



# St. Stephen's Newsletter

## August-September 2023

### Devotional Thought

*For at the appointed time, while we were still helpless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> It is rare indeed that someone will die for a righteous person. Perhaps someone might actually go so far as to die for a person who has been good to him. <sup>8</sup> But God shows his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

*Romans 5:6-8*

Your car runs out of gas. There you sit, out in the middle of nowhere on the side of the road, hundreds of miles to the nearest town. You could wait for a passing car, but you haven't seen another car in hours. You could start walking, but how long will that take? And what shape will you be in when you finally reach civilization? Being helpless is a true horror.

What about when *life* runs out of gas? There are so many missed opportunities—the time for action has already passed. There are more things that should be done—but lack of time, energy and our helplessness keep us from doing them all.

God's Word tells us, "*while we were still helpless, Christ died for the ungodly.*" He died as "*the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world*" (John 1:28). A biblical word for that is "atonement." It means a sacrifice of payment—for our sins, failures, mistakes, willful disobedience, what we should have done but didn't, what we didn't but should have done—all taken by Jesus, "*while we were still helpless.*" "*Powerless.*" This is more than just *rescue*. It's *redemption*. This is more than just *assistance*. It is *power*—the power of God's own forgiveness—the power of new life given us by Jesus.

And it's yours, all because of your Savior, Jesus. It's yours all because of God's grace (undeserved love). There is nothing for you to earn, nothing for you to repay—because Jesus has given himself for you. Even when your life was out of gas. Even though you feel helpless—he is your Help.

### Prayer

Keep my footsteps on your paths.  
Keep my feet from slipping.

Lord Jesus, have mercy.  
You are my only help.  
With your Father,  
you made all things in the beginning.  
In your life on earth  
you stilled storms,  
fed the thousands,  
healed the sick,  
and drove out devils.  
Help me, dear Jesus.  
You alone can still my storms,  
fill my hungry soul,  
heal my sick heart  
and deliver me from every evil power.  
Restore my soul,  
and make me whole in you.  
Amen.

### Worship Opportunities

**Thursdays at 6:30 p.m**

**Fridays at 1:30 p.m.** (abbreviated; no singing)

**Sundays at 8:00 & 10:00 a.m.**

**Our block of time for Christian Education  
(Sunday School/Bible Class)  
and fellowship is 9:10 - 9:50 a.m.**

**Lord's Supper is celebrated the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup>  
Sundays of the month  
(also the Thursdays & Fridays before those  
Sundays).**

**Let's make worship of our Savior God with  
brothers and sisters in Christ a priority in  
our weekly schedules!**

**Christian Education Sunday and Church Picnic—  
September 17**

Christian Education is meant for all ages! God has blessed us with numerous opportunities for Christian Education. We have Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool, and our very own St. Stephen's Lutheran School. We offer Bible classes for all to attend. Please join us on this special

Christian Education Sunday to give thanks to God for all the opportunities we have for Christian Education, and to be encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities!

**This year, we are planning our Christian Education Sunday and Church Picnic a little later, September 17, with worship at Lakeview Park, and special music from the children of St. Stephen's School. There will be one service that Sunday at 10:00 a.m.** (Details below in *Fellowship Opportunities*.)

**Recommitment of Teachers** – With the departure of a few teachers (Miss Hensler, Miss Geiger, Mrs. Dorn) our school's teaching staff is changing. Yet God continues to bless us with a dedicated and faithful faculty to provide a solid Christian education in the upcoming 2023-2024 school year. At our Christian Education Sunday worship service our teachers will recommit to the promises they made when first installed as teachers at St. Stephen's - to be faithful to God's Word in their teaching and to be faithful in the use of their abilities in serving the Lord as they teach his lambs in their care. In that service we will also install and welcome Ms. Amy Helwig as our new second grade teacher.

