



Steppingstone Newsletter



September, 2025

September 7

Service Project

ELCA God's work. Our hands.

Join us on September 7 (the Sunday before Rally Day)
to bag lunches for Union Gospel Mission (10:45am-12:30!)
(food paid for by a Thrivent Action Team grant)

September 14

Rally Sunday



Community & PICNIC

9:30-10:30
10:45-12:30

Worship Service (*INDOORS THIS YEAR*)
Community Picnic & Games



At St. Stephen Sept. thru Nov.
At Redeemer Dec. thru May

* Kids In Christ's Kingdom
* Faith Quest

Register Children & Youth for Faith Education Sundays...

♦ Sunday School (weekly) (9:45-10:30am) Preschool thru Grade 5

Wednesdays...

♦ Frolic Nursery (6:00-6:50pm) Age 3 (by 9/1) thru K
♦ *KICKin' It! (NOT on 5th Wed) (5:00-5:45pm) Grades 1 thru 3
♦ *Pre-Confirmation (NOT on 5th Wed) (5:00-5:45pm) Grades 4 thru 6
♦ Confirmation (1st, 3rd, 5th) (7:00-8:30pm) Grades 7 thru 9
♦ Youth Group (2nd & 4th) (7:00-8:00pm) Grades 7 thru 12

CHURCH MATTERS

ELCA Bishop-Elect: The Rev. Yehiel Curry

The Rev. Yehiel Curry (pictured right) has been elected to a six-year term as presiding bishop of the ELCA. The election took place July 30 during the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix, Ariz. Curry, who was elected on the fifth ballot, will be the ELCA's first Black presiding bishop.



Church Council Highlights

- ♦ Approved WIFI Proposal to significantly improve indoor and outdoor WIFI experience
- ♦ Discussed potential proposal of shared ministry of our GAP service
- ♦ Debriefed on Pets & People event
- ♦ Outside of our meeting, approved purchase of new AED device as ours was outdated and needed to be replaced

New Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

We have a new AED located in the mounted case just outside the sanctuary doors. This is a lightweight, portable device that delivers an electric shock through the chest to the heart when it detects an abnormal rhythm and changes the rhythm back to normal. The AED is in its own case that when opened, automatically begins giving voice instructions and visual prompts.

Sharps Containers Located in Restrooms

Sharps containers are now located in our restrooms. They are specifically designed to safely collect and dispose of medical needles, syringes, and other sharp objects.

Lost & Found

We have a place for lost and found items near the coat rack by the Welcome Desk. Contact the office if you are missing any jewelry or smaller items.

St. Stephen T-shirts For Sale

Medium, Large, and X-large for sale for \$14. Located in the church office. Please make checks payable to St. Stephen and drop your payment into the office door mail slot using the envelope provided with the t-shirts.



Pastor Juli's Birthday

We wished Pastor Juli a Happy Birthday during a recent staff meeting since she'll be in Tanzania on her actual birthday (8/19).

Designated Pet Area

Our outdoor Wednesday GAP worship services during the warmer months is pet-friendly, but please keep pets leashed!



HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES



Drop-off Deadline for Church Garage Sale Items (8/31)

We are now accepting items (NO clothing or large furniture) for our indoor church garage sale, happening on Saturday, September 20 (10am-1pm). Sue Lemon is leading this event as a fundraiser for upcoming children's events. She is looking for volunteers to help set up a couple days before the garage sale and on the day of. She can be contacted at 651-429-5861. **The deadline for dropping of your donations is Sunday, August 31st.**

Labor Day Sunday (8/31)

Join us after worship on Sunday, August 31 for Root Beer Floats!



Church Office Closed (9/1)

On Monday, September 1, the church office will be closed in observance of the Labor Day holiday. Regular office hours are Monday-Thursday (9am-3pm) and Friday (9am-12noon).

Food Collection (9/3 & 9/7)

Thank you for your food shelf donations on the first Wednesday or Sunday of the month. Donations go to the White Bear Area Food Shelf for distribution to those needing assistance in the area.



Fellowship Group

All are invited to gather (10:30am) in the narthex on Wednesdays 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) with any questions.

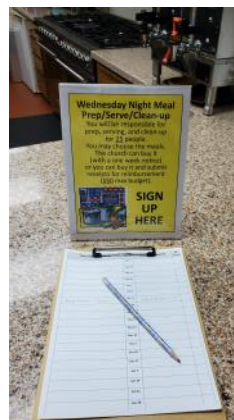


Community Meals & GAP Worship Services

Join us and invite others on Wednesdays for a Community Meal (5:15pm) and GAP (Grace & Praise) Worship Service (6:00pm). We will be monitoring the weather conditions to determine if GAP is held indoors or outdoors throughout September. Pets are welcome when we gather outside (look for sign marking pet-friendly area). Remember to bring a lawn chair or blanket!

