



Steppingstone Newsletter



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

November, 2025

Join Us and Invite Others!



All Saints Remembrance (11/2)

Sunday, Nov. 2 (details on page 4)
Service 9:30am / Reception 10:30am



Holly Boutique & Bake Sale (11/8)

Saturday, Nov. 8 (details on page 6)
10:00am - 1:00pm



Stewardship Calling (11/9 & 11/12)

Sunday, Nov. 9 and Wednesday, Nov. 12
(details on page 4)



Speaker on Bouncing Back (11/13)

Thursday, Nov. 13 (details on page 5)
Coffee Plus 9:30am / Program 10:00am



A Service of Thanksgiving (11/26)

Wednesday, Nov. 26 (details on page 5)
Combined Choirs Singing at Redeemer / 7:00pm



Thanksgiving Meal (11/27)

Thursday, Nov. 27 (details on page 6)
For those with no family in town / 1:00pm

CHURCH MATTERS

Church Council Highlights

At its regular monthly meeting on October 13th, the church council addressed the following items:

- Council approved the Health Insurance recommendation made by the Staff Relations committee. A recommendation was needed due to changes from the 2025 options. The approved option is the closest to the plan we had in 2025 with a net increase of 10% due to insurance rates going up, this amounts to about a \$3000 increase for 2026.
- The Technology Committee has purchased most of the wifi equipment for our building-wide wifi improvement project. Savings was gleaned through a local discount retailer and our tax exemption. Additionally, the overhead projector needs maintenance. Further discussions are needed to determine how we should move forward.
- Shared ministry with Redeemer continues to be worked on. Council has asked for the following: 1) Youth is expected to attend worship, 2) Accurate attendance records need to be kept (we would like to assign an usher), 3) Feedback and adjustments will need to be made, 4) Regular Youth ministry updates must be presented to us
- Sunday School options were discussed. We would like to have Children's ministry within the sanctuary and chapel possibly starting January 2026. Council also felt we should bring back the Children's sermon. We will start slow, be flexible and build based upon how things go.
- Tami Heart, our Communication & Administrative Coordinator, has announced her retirement which will be sometime in 2026. Creative and thoughtful considerations are being made on how we should fill her position.
- The ELCA has made amendments to their constitution, we are in the process of reviewing ours and making minor changes to ensure they do not conflict. We will need to review the revised constitution, and the congregation will need to approve it at our annual meeting in January 2026.
- The council terms for Kathy Stickler, Ted Field and Scott Ziemann are up which gives us three openings. Kathy will provide this information to the Nominating Committee.
- We have had a significant number of events over the last few months. It was decided that the Music Festival and Auction has run its course and will no longer be offered.
- Council is excited about a new event we are participating in this year that typically brings in 3000 adults and children to the Armory in Downtown White Bear Lake. It is called the Festival of Trees. Kathy will involve the congregation in preparing ornaments, decorating our tree and preparing a table with all our information. All who attend the event vote on the best decorated tree; votes are tallied by the League of Women Voters.

Both Pastors Attended Bishop's Theological Conference

Pastor James and Pastor Juli recently attended the Bishop's Theological conference at Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria with about 80 rostered ministers in attendance for learning and reflection, worship and renewal while emboldening relationships with ministry colleagues and synod staff. Visit <https://spas-elca.org/> for pictures and information about upcoming events.

Church Office Closed (11/27 & 11/28)

On Thursday, November Nov. 27 (Thanksgiving Day) and on Friday, Nov. 28, the office will be closed. Regular office hours are Monday-Thursday (9:00am-3:00pm) and Friday (9:00am-12noon). There will be a Thanksgiving meal on Thursday, Nov. 27 at 1:00pm - see page 6 for details.

Winter Weather... It's that time of year! Just a reminder that if WHITE BEAR LAKE school district cancels school or cancels evenings activities, St. Stephen will close for the day/evening as well. In the event that it snows and school is not canceled please use your own judgement on whether or not you should drive to church. It is rare that we have to close on a Sunday, but if we feel we need to cancel a Sunday service we will do everything we can to relay the message to our members, including posting a notice on our website.