### Finance Report

The following report is for the first six months of the year (Jan 1-June 30). However, due to the decision to begin operating on a fiscal year on July 1, we've "closed the books" on this "mini-year". Here are the numbers as we close our 2023 books and enter the '23-'24 cycle.

General Fund Balance: – \$ 34,700

Income: \$532,940

Expenses: \$566,640

Dedicated Funds Balance: \$ 442,497

The largest Dedicated Funds are:

Restoration Fund: \$ 336,903

Special Improvement: \$ 41,400\*

\*Payments yet to be made for parking lot / playground/paving/fencing projects

**To God be the glory!**

## Christian Education Opportunities

### Sunday School...

Our Sunday School is open to all children from age 3 through 8th grade. We meet on Sunday mornings, 9:10 AM-9:50 AM.

Students will go through a Bible lesson every week. This year our focus will be on the life of Jesus.

**The first day of Sunday School will be September 10.** There is no need to register beforehand. Simply come to the lower level of the school, and we will have forms to fill out and directions on where to go from there. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Stratman or the church office.

### Catechism / Confirmation Classes Begin

- **7th & 8th Grade Public School Catechism Classes** will be conducted together with Good Shepherd. They will meet **Wednesdays, 3:30-4:45pm**. Classes begin **Wednesday, September 6**. All students will meet at **Good Shepherd**. Pastor Reichert will lead this class. A letter with more information will be sent out in August.
- **Public School 5th-6th Grade Catechism** classes will begin **September 6, 3:30pm-4:45 at St. Stephen's**. This class introduces students to Bible History in preparation for the 7th-8th grade confirmation years. Pastor Heyer will be teaching this class.
- Questions? Call Pastor Stratman.
- If a student has special needs and would benefit with individual classes, the pastors are more than willing to arrange a schedule that works for everyone. Please feel free to contact one of the pastors for more information.

### For all adults...

#### Sunday Bible Class

Our Sunday Bible Class meets between Sunday morning worship services, 9:10 - 9:50. It is held every Sunday, except the first Sunday of each month when we have our Coffee Fellowship Hour. This summer we have been studying the book of Jonah, how God communicated to his people through his prophets,



and how he did his work through Jonah, a *reluctant* prophet. This study will continue through August. In September we will begin an experiment with *adult Sunday School*, looking at the basic lessons of Bible history which coincide with lessons the children will study in Sunday School. Please join us for growth in faith, Bible knowledge, and for fellowship over some coffee, juice and small treats!

### **Monday / Wednesday Bible Study**

We will resume our weekday (Monday nights / Wednesday mornings) Bible Class after Labor Day, beginning **September 11 & 13. We will meet Mondays at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.** (same lesson at each) **in the church basement.**

Not long ago we studied the Gospel of John with the theme “*Who Is Jesus?*” **We will continue a study of John’s letters with the theme “Who Are You?”** By reviewing *who is Jesus*, John shows us that *we are children of God* because of our connection to Jesus.

### **For Seekers...**

Our pastors love to take people through the Bible and answer questions they may have. Beginning **Thursday, September 7**, we will offer a class to present the basic teachings of the Bible. These classes are aimed toward those who have questions or are seeking membership in the church. However, they also serve as a refresher course for even the most veteran Christian.

We offer two times for these classes each Thursday - **11:00am or 7:30pm** (same class just different times). Simply come to the church basement. Invite someone to this class. Better yet, come to the class with them. Your pastors will also be more than willing to talk to anyone interested in these classes. Please give their contact information to a pastor who will follow up with them.

### **Education Grants Awarded...**

St. Stephen’s has the privilege of awarding financial grants to our members attending Lakeside Lutheran High School (LLHS) in Lake Mills, WI, Luther Preparatory School (LPS) in Watertown, WI, Martin Luther College (MLC) in New Ulm, MN, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) in Mequon, WI.