Cooks Needed for Wednesday Meals

We are in need of volunteers to prepare, cook, and serve (FOR 25 PEOPLE) Wednesday evening community meals. Get reimbursed for up to \$50. Mealtime is 5:15-6:00pm before our Grace & Praise (GAP) Worship Service. Choose one or as many Wednesdays as you like. Sign



up in the kitchen or contact the church office at 651-777-1107 or office@ststephenwbl.org to get onto the schedule.

Crafts Needed for Holly Boutique

Please remember the Holly Boutique will be November 8th 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.



HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES



Sing, Sing, Sing - Join the Choir! Rehearsals Resume (9/3)

Choir members and anyone who may wish to join the choir are invited back to the church on Wednesdays (7:00-8:00pm) for practice. Rehearsals begin again on Wed., Sept. 3rd! If you wish to participate or have any questions, contact Kari at ballatahosmer@gmail.com

God's Word Bible Discussion Group

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



God's Work Our Hands (9/7)

Immediately following worship, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for our annual ELCA God's Work Our Hands service project. We will bag

"God's work. Our hands."



lunches for the Union Gospel Mission. We are grateful for a Thrivent Action Team grant that paid for the food we are packaging.

Thank you to Jackie Colaizy and Kathy Anderson for organizing this event. Please sign up in the narthex at the Welcome Desk if you plan on participating!

Retiree's Breakfast (9/11)

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



Preparing for Rally Day

Rally Day will be on Sunday, September 14th and held **INSIDE** this year. Please sign up in the narthex to help with set-up, food prep, cooking, baking, family games, tear-down, clean-up, and **INVITE OTHERS** (family, friends, and neighbors) to join us on this fun day!



9/14 Community PICNIC



Come and celebrate with us! We will gather **INSIDE** this year. Worship (9:30), a community picnic (10:45-12:30), and Christian Faith Education registration is open for children!

A new church year begins on Rally Sunday, Sept. 14th!

Back-to-School Kick-Off (9/17)

Gather on the South Lawn at Redeemer Lutheran Church for a back-to-school kick-off with a back-pack blessing on Wednesday, September 17 (5:00pm).

Faith Education Resumes

Registration is now OPEN for Faith Ed. Registration forms will be available in the narthex. This year, Faith Education is held at St. Stephen September through November and at Redeemer December through May. For more information, see the newsletter cover for further details or contact Melissa at mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org



HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Church Garage Sale – Helpers Needed (9/20)

Support the children of our community by volunteering at our first indoor church garage sale on Saturday, September 20 (10am-1pm). Sue Lemon is leading this event as a fundraiser for upcoming children's events. She is looking for volunteers to help set up a couple days before the garage sale and on the day of. She can be contacted at 651-429-5861.



Wine & Weeding

We are in need of folks (men are welcome too) to help weed the gardens around the church.

Please contact Karen

Smith if you are interested in getting together with others to weed and maybe

have a little wine too! 612-385-5704 or

Karen.sawyer.smith@gmail.com



Worship Disciples & Sponsors:

SPONSOR ALTAR FLOWERS

If you wish to sponsor flowers, please sign up in the narthex or contact Tami in the church office at office@ststephenwbl.org or 651-777-1107 and let us know the date (any Sunday) and your 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.

BE A WORSHIP DISCIPLE: LECTOR

We are in need of Lectors to read the scripture lessons during Sunday services. We welcome any age. No experience necessary. Individuals or pairs are encouraged to volunteer. Please choose any Sunday, sign up in the narthex, and fill out a reminder card for yourself.

BE A GREETER ON SUNDAY

Sign up in the narthex or let Judee Bramscher know if you would like to be a greeter on any Sunday. Simply be here around 9:00am to say "hello" to folks entering the church.

SNACK SPONSOR SIGN-UP

If you wish to sponsor snacks for Sunday, please sign up in the narthex. If you wish to bring your own snacks (ex: cookies, bars, fruit, donuts, muffins, etc.), indicate that on the sign-up sheet by checking the yellow box and fill out a small reminder for yourself. If you wish for the church to provide snacks, please use a snack envelope. The cost is \$20. Fill out an envelope with your name, let us know what your dedication is, the date you wish to sponsor, and drop envelope with your \$20 into the office door mail slot.