CHURCH MATTERS

“Stewardship Calling” **Stewardship Campaign 2026**

Join us as we continue
bringing God’s LOVE to the world.



STEWARDSHIP
CALLING

As you partner with St. Stephen Lutheran Church, this is who/how you are helping...

- ♦ Raise money for children’s events through our **Indoor Garage Sale**
- ♦ Provide **Faith Education** and **Events** for children and youth throughout the year
- ♦ Sponsor **Adult Forum** presentations for the community throughout the year
- ♦ **Sleep In Heavenly Peace** to build and deliver beds to children in need
- ♦ Celebrate **Pets & People** with blessings, samples, services, crafts, and food
- ♦ Provide a gathering place for Al-Anon, KRMI, PCC, Scouts, and other groups
- ♦ Raise money for the **American Cancer Society** with Relay for Life
- ♦ Children in Tanzania by providing **secondary school scholarships**
- ♦ Support village **water and well systems** in Lukani, Tanzania
- ♦ **Lutheran Social Service** (including Homeless Teens and Greatest Needs)
- ♦ Support **Neighbors Helping Neighbors** Thrift Store (proceeds from clothing sales benefit local food shelves, shelters, and many others)
- ♦ Community togetherness with **Neighbors Night Out** (Night to Unite)
- ♦ Bring the nativity story to life with our **Living Nativity**
- ♦ **Saint Paul Area Synod** outreach programs
- ♦ Support the Galilee Lutheran and Roseville **Community Gardens**
- ♦ Partner with others to bring a safer option for kids to **Trunk-or-Treat**
- ♦ Support the **Tubman Alliance and the Tubman North Star Youth Outreach**
- ♦ Deliver lunches, socks, hats, and gloves to the **Union Gospel Mission**
- ♦ Provide (in partnership) local children with **FREE Vacation Bible School**
- ♦ Support the **White Bear Area Food Shelf** in many ways throughout the year
- ♦ **White Bear area schools** with school supplies, musical instruments, and more

Thank you for your partnership!

Please watch for the 2026 Stewardship Drive mailing and be sure to return your annual pledge card to the church. All pledges are greatly appreciated!

Stewardship Sunday (11/9) & Wednesday (11/12)

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

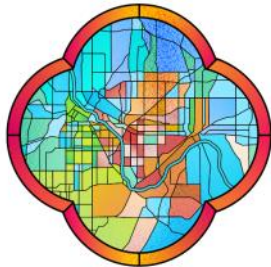


Daylight Saving Time Ends (11/2)

Remember to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday, Nov. 1 before you go to bed.

National Lutheran Choir – A Concert of Remembrance (11/2)

This season, the National Lutheran Choir invites you to celebrate our 40th anniversary on a journey through light and loss, wonder and welcome, growth and grace. From honoring the saints to celebrating new life, each concert becomes a homecoming—where voices rise, hearts remember, and belonging is made real in song. “Lead Me Home – A Concert of Remembrance” is on Sunday, Nov. 2 (4:00pm) at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Mahtomedi. For tickets and more information on this season's concert series, visit NLCA.com



All Saints Remembrance (11/2)

On Sunday, November 2, we gather in worship (9:30am) for a service of remembrance to honor members who have died in the past five years.

This year, we invite you to bring a photo of a loved one (framed or unframed) that you may place on the communion rail before the service begins. You are also welcome to light a candle in their memory. The photo and lit candle can be in memory of anybody. Please remember to take your photo with you after the service. Join us for refreshments immediately following worship.



Bible Study

Join Pastor James in the library (10:00am) on **Mondays** for a pastor-led Bible study.

St. Stephen Election Day Voting Site (11/4)

The Fellowship Hall is open on Election Day for voting on Tuesday, November 4 (7:00am-8:00pm)



Cookie Baking (11/5)

Please join us on Wednesday, November 5 (9:00-12noon) in the kitchen to bake cookies!! All the cookie dough and supplies will be provided. These cookies will be packaged and sold for the Holly Boutique & Bake Sale held on Nov. 8. No experience needed and all are welcome. Come for fun and coffee and fellowship!