### *Neuendorf Scholarship*

This scholarship was started in 1992 by Mr. Eugene Neuendorf in memory of his parents. Scholarships are given to all students considering and studying for the public ministry at Luther Prep or Martin Luther College. The following scholarships were awarded for this coming school year:

- Grace Seim (Junior at MLC) \$3,000
- Alexis Yerges (Junior at LPS) \$1,000
- Austin Yerges (Sophomore at LPS) \$1,000

### *Christ Estate Scholarship Fund*

This fund uses the interest earned from a trust that has been set up to help all Martin Luther College students and male students at Luther Prep.

- Grace Seim (MLC) \$100
- Austin Yerges (LPS) \$48

### *Lakeside Lutheran Assistance Fund*

This fund helps students who are attending Lakeside Lutheran High School.

- Elena Loest (Junior) - \$1,000
- John Loest (Junior) - \$1,000
- Bryce Tasker (Sophomore) - \$1,000

Lakeside Lutheran High School also participates in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP). The state awards vouchers to families meeting certain income requirements. These vouchers allow students to attend Lakeside and pay no tuition. If you would like more information about this program, please contact the church office.

### *Seminary Student Fund*

This fund helps men completing the last four years of their training to become pastors.

- Malachi Mortensen (Vicar) - No tuition for Vicar year in which he gains practical ministry experience.

Congratulations to all these students. May God continue to be with you in your studies!

We thank God that we are able to help support these students. In addition to this we also take part in the Martin Luther College Congregational Partnership Program. This means that MLC matches our grants for our students up to \$1,325.

For us to continue to offer these scholarships, we need generous donors. Anybody can donate to the Neuendorf Scholarship Fund, Lakeside Lutheran Student Assistance Fund, or Seminary Assistance. If you would like to donate to these funds, please speak with Pastor Heyer or contact the church office.

## Fellowship Opportunities

### OWLS

Area WELS Seniors are invited to our next **Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors** get together. **Tuesday, August 8** we meet at Friedens Lutheran in Randolph. Our potluck meal starts at 12:00 noon in the church basement. After the meal, we will take time for a Bible devotion, followed by a presentation by Missionary Gregory Bey about Gospel work in southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, where he has served as our missionary for many years.

Our **September 12** “meeting” will be a bus trip. Pastor Straseske has arranged for “tours” of our Seminary in Mequon, WELS Historical Museum at Salem Landmark Church and Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee, and our WELS Center for Mission and Ministry in Pewaukee. The trip is open to everyone (you don’t have to be a “senior”). Info and registration form is available at church. Cost for the coach bus is \$40 (2 meals - at Chick Fil A and Pizza Ranch - are on your own). We leave at 7:00 A.M. from Peace Lutheran’s parking lot. Questions? Talk with Pastor Heyer or call Pastor Straseske at 507-450-3777. Bring a friend and join the fellowship!.

### Mark Your Calendars!!

#### Church Picnic – September 17



Our annual church picnic will be on **Sunday, September 17**, starting with **our church service at Lakeview Park at 10:00am** with lunch starting shortly after the service. Meat and drinks will be provided. We ask that everyone would please bring a dish to pass and lawn chairs.

We have plenty of activities planned. There will be bingo with prizes and other games. Make plans to join us! If inclement weather happens on that day, we will move the picnic to the church basement. **Join us for this time of fellowship!**

### Lutheran Teens

Lutheran Teens is open to anyone in 7th-12th grade, friends are even welcome! We join together for various activities and Bible studies. We aim to meet at least once a month. In the past we have done bowling, laser tag, a corn maze, and many other fun activities. We also serve the congregation by helping with a Lenten Supper and serving donuts during a Sunday coffee fellowship.

Pastor Dorn had been our main organizer and coordinator, assisted by Matt O’Brion. Matt, along with Jayme Roll, will be coordinating our activities and events during the time of our pastor vacancy. We are working at planning our activities, so watch the Sunday bulletin announcements and our FaceBook page for updates. The one “for sure” upcoming service activity will be **Sunday, August 6** when we serve for our Coffee Fellowship at 9:10am.



