesus.

The Bible contains countless messages about giving but none are as packed so neatly together as in Mathew 6, 24-34, starting with *you cannot serve two masters: God and money*. A couple of these verses speak to the choice to spend or give, like the 33rd verse where Jesus admits that God knows we must spend to feed and clothe ourselves, but that *he will give them—meaning food and clothes—to you if you give Him first place in your life and live as he wants you to*.

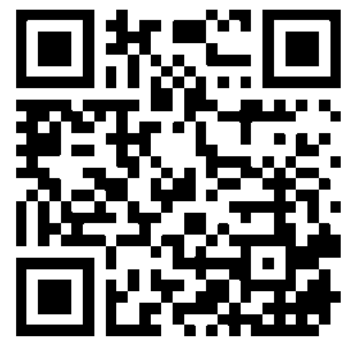
There it is. God’s suggestion about lifestyle, to give first, spend later.

A stewardship prayer: *Dear heavenly father, I pray you will enable me to be faithful with all my blessings, especially in the attitude toward and in the management of my money. Help me always to be thankful for what I have. I thank you for your constant love and presence in my life. Through Christ I ask these things. Amen.*

How To Give

We give to see a change in the world. Because of our generous gifts, we can fulfill our mission and vision. Thanks to everyone for being good stewards of St. Stephen ministries.

There are numerous ways for you to give, from mailing or dropping your gift off at the church, to regular and automatic gifts through Simply Giving (contact Brad Wilm at ruthabradj@gmail.com to set it up.) You can give online at <http://www.ststephenwbl.org/impact/giving.cfm>. Or you can check with your online banker to set up electronic giving. Finally, you can scan our QR code or the **Donate** button to be directed to the church’s donation page.



CHURCH MATTERS

Welcome Interim Pastor - Rev. Sharon Kelly!

(Brief biography of the Reverend Sharon F. Kelly, MDiv. PhD)

Born in Baltimore, Maryland to Betty Ruth Williams Kelly and John Anderson Kelly. Lived with trips to rural South Carolina visiting my mother's extended family. Currently, my mother, siblings, with their spouses and 2 nephews and one niece all live in the city and surrounding communities with extended family related to my deceased father. We attended a Lutheran congregation across from our home now consolidated with another Lutheran congregation.



Earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Baltimore, Maryland. Graduated from the oldest Lutheran seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Now United Lutheran Seminary (consolidated with the Lutheran seminary in Philadelphia). I received settled congregational calls in Kansas City, Missouri and Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Thomas and I moved to Minnesota in 1999 because Luther Seminary extended a call to me to support students in congregational ministry. While at Luther Seminary I started a doctoral degree in the educational philosophies of work, community, and family at the University of Minnesota. While completing this doctoral degree, I received an invitation from the now retired Bishop Rogness to begin ministry as an interim pastor in Lauderdale, MN where I now reside.

Having completed 8 interim ministry calls in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maryland, and Pennsylvania and a term as a chaplain in specialty care, I can affirm that God in Christ Jesus has the Spirit on the loose with calling and guiding congregations in transition. As an experienced interim pastor, the witness I have received is that the Christian church within society is blessed with the baptized scattered in many locations supported by the Spirit of Christ Jesus pleading for our leading and serving communally. Prayerfully, I am looking forward to interim pastoral ministry on Sunday, July 2 in accompanying the beloved St Stephen Lutheran congregation during this transition for calling the settled pastor!

Church Council

Upper left to right:

Patsy Olson, Marla Amborn, Kathy Stickler, Cheryl Skrypez, Phyllis Ballata, **Lower left**

to right: Betsy Clark, Scott Ziemann, Pastor Jim Woodruff, and Bethany Zenner.

Not pictured:

Denise Ashley, Ted Field, Pastor Juli Thompson, and Brad Wilm.



HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Pentecost Sunday (5/28)

The Christian holy day of Pentecost, which is celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles. We invite you to join us in celebrating the Spirit of God by wearing red, signifying the Spirit within on Sunday, May 28th.



Farewell Reception (5/28)

Pastor Jim's final Sunday worship service is on Sunday, May 28.

Following worship, we will have a reception with refreshments as we say our farewells.



Bookkeeper/Treasurer Needed

Patsy is retiring therefore we are seeking someone to fill this role.