Stewardship Sunday (11/9) & Wednesday (11/12)

Join us on Stewardship Sunday/Wednesday as we pledge our commitment of “Stewardship Calling”. Please read page 3 for more information about how your partnership with St. Stephen is helping bring God's love to the world!



2026 Church Calendar (Office Needs Updates By 11/23)

We are working on our 2026 church calendar.

Please submit any requested special events, gatherings, meetings, groups, etc. dates and times to



Tami at office@ststephenwbl.org before Saturday, November 23.

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Bounce Back – Navigating Change and Building Resilience (11/13)

Speaker Kelly Nygard, from Live 2 B Healthy, returns to St. Stephen to speak on a topic called “Bounce Back - Navigating Change and Building Resilience”. This powerful session is designed to help you face life’s uncertainties with strength and purpose. Through engaging stories and practical strategies, you’ll learn how to adapt, stay grounded, and grow through the challenges that test us most. Discover how resilience can turn obstacles into opportunities and empower you to move forward with confidence, no matter what life brings. Join us (invite others) on Thursday, Nov. 13 (9:30am – Coffee Plus, 10:00am – Program) in the Fellowship Hall for another engaging forum.



Monthly Hymn Sing (11/17)

Fleshpots of Egypt (Lutherland’s Most Acclaimed Bluegrass Band) leads this hymn tap/sing (6:30-8:30pm) on the THIRD Monday of every month at Dubliner Pub (2162 University Ave., St. Paul, 55114) at University and Vandalia. Get there early (6:00pm) to get a table. Beer and pizza available and/or bring your own snacks. More info at:



<https://www.facebook.com/share/PKH9NJufre7PSWsk/?mibextid=JRokGi>

Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (11/25)



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 Tuesday, Nov. 25, we will be gathering at the White Bear Lake VFW (4496 Lake Ave S). **RSVP by 11/23.**

Wednesday Programming On Break (11/26)

Faith Ed, GAP Worship, and the Community Meal are on BREAK.

Thanksgiving Service with Combined Choirs at Redeemer (11/26)

Join us for a very special Service of Thanksgiving featuring the combined choirs of Redeemer and St. Stephen Lutheran Churches on **Wednesday**, November 26 (7:00pm) at Redeemer (3770 Bellaire Ave.).

Please bring an item for our canned food drive.



Mom's Morning Out (11/15)

Attention moms! Do you need a morning to yourself? We have the answer for you. On Saturday, Nov. 15th, we are offering the wider



community FREE childcare (10:00am-1:00pm). The children will receive lunch and enjoy fun activities. Group size is limited. We can accommodate children 2 through 9 (no infants or children under 2). Pre-registration is necessary – please call 651-777-1107 to sign up.

Congregational Survey Results & Plans (11/16)

Join us on Sunday, Nov. 16 (10:45am) for an important meeting where we will discuss the actions we are planning on taking based on the tabulated results of the Congregational Survey we took several months ago.

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Holly Boutique & Bake Sale

Saturday, Nov. 8
(10:00am-1:00pm)



Crafters & Bakers...

We are in need of: homemade crafts, quilted or crocheted items, artwork, homemade soaps and lotions, woodcraft items, jam and jellies, lightly-used Christmas decorations, freshly baked breads, rolls, cookies, and sweets.

Proceeds to Benefit... The Tubman Alliance, White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf, Lutheran Social Services (for homeless teens), and projects at St. Stephen.

How to Donate... Leave craft items, beginning now, in the church office marked "Holly Boutique". Please fill out the Contribution Sheet, available in the office, to help us out when marking items.

Other Ways to Help...

- 1) BAKE desserts (pie, cake, bars, cookies) to sell the day of the event. Baked items may be dropped off up until the boutique begins. Wrap and seal items and indicate if nuts are used in your baking.
- 2) Join us on COOKIE BAKING DAY, Wed., **Nov. 5** (9:00am)
- 3) Help us SET-UP and pack cookies on Friday, **Nov. 7** (9:00am-12noon).
- 4) WORK during the boutique on Saturday, **Nov. 8** (9:30am-1:15pm).
- 5) Help with CLEAN-UP on Monday, **Nov. 10** (9:00am).
- 6) Come and shop, have lunch, enjoy the music, and INVITE OTHERS!