Members of the Lutheran Teens also help recycle the aluminum cans from the trailer in the church’s parking lot. Money collected from these cans help support the Teens activities to keep costs down for different events. About once every two months we drop off the cans to the recycle center. If you would like to help our “can man” get cans to the recycle site, talk with Pastor Heyer or Matt O’Brion.

We always look forward to having new people join us. If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Heyer or Matt O’Brion.

## Service Opportunities

### Ladies Aid

Our Ladies Aid is a service organization within our congregation. In recent years our major service has been to coordinate meals and activities involving the church basement and kitchen, mostly funeral luncheons, and the occasional Baptism or Confirmation lunch or wedding or baby shower. We are thankful to the many “non-Ladies Aid members” who help us with these services

Another of our service activities is our annual “Care Card” program for our St. Stephen’s young people away at college or in the military. In the Fall of the year we seek donations from the congregation and then



send some money in a card with an encouraging Christian message to our young people. We encourage them to stay connected to our Savior God and include some money for them to do laundry, buy needed small items, or to splurge on a pizza! We want to let our young brothers and sisters in Christ know we are thinking of them and praying for them.

Although our congregation has been very generous with their giving for this, the number of recipients has decreased in recent years. We can only send greetings to children whose families let us know where their child is attending school or is stationed while serving our country in the military. **Please call the church office at 920-885-3309 to update your child's address for the upcoming school year.**

### Hand Bell Choir

The Hand Bell Choir will be starting practices **September 13th**. Our practices are Wednesday evenings at 7:15pm until about 8:30pm in the church balcony. We play in church about seven times a year and also at Advent by Candlelight. Please call the office if you are interested in joining!

### Senior Choir

St. Stephen's Senior Choir is about to begin another year of praising the Lord in song! Senior Choir is an opportunity for all confirmed members of our church who enjoy music to enjoy fellowship, sing beautiful choral music, and glorify our God. Senior Choir rehearses every Thursday during the school year from 7:30-8:45pm. We primarily sing at church festivals, such as Reformation, Christmas, Holy Week, and Ascension. If you cannot make every rehearsal, or if you only want to participate during a certain part of the year (only Christmastime, only Lent, etc.), you are still welcome and encouraged to join us.

Our first rehearsal is **Thursday, August 31st, at 7:30pm in the school Choir Room**. If you want to participate in Senior Choir at any point this year **but cannot make the first rehearsal, please contact Mr. Barnett** so that a music folder can be prepared for you. There is no commitment, and latecomers are welcome at any point in the year. If you have any questions at all, don't hesitate to contact the director, Mr. Barnett,

at [jbarnett@saintstephen.org](mailto:jbarnett@saintstephen.org) or 262-234-2981. See you on August 31st!

### St. Stephen's Radio Service

This service provides the opportunity to hear God's precious word and to sing with fellow Christians the hymns of the faith. **It airs every Sunday at 9:30am on WBEV (95.3 FM).**

Volunteers record two half-hour services on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, September through March. We start at **7 pm and finish around 8:10**. It's a simple and pleasant way to serve Jesus and his people by singing hymns and speaking other service sections. Our first service recording sessions will be **Tuesday, September 12**. We record in the church. The Maple Ave, church office, and ramp entrances will be open. Please join us! Another way to support this ministry is with an offering. Each half-hour Sunday service on WBEV costs about \$75.

You can listen to our radio services over the internet. On our website ([www.ssbdwels.com](http://www.ssbdwels.com)), go to our [Radio Service Page and listen by streaming audio](#).

### Good Shepherd's Vacation Bible School

Will take place on August 7th-11th from 1:00-3:00pm for ages 3 - 6th grade. This year's theme is "Gone Fishing." Check our website and Facebook page for more information. Registration will be open soon - sign up online, call 920-885-6482, or email [ggsbdoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ggsbdoffice@gmail.com). Any questions, please contact Kim Steinberg at 920-885-4317 or [gslpreschool@gmail.com](mailto:gslpreschool@gmail.com).