Duties of the Bookkeeper:

processes bills, vouchers, assigns expenses to accounts, designated fund accounts entries, makes checks, payroll, and opens emails (usually bills). **Duties of the Treasurer:** prepares all financial and designated fund account reports, prepares and maintains budget, monitors church's cash flow, proofs ledger entries, prepares for audits, and reports to Church Council. If you are interested in volunteering as the Church Bookkeeper/Treasurer, please contact Patsy Olson at treasurer@ststephenwbl.org



Memorial Day (5/29)

The church office is closed on Monday, May 29 for Memorial Day (office hours are Monday thru Thursday (9:00am to 3:00pm) and Friday (9:00am - 12noon).



Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (5/30, 6/27)

Please feel free to join our group for lunch on the last Tuesday of each month (11:30am). To RSVP, please contact: Judee Bramscher (651-269-6122).



- ♦ **May 30** – we will gather at the Blacksmith Lounge and Broaster (17205 Forest Blvd N, Hugo, MN 55038). RSVP (required) by Sunday, May 28.
- ♦ **June 27** - we will be meeting at Quinny's Sports Pub and Grill (3140 Century Ave., No, Mahtomedi). RSVP (required) by Sun., June 25).

Summertime GAP Worship & Community BBQ's



Weather permitting, we will hold GAP (Grace & Praise) casual worship services outside beginning on Wednesday, May 31 (6:00-6:45pm) and continuing throughout summer. Join us and invite others to our Community BBQ's (5:15-6:00pm). Remember to bring a lawn chair or blanket!

Farewell Picnic (5/31)

Join us on Wednesday, May 31st on Pastor Jim's Last Day. We gather at 5pm for a Farewell Picnic (freewill offering), followed by our 6pm GAP worship service. If the weather is nice, we will be outside, so remember to bring your lawn chair!



HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Food Shelf Collection

Thank you for your food shelf donations on the first Wednesday or Sunday of the month. All donations go to the White Bear Area Food Shelf to be distributed to those who need assistance in the area.



Spring Block Party (6/4)

All are invited to attend the FREE Spring Block Party at Redeemer Lutheran Church (3770 Bellaire Ave.) on Sunday, June 4. 11:15am: Kinder Konzert w/Metro Brass Quintet, 12-2pm: Lunch, music w/DJ from Kidsdance, snow cones, bouncy houses, lawn games, and a visit from the WBL Fire and Police Departments.

Graduation Recognition Reception (6/7)

Join us on Wednesday, June 8 for a reception and BBQ at 5:15pm, followed by our Grace & Praise outdoor worship service at 6:00pm as celebrate graduates!



We Need Your Help with BBQ's

We are in need of volunteers to help with our Wednesday BBQ's in June, July, and August. Choose one or as many Wednesdays as you like. Please sign up in the kitchen or contact Tami in the church office (651-777-1107, office@ststephenwbl.org) to get onto the schedule. We especially need help on 6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28.

- ♦ **In advance:** buy brats and hamburgers (get reimbursed from church)
- ♦ **In advance:** bring in side-dish, chips, or dessert
- ♦ **4:00pm:** boil brats, thaw burgers, and mix lemonade
- ♦ **4:45pm:** grilling brats and hamburgers
- ♦ **5:00pm:** set out side-dishes, chips, condiments, desserts, plates, cups, eating utensils, etc.
- ♦ **After BBQ:** clean-up (mealtime is at 5:15-6:00pm)



Learning to Operate the Soundboard System

As we try to disperse the knowledge that Pastor Jim stores in his memory, we are looking for people who would like to learn how to operate the soundboard system in the sanctuary. If we get a couple people interested, we will contact the company who installed it and ask for a trainer. We wish to have several folks learn how to use it and fill-in for the regulars when/if needed. Please contact Tami in the church office at office@ststephenwbl.org if you are interested.

Fellowship Group

Gather with us in the narthex on Wednesdays (10:30am) to share news, lift each other up with encouragement, and simply just visit! This is an informal group. Walk-ins are welcome. Contact Judee Bramscher (651-269-6122) if you have questions.



Retiree's Breakfast (6/8)

Attention all retirees! You are invited to join other retirees from church for breakfast (Thurs/9:00-10:00am) at Perkins in Maplewood on County Road D.



God's Word

God's Word Bible discussion group, led by Phyllis Ballata meets in the Library on Thursdays (1:00-2:00pm). We continue throughout the summer.



HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES



Fools for Christ Performances of "Joseph"

Purchase tickets online at foolsdrama.com/tickets for "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat". Cost: \$18-adults and \$12-children (12 or under). Performances are in June at 7:00pm on Thurs-6/18 and Fri-6/16. Then at 2:00pm on Sat-6/17 and Sun-6/18. Location: Liberty Classical Academy, 3878 Highland Ave, White Bear Lake. Doors open 30 minutes prior to show-time.