Crafts Needed

We are accepting hand-made crafts **NOW** and hope you consider donating for our sale!



Thanksgiving Meal (11/27)

On Thanksgiving, **Thursday**, Nov. 27, those who have no specific dinner plans and no family in town, are invited to a Thanksgiving meal (1:00pm) here at St. Stephen. Donations are appreciated to help cover costs. Thanks in advance to Melissa Whitman for organizing this gathering.

Living Nativity (12/13)

Our annual Living Nativity will be held on



Saturday, December 13th (4:30-7:30pm)! Please plan to participate. You can play a Nativity role, no experience is necessary. We need Mary, Joseph, angels, wisemen, and shepherds for 30 minute shifts. Invite your friends and family from the wider community to volunteer with you and/or attend. Come inside for coffee, hot apple cider, tasty treats, kid's crafts, live music and caroling. Bring a cellphone or camera and use our holiday vignette as a backdrop for a photo. If you are unable to volunteer, you can still participate by sponsoring an animal to help defray the cost. Please sign up when you see the Living Nativity display in the narthex or contact Tami in the office: 651-777-1107 or office@ststephenwbl.org

APPRECIATION

Good News On Tap... Thank you to Ted Field for organizing our second gathering of “Good News On Tap” in September. Thank you to all who attended, along with those from Redeemer. Folks enjoyed two hours of fellowship, small-group discussions, personal stories, and just getting to know each other better while also enjoying liquid refreshments.

Garage Sale... Thank you to all who donated items and helped prepare for our first Indoor Garage Sale. We had a pretty decent attendance and raised over \$1500 to help with free events for children—all coordinated by Sue Lemon!

Longevity Speaker... Thank you to Brad Wilm for setting up the first of an ongoing series of speakers. On Thursday, October 9, Kelly Nygard gave an interactive presentation on “The Science & Art of Longevity” that was well received by those who attended. She is returning to speak on a different topic (*see page 5 for details*).

Informal Women’s Golf League... Thank you to Judy Ruth for starting a new group: an informal Women’s Golf League. Look for this group to have more outings in the Spring of 2026.

Veterans & Families on Veterans Day (11/11)... Veterans Day ceremonies across the country take place on November 11 at 11:00am (a time that commemorates the ending of World War I). Although another holiday, Memorial Day, honors deceased veterans, Veterans Day honors ALL veterans with an emphasis on military personnel still living. Thank you veterans (and families) for your service to our country.

Caring for Rain Garden...

Thank you to Diane Swanson for working so diligently in caring for our rain garden!
(picture on next page).

Painting...

Thank you to all who painted the Library a nice clean white to brighten it up (next page).



APPRECIATION



Music Festival & Auction

The 34th annual Music Festival and Auction on Saturday October 11 was a great success. We were able to raise over \$4,000 (before expenses) for our church! The event included great music, a silent auction, and a live auction. Thanks go to all the people who donated, who set everything up, volunteered at the event, and who provided homemade desserts. A special thank you to Betsy Clark for organizing this event over the years!



PRAYERS

Jesus said “My Father’s House shall be a House of Prayer.”



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



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, drop into the church office door mail slot, or cut out and mail this one to the church. Please keep us updated on those you have asked us to add to our prayer list.

Christ in Our Home

Devotional Booklets for Oct/Nov/Dec 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.

"To the world you may be just one person, but to just one person, you may be the world." — David Wilkerson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

November Birthdays



YOU ARE INVITED TO EVENTS HELD ELSEWHERE!