### VBS Thank you

We had another wonderful time at Vacation Bible School. We shared the wonderful news of God's love with many children!

A huge thank you goes out to all those who helped in any way. We received many donations of items for snacks, people volunteered their time to help during the week in classrooms or in the kitchen, and we had many members put yard signs out to help publicize this event. Thank you to all!



### School News

#### It's that time again! – Back to School

Registration packets were mailed in the middle of July as we are shifting how we make our summer



connections with parents. We will be doing a parent/teacher/pastor/organization orientation/registration combination. Be sure to examine all the information and bring the **completed** forms when you register. If you've lost yours, or if you have any questions, please contact Mr. Schulz (920-885-6484 or [principal@saintstephen.org](mailto:principal@saintstephen.org)). The times of this orientation are specific and we ask that all parents make a time commitment. We will be discussing changes in the handbook. There will be presentations by the AD, PTS, SCRIP coordinator. After the presentations, parents will be asked to go to specific classrooms to talk with teachers. That later part of the time frame is when parents will also drop off registration materials/payments to specific teachers throughout the building. This is something new we are attempting. Please be patient as we work through this together.

**Orientation Days @ St. Stephen's**  
**Sunday August 13, 2023, 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.**  
**Monday, August 14, 2023, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

Please make every effort to attend one of the two listed orientation times.

The complete school calendar is on the school website: [www.ssbdwels.com/school](http://www.ssbdwels.com/school).

### All Parents with Elementary School Age Children

St. Stephen's Lutheran School is an affordable, quality, Christian education for all of your children. There is no tuition charge. We have a book fee of only \$1,050.00 per child, per year to cover technology and consumable materials. If you have not enrolled your children in the past because you felt the cost would be too much, please reconsider. A quality, Christian education is affordable for about \$6.15 a day. Members of our congregation generously support the church and school so that the children can be taught the precious message of Jesus each day.

For more information about the school please check out the website at <http://www.ssbdwels.com/school>. You can also call the school principal at 920-885-6484 and we will gladly discuss the school with you.

Also check out Good Shepherd Preschool for your K3 and K4 children.



### First Day of School

**Tuesday, August 29, 8:00am.**

This early start time accommodates the correct number of instructional hours we need to be compliant with state guidelines. Our year will begin with a worship service at 9:00 a.m. in the church.

**All are welcome!**

### Singing Schedule

The singing schedule has been placed on our website. There are numerous dates for each group to sing at church. Please be sure to have your children present as they sing praises to the Lord. Something new this year: We will occasionally have different instrumentalists playing preservice music.



### Help Our School by Saving Labels and Boxtops

We Collect:

- Boxtops for Education—download the Boxtops for Education app. With the app you select your school of choice and scan your receipts for funds to be gained.
- Our Family UPC (proof of purchase labels). Please cut off the proof of purchase bar code (# 70253). **Only** Our Family Bar codes can be accepted. Please drop all receipts off at the office.
- St. Stephen's SCRIP is also a way to help raise funds for the school and your family's fees. Information for SCRIP is available in the back of the church or at the church office.

### Our 2023-2024 Faculty

Kindergarten: Mrs. Kendra Barnett  
 1st Grade: Mrs. Brittany Trimmer  
 2nd Grade: Ms. Amy Helwig  
 3rd/4th Grade: Mrs. Karen Cooper  
 5th/6th Grade/Church music:  
 Mr. Joshua Barnett  
 7th Grade/Athletic Director:  
 Mr. Tom Zuberbier  
 8th Grade/Principal: Mr. David Schulz

**May the Lord continue to bless the work of our faculty here at St. Stephen's as we teach the Lord's little ones the truth and grace of his Word.**