Good News On Tap Redux (9/29)

The first Good News On Tap with Redeemer was so much fun we're doing it again. When? Monday, September 29th, from 7 to 9 pm at the Dugout Bar in

Willernie. What is it? Two hours of fellowship over liquid refreshment. The event is structured by small-group discussions to get to know each other sharing faith and other personal stories, but most of the time we're in conversation getting to know each other better, just like typical bar talk. The first **Good News** last month drew an audience of approximately 20 with equal numbers from both churches. Hope to see you there.

Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (9/30)

Please feel free to join our group for lunch on the last Tuesday of each month (11:30am). RSVP (required) on Sunday before event by contacting Judee Bramscher at 651-269-6122. On September 30, we will meet at Quinny's Sports Pub & Grill (3140 Century Ave N). RSVP by 9/28.



You cannot do a kindness too soon,
for you never know how soon
it will be too late.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

34th Annual Music Festival and Auction

Saturday, October 11, 2025
(11:00am—2:30pm)

Get ready for our 34th annual Music Festival and Auction.
All proceeds raised by this event will be used to reduce
St. Stephen's budget deficit.

**Auction Donations
&
Volunteers Needed!**



Schedule of Events:

Live Music (11:00am-12:45pm)
Food for Sale (11:00am-2:30pm)
Silent Auction (11:00am-1:30pm)
Live Auction Begins (1:00pm)

Ideas for Auction Donations:

- ◆ Sporting event tickets
- ◆ Weekend (or longer) retreat at your cabin
- ◆ New or gently used items (NO clothing)
- ◆ Your services to someone in need or to promote your business (examples: website creation, computer work, auto work, raking leaves, washing windows, snow plowing, lawn mowing, yard work, electrical work, carpentry, painting, house cleaning, plumbing, etc.)
- ◆ Home-made items (such as arts & crafts items, edible items, you name it!)
- ◆ Donate your hobby time to create something with that lucky winner (make jelly, sew, quilt, photography, bake, give singing or instrument lessons, etc.)
- ◆ Provide themed dinner in your home for a group of lucky winners
- ◆ Make soup or dessert every month for 6 or 12 months (you pick the number of months)
- ◆ Themed Gift Baskets

Donation Instructions:

- ◆ Have some extra baskets? Please donate them to be used for our gift baskets.
- ◆ Please leave items in the church office and mark "Auction" on them.
- ◆ **You may begin dropping off items AT ANY TIME STARTING NOW!**
- ◆ Start thinking now about that "special" item or service you would like to donate.
- ◆ FIRM deadline for dropping off items: **Sunday, October 5.**

Volunteer Needs:

- ◆ Solicit items or services from local businesses (please talk with Betsy Clark)
- ◆ Making desserts to sell day of event, set-up of tables and auction items, volunteer shifts the day of the event, clean-up, and more.
- ◆ If you have volunteered in the past to assist with the auction, you may be contacted in September.

**Please contact Betsy Clark at 612-554-3925 or at
eaclark001@comcast.net if you have any questions, and thank you!**

APPRECIATION

Thank you to...

- ◆ Melissa Whitman, chaperones, and youth for a meaningful trip to Tennessee July 19-27.
- ◆ Judee Bramscher for tending to the garden.
- ◆ Brad Wilm for setting up an Adult Forum with Marie Koehler giving her "End of Life Doula" presentation on July 20th.
- ◆ Ron Johnson for mowing the lawn throughout the summer.
- ◆ Cindy Scott for researching and obtaining a new AED (see page 2 for details) and sharps containers in restrooms.
- ◆ All the people who helped with Wednesday meals throughout the summer, including Marla Amborn, Kathy Anderson, Cheryl Skrypez, Diane Swanson, Matthew Tilahun, Melissa Whitman, and Deb Yusuf.
- ◆ Betsy & Brent Clark for bringing their talent into the sanctuary on Gospel Music Sunday on July 20th.
- ◆ John Strand for delivering donated items to the White Bear Area Food Shelf and to all who contribute to this cause.
- ◆ Everyone who helped with our annual Night to Unite event on August 5th!
- ◆ All who participated in our Pets & People Event in on June 29th! Despite the rain, we had a good turnout! *(Pictured below: Pastor James blessing Kris Vollmer's tarantula.)*



APPRECIATION

Relay for Life Success!