Christ in Our Home

Devotional Booklets for April/May/June are available in the narthex in the info racks. Please feel free to take as many as you like and offer them to others who may find comfort in reading them.



Readers Needed

We are in need of Lectors to read the scripture lessons during Sunday services. No experience necessary; we welcome any age. Individuals or pairs are encouraged to volunteer. Please choose any Sunday, sign up in the narthex

on the table near the Welcoming Jesus woodcarving, and fill out a reminder card for yourself. Thank you for being a ministry disciple!

2023 Flower Sponsors

If you wish to sponsor flowers in 2023, contact Tami in the church office (651-777-1107 or office@ststephenwbl.org) to let us know the date and dedication (in memory, celebration, or in honor, etc.). The cost is \$20 per bouquet. Simply mail in (1965 East County Road E, White Bear Lake, MN 55110) or drop off your payment at least one week before the date you are sponsoring.



Crafts Needed for Holly Boutique

Please remember the Holly Boutique will be November 11th and it's not too early to start making items to be sold. We are accepting hand-made crafts and hope you would consider donating for our sale.



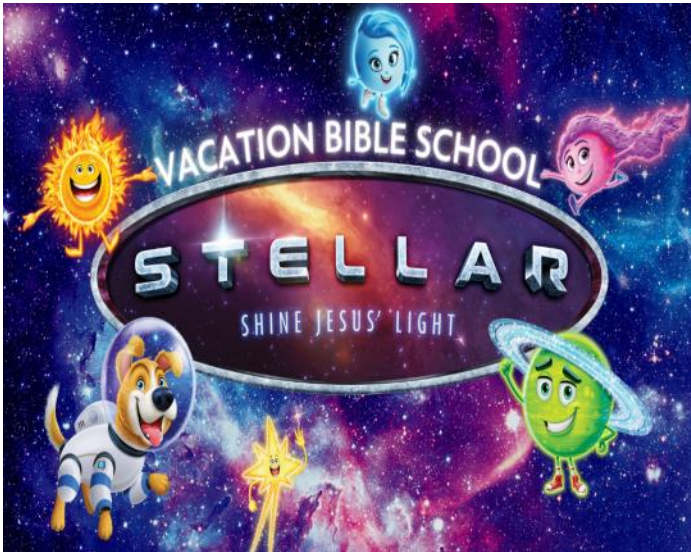
Volunteer Helpers for St. Stephen Funerals

Please consider volunteering to help with funeral luncheons at St. Stephen Church. Positions to choose from include food prep and set-up from 9:00-11:30am. Serving food and clean up 11:30am-2:00pm. Making a pan of bars and/or cookies to serve at funeral lunch. Please contact Judy Ruth at 651-426-0869 to volunteer or for additional information.



Sunday, June 18

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES



Vacation Bible School

Register now for FREE Vacation Bible School (VBS). VBS is open to children who turned three by September 1, 2022 and are "potty trained" thru children who completed the 6th grade this school year. Invite your friends and neighbors for our biggest summer event – coming August 7-11, 2023 (9am-12noon). Registration forms are located in the church narthex or can be downloaded from website at www.StStephenWBL.org

Register NOW for Camp WAPO

If you're planning on attending camp this summer at Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp (WAPO), NOW is the time to register your child/youth for camp - online at www.lakewapo.org. WAPO is filling up fast. St. Stephen has Seeds Summer Camp (completed Grades 1 – 3) June 16 – 18 and WAPO Youth Camp (completed Grades 4 – 8) June 18 – 23. If these dates don't work for you or the week fills up other dates can be attended.

St. Stephen has camperships available; \$100.00 for Seeds weekend camp and \$225.00 for Youth week long camp. Any questions, concerns, need help or assistance see or talk to Paul Schultz (651-238-0610). Sign-up NOW!



Summer Fun for Kids

For children in grades 1 through 5 during the 2022/2023 school year. All activities will occur on Thursdays (10am-2pm) with pick-up and drop-off at Redeemer Lutheran Church. Your child should bring a lunch (unless noted**) and a water bottle each day they are registered. We ask that you apply sunblock to your child before they are dropped off. Unless we are told not to, we will also use a spray sunblock on your child's arms, legs, and neck and a lotion sunblock on their face throughout the day as needed. Payment and registration is due one week prior to each event, however these may fill up fast so register as far in advance as possible to guarantee a spot for your child. Registration forms are located online at www.ststephenwbl.org or on the Welcome Desk in the narthex. Please return this form to Melissa Whitman or to St. Stephen church office. We never want to exclude a child from our programs due to the inability to pay. If you are in need of a scholarship for your child to participate, please let us know.