Cultivating Good Soil Through Prayer Ministry In Your Congregation (11/15)

Please join others at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church (1669 Arcade St. N, St. Paul, MN 55106) on Saturday, Nov. 15 (9am-2pm) to reflect on why prayer matters, learn about different models of prayer ministries, and experience a variety of spiritual practices. The cost is \$25 and includes lunch. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: <https://spas-elca.org/event/cultivating-good-soil-prayer/>

Primetime Event at Redeemer: “Windows into Eternity – Understanding the Russian Orthodox Icon” (11/20)



Icons are central to Russian culture in so many ways. Because they are the forms of this world to glimpse the eternal world, icons bring worshippers into contact with something larger than life. An examination of the visual methods used and the concepts illustrated will help those unfamiliar with icons appreciate both their significance as religious objects and their influence on the visual expressions created by artists throughout history. Please join us at Redeemer (3770 Bellaire Ave.) on Thursday, Nov. 20 (9:30am Coffee Plus; 10:00am program) for this Redeemer Primetime event. You must RSVP by calling Redeemer's office at 651-429-5411 by Nov. 16th.

Festival of Trees At The Armory (11/20—12/20)

This year, St. Stephen Lutheran Church is participating in the White Bear Lake Armory's 3rd Annual Festival of trees by submitting a decorated tree. Trees are all done by local businesses and non-profits. Come stroll through a wonderland of trees which will be judged by attendees; over 1500 are expected each week. We wish to decorate our tree in a way that portrays St. Stephen in a beautiful and fun way. If you wish to help decorate our tree or contribute an ornament which will help represent our church, please contact Kathy Stickler at kstickler23@gmail.com.



GENERAL INFORMATION

In This Issue

Church Matters (2-3)
Happenings & Opportunities (4-6)
Appreciation (7-8)
Prayers (9)
Announcements (10)
Events Elsewhere (10)
General Information (11)
Calendar (back cover)

The Steppingstone Newsletter...

Is distributed monthly. If you have any items for the **December** issue, please send them to office@ststephenwbl.org by Monday, Nov. 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

(weekly events listed above & below in blue print)

- 11/2 Food Shelf Collection (Sun)
- 11/2 Daylight Saving Time Ends (Sun/2:00am)
- 11/2 All Saints Remembrance/Choir Singing (Sun/9:30am)
- 11/2 All Saints Remembrance Reception (Sun/10:30am)
- Bible Study (Mon/10:00-11:00am) - weekly
- 11/4 Election Day – Polls Open (Tues/7:00am-8:00pm)
- 11/5 Food Shelf Collection (Wed)
- Choir Rehearsal (Wed/7:00-8:00pm) - weekly
- (NOTE: 6:00pm at Redeemer on 11/26)
- 11/5 Cookie Baking Day (Wed/9:00am-12noon)
- 11/6 Worship & Music Ministry Meeting (Thurs/6:00-7:00pm)
- 11/7 Boutique Set-up and Cookie Packing (Fri/9:00am)
- 11/8 Holly Boutique & Bake Sale (Sat/10:00am-1:00pm)
- 11/9 Stewardship Sunday
- 11/9 Boutique Church Sale (Sun/10:30am)
- 11/10 Content DEADLINE for December Steppingstone (Mon)
- 11/10 Boutique Clean-up (Mon/9:00am)
- 11/10 Church Council Meeting (Mon/6:00-7:30pm)
- 11/11 Veterans Day (Tues)
- 11/12 Stewardship Wednesday
- 11/13 Speaker on Bouncing Back (Thurs/10:00am)
- 11/14 Outreach Ministry Team Meeting (Fri/10:00am)
- 11/15 Mom's Morning Out (Sat/9:30am-12:30pm)
- 11/15 Prayer Ministry event at Gustavus (Sat/9:00am-2:00pm)
- 11/16 Congregational Survey Results & Plans (Sun/10:45am)
- 11/17 Hymn Sing at Dubliner Pub (Mon/7:00-9:00pm)
- 11/20 Primetime event at Redeemer (Thurs/10:00am)
- 11/25 Christian Singles Lunch Bunch - VFW (Tues/11:30am)
- 11/26 Wednesday programming—**ON BREAK**
- 11/26 Thanksgiving Service at Redeemer (Wed/7:00pm)
- 11/27 Thanksgiving Meal (Thurs/1:00pm)
- 11/27 Church Office **CLOSED** (Thurs)
- 11/28 Church Office **CLOSED** (Fri)