I want to thank everyone for supporting the Spirit of St Stephen and making our 30th year our best ever! The numbers were astounding - 8 team members, 5 volunteers, 16 sponsors, 29 donors all contributed to us raising \$8,115! We are the 4th highest team, and the team with the most sponsors. To date, the event raised \$158,000, with additional funds expected to come in this week. Contributions continued until the end of August. - **Viki Bosin**



PRAYERS

Pastoral Care

Due to her accompanying the Tanzania group, Pastor Juli Thompson will NOT be available for pastoral care now through September 10th. If you have a pastoral emergency while she is away, please contact the church office at 651-777-1107 or Pastor James Muske at 320-583-5796.



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

“Shared joy is double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow. “ — Swedish proverb

ANNOUNCEMENTS

September Birthdays



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

Welcome New Members

On Sunday, July 13th, we welcomed new members Nicole Robinson and her daughter, Hailee Jo Madrid, along with Angel Stafsholt into our church family!



Prayer Request (add or remove from the Prayer List)

ADD: This person is... ☐ Member ☐ Family ☐ Friend ☐ Self 

Your name _____

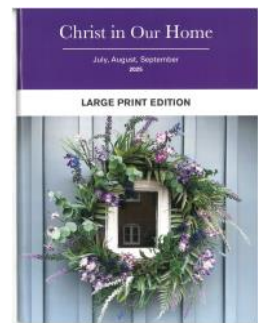
Reason for prayer _____

May we share this with the congregation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

REMOVE: _____

Update: _____

A Christian community bringing God's love to the world.



Prayer Request Cards

Prayer Request Cards are located in the sanctuary pews. Feel free to place your request in an offering plate/basket or drop into the church office door mail slot. Please keep us updated on those you have asked us to add to our prayer list.

Christ in Our Home

Devotional Booklets for July/Aug/Sept are available in info racks near both entrances. Please feel free to take as many as you like and offer them to others who may find comfort in reading them.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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The Steppingstone Newsletter...

Is distributed monthly. If you have any items for the **October** issue, please send them to office@ststephenwbl.org by Wed., Sept. 10. Newsletters are also available in information racks near both entrances or via email.

Please let us know if you have a change of address so that we can update our mailing list.

Staff

Council & Leadership

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

Worship Service 9:30am
(In person, live-streamed, and online)
Faith Ed: 9:45am

Wednesdays

Grace & Praise (GAP) 6:00pm
(Community Meal at 5:15pm, \$5/pp)
Faith Ed: 5:00pm/6:00pm/7:00pm

Calendar Highlights [Resuming](#) / [Weekly events](#) / *Not on 5th Wednesdays

- 9/1 Labor Day / Church Office CLOSED (Mon)
- 9/3 Food Shelf Collection (Wed)
- 9/3 Fellowship Group (Wed/10:30am) *also on 10, 17, 24*
- 9/3 Community Meal (Wed/5:15pm) *also on 10, 17, 24*
- 9/3 Summer GAP Worship (Wed/6:00pm) *also on 10, 17, 24*
- 9/3 Choir Rehearsal **RESUMES** (Wed/7:00-8:00pm) *also on 10, 17, 24*
- 9/4 Bible Discussion (Thurs/1:00pm) *also on 11, 18, 25*
- 9/4 Worship & Music Meeting (Thurs/6:00pm)
- 9/7 Sunday Worship (9:30am) *also on 14, 21, 28*
- 9/7 God's Work Our Hands Outreach Project (Sun/10:45am-12:30)
- 9/7 Food Shelf Collection (Sun)
- 9/8 Church Council Meeting (Mon/6:00-7:30pm)
- 9/10 Content Deadline for October Steppingstone (Wed)
- 9/11 Retiree's Breakfast (Thurs/9:00-10:00am)
- 9/14 Rally Sunday Worship Service (9:30am)
- 9/14 Rally Sunday Community Picnic (10:45am-12:30pm)
- 9/17 Back-to-School Kick-Off at Redeemer (Wed/5:00-6:30pm)
- 9/17 Confirmation **RESUMES** (Wed/7:00-8:30pm)
- 9/24 Frolic Nursery **OPEN** (Wed/6:00-6:50pm)
- 9/24 Pre-Confirmation **RESUMES** (*Wed/5:00-5:45pm)
- 9/24 KICK'in It! **BEGINS** (*Wed/5:00-5:45pm)
- 9/18 Garage Sale SET-UP (Thurs/9:00am-9:00pm) *and on 19*
- 9/20 Church Garage Sale (Sat/10:00am-1:00pm)
- 9/21 Sunday School **RESUMES** (9:45-10:30am) *also on 28*
- 9/24 Youth Group **RESUMES** (Wed/7:00-8:00pm)
- 9/29 Good News on Tap at Dugout Bar (Mon/7:00-9:00pm)
- 9/30 Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (Tues/11:30am)