- ♦ **June 22** – Como Park Zoo and Miniature Golf (\$15)
- ♦ **June 29** – Snake Discovery Center and Take-Home-Bio-Terrarium (\$20)
- ♦ **July 6** – Fawn-Doe-Rosa Animal Park (\$15)
- ♦ **July 27** – Franconia Sculpture Park and Drive-inn Restaurant** (\$15)
- ♦ **August 3** – Tamarack Nature Center and Cup and Cone** (\$5)
- ♦ **August 24** – Stillwater Trolley, Pioneer Park, Leo's Malt Shop** (\$20)

Family Fun Night (6/25)

All are invited to attend Family Fun Night at Redeemer Lutheran Church (3770 Bellaire Ave.) on Sunday, June 25. Event: Kickball Tournament and BBQ beginning at 4:00pm.

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Location:

Liberty Classical Academy
3878 Highland Ave
White Bear Lake
(Doors open 30 minutes prior to show-time.)



JOSEPH and the Amazing

Technicolor Dreamcoat

Lyrics by Tim Rice, Music
by Andrew Lloyd Weber

TICKETS

On sale now!

foolsdrama.com/tickets

Adults: \$18

Children: \$12

(12 or under)

One Weekend Only!

Thursday, June 15: 7 PM

Friday, June 16: 7 PM

Saturday, June 17: 2 PM

Sunday, June 18: 2 PM



Fools For Christ

[www.foolsdrama.com/tickets](https://foolsdrama.com/tickets)

Ordinary people spreading an extraordinary message.

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of The Really Useful Group. www.concordtheatricals.com

PRAYERS

Help Keep Us Informed

Please help keep us informed of any concerns that you would like our congregation to be praying about, including those serving in the military and any deaths among family members, by contacting the church office at 651-777-1107 or office@StStephenWBL.org



APPRECIATION

- ♦ **Yard Waste...** Thank you to Bill Kneip for hauling away old Christmas trees , branches, and dried up greenery that accumulated over the winter. We appreciate your help!
- ♦ **Spring Cleanup Day...** A large group showed up on May 6th to help clean up the church, parking lot, and yard. We are grateful for your participation this year; the place looks great! Thank you to all those who pitched in!
- ♦ **Youth Hospitality...** Thank you to our youth for providing hospitality on Mother's Day.
- ♦ **Quilts...** Thank you to all the quilters for making many beautiful quilts, and those who support this ministry by purchasing quilts, donating fabric and sheets, etc. This enables us to continue making quilts for shelters, including Solid Ground, Tubman, and other various charities.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

June Birthdays

Please let the church office know if your birthday is not listed so that we may correct the database.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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The Steppingstone Newsletter...

Is distributed monthly. If you have any items for the **July** issue, please send them to office@ststephenwbl.org by Sat., June 10th. Newsletters are also available in the narthex information racks or via email. Please let us know if you have a change of address so that we can update our mailing list.

Staff

Interim Pastor ▪ Sharon Kelly
ipk@ststephenwbl.org

Visitation Pastor ▪ Juli Thompson
visitation@ststephenwbl.org

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**Children & Families Ministry Director** ▪ Paul Schultz  
[childrenmin@ststephenwbl.org](mailto:childrenmin@ststephenwbl.org)

**Communications & Administrative Coordinator** ▪ Tami Heart  
[office@ststephenwbl.org](mailto:office@ststephenwbl.org)

**Custodian** ▪ Paul Swanson

**Digital Ministry Director** ▪ Zach VanDyke  
[zrv10000@gmail.com](mailto:zrv10000@gmail.com)

**GAP Worship Director** ▪ Justin Woodruff  
[jwoodruff@homfurniture.com](mailto:jwoodruff@homfurniture.com)

**Nursery Caregiver** ▪ Lisa Klingbeil

**Organist** ▪ Cindy Bittner  
[cynthia.k.bittner@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.k.bittner@gmail.com)

**Senior Choir Accompanist** ▪ Cindy Bittner  
[cynthia.k.bittner@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.k.bittner@gmail.com)

**Senior Choir Director** ▪ Kari Ballata  
[ballatahosmer@yahoo.com](mailto:ballatahosmer@yahoo.com)

**Wedding Coordinator** ▪ Missy Kneip  
[mothergoose2954@yahoo.com](mailto:mothergoose2954@yahoo.com)

**Youth & Families Ministry Director** ▪ Melissa Whitman  
[mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org](mailto:mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org)

### Council & Leadership

**President and Staff Relations**  
Marla Amborn—[MarlaAmborn@gmail.com](mailto:MarlaAmborn@gmail.com)

**Vice President, Finance & Stewardship**  
Ted Field—[FieldJackson@msn.com](mailto:FieldJackson@msn.com)

**Previous President and Church Council Secretary**  
Betsy Clark—[eaclark001@comcast.net](mailto:eaclark001@comcast.net)

**Adult Learning**  
Scott Ziemann—[scott.ziemann@century.edu](mailto:scott.ziemann@century.edu)

**Children, Youth, & Families**  
Bethany Zenner—[bethanyzenner@hotmail.com](mailto:bethanyzenner@hotmail.com)

**Congregational & Community Care**  
Phyllis Ballata—[pballata@msn.com](mailto:pballata@msn.com)

**Evangelism**—OPEN

**Fellowship**  
Cheryl Skrypez—[cskrypez@gmail.com](mailto:cskrypez@gmail.com)

**Financial Secretary**  
Brad Wilm—[RuthaBradj@gmail.com](mailto:RuthaBradj@gmail.com)

**Mission and Benevolence**  
Pastor Jim Woodruff—  
[jamesawoodruff@ststephenwbl.org](mailto:jamesawoodruff@ststephenwbl.org)

**Property**  
Kathy Stickler—[kstickler23@gmail.com](mailto:kstickler23@gmail.com)

**Treasurer**  
Patsy Olson—[joellyo@netscape.net](mailto:joellyo@netscape.net)

**Worship & Music**  
Denise Ashley—[deniseashley1@yahoo.com](mailto:deniseashley1@yahoo.com)

### Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9am-3pm; Friday 9am-Noon

St Stephen Lutheran Church  
1965 East County Rd E  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

# What's Happening

## Sundays

Blended Worship Service  
**9:30am IN-PERSON**  
(also live-streamed and online)

## Wednesdays

Grace & Praise Casual Worship  
**6:00pm IN-PERSON**  
(Community BBQ at 5:15pm, \$5/pp)

## Calendar Highlights

- 5/28 Pentecost-wear red/Pastor Jim's **FINAL** Sunday service
- 5/28 Farewell Reception (10:15am)
- 5/29 Memorial Day (Church office **CLOSED**)
- 5/30 Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (Tues/11:30am)
- 5/31 Farewell Picnic (Wed/5:00-6:00pm)
- 5/31 Pastor Jim's **FINAL** Wednesday
- 5/31 Pastor Jim's **FINAL** GAP service (Wed/6:00pm)
- 5/31 Summer Community BBQ **BEGINS** (Wed/5:15pm)
- 5/31 Summer GAP Worship **BEGINS** (Wed/6:00pm)
- 6/1 Worship & Music Meeting (Online, Thurs/7:00-8:00pm)
- 6/4 Food Shelf Collection (Sun)
- 6/4 Spring Block Party at Redeemer (Sun/11:15am-2:00pm)
- 6/7 Food Shelf Collection (Wed)
- 6/7 Graduate Recognition Reception (Wed/5:15pm)
- 6/8 Retiree's Breakfast (Thurs/9:00-10:00am)
- 6/10 Content Deadline for July Steppingstone (Sat)
- 6/12 Church Council Meeting (Mon/7:00-9:00pm)
- 6/15 Play "Joseph" Fools for Christ at LCA (Thurs/7:00pm)
- 6/16 Play "Joseph" Fools for Christ at LCA (Fri/7:00pm)
- 6/17 Play "Joseph" Fools for Christ at LCA (Sat/2:00pm)
- 6/18 Play "Joseph" Fools for Christ at LCA (Sun/2:00pm)
- 6/18 HAPPY FATHERS DAY!
- 6/22 July Steppingstone Distribution Day (Thurs/9:15am)
- 6/22 Summer Fun for Kids at Redeemer (Thurs/10:00am-2:00pm)
- 6/25 Family Fun Night at Redeemer (Sun/4:00pm)
- 6/27 Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (Tues/11:30am)
- 6/29 Summer Fun for Kids at Redeemer (Thurs/10:00am-2:00pm)