



# St. Stephen's Newsletter

## August-September 2024

### Devotional Thought

*Trust in the Lord, and do good. Dwell in the land and feed on faithfulness. Take pleasure in the Lord, and he will grant your heart's desires. Commit your way to the Lord. Trust in him, and he will act. He will make your righteousness shine like light, your justice like noon. Be silent before the Lord. Wait patiently for him. Do not fret when an evil man succeeds in his ways, when he carries out his wicked schemes. Let go of anger and abandon rage. Do not fret—it leads only to evil. For evildoers will be cut off, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the earth. After a little while the wicked will be no more. When you search for them at their place, they are not there. But the meek will inherit the earth. They will enjoy plenty of peace. Psalm 37:3-11*

What struggles King David had! When Samuel came to anoint one of the sons of Jesse as king, Jesse didn't think his youngest son David was a good candidate, so David was left out in the field with the sheep. After David killed the giant Goliath, King Saul was insanely jealous and pursued David like an enemy. When David became king, his generals didn't want to listen to him. Then there was the struggle of David's own making. Adultery. Murder. Deception. Loss. And then there were troubles within David's own family. One son, Absalom, campaigned to be king while David was still living, shouting propaganda against David in the city gate where everyone could hear. When one of David's men killed Absalom, David was overcome with grief. When David was on his deathbed, he made all the arrangements to hand everything over to Solomon, and another son, Adonijah, made his campaign like Absalom did.

So how did David respond to all of those challenges? He sang. He wrote. He taught about faith. Faith isn't mere positive thinking. It is trust. It is turning your will and your life over to the care of God. "Commit your way to the Lord. Trust in him, ... Be silent before the Lord. Wait patiently for him." David knew his struggles and his limits. He also knew that God has no limits—and that God had forgiven him, and God was working for him, with him, and through him. In another psalm he wrote, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me." That is faith—not relying on your strength, but relying on God's strength. That is faith—not trying to be tough on your own, but letting go, putting everything in God's hands, and enjoying his peace.

### Prayer

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

Lord Jesus, have mercy.  
As I hear your words of promise,  
fill me with knowledge  
of what you have already done,  
and what you promise to do.  
Help me see  
that your Word is not just true,  
but to accept that it is your truth and promise  
for me.  
And finally,  
send your Holy Spirit  
to soften my hard heart  
and create it anew,  
built solid and firm  
on nothing but trust in you.  
Amen

Pastor Stratman

### 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 15**

Christian Education is meant for all ages! God has blessed us with numerous opportunities to grow in our understanding of his love and activity in our lives, earthly and eternal. 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 for Sunday, September 15, with worship at Lakeview Park, and special music from the children of St. Stephen's School. There will be only one service that day - at 10:00 a.m.** (Details below in *Fellowship Opportunities*.)

**Recommitment of Teachers** – With the departure of Ms. Helwig and Mrs. Elmquist, and some other situations “in flux”, our teaching staff will again see some changes for this year. Through it all God continues to bless us with a dedicated and faithful faculty to provide a solid Christian education in our School. At our Christian Education Sunday worship service our returning 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 **Miss Amber Wenman** as our new second grade teacher, and **Mr. Marc Meihack** as our one-year Upper grades Science and “other subjects” teacher.

### Financial Stewardship Report

The following report is for the fiscal year ended June 30, our first year operating on a fiscal calendar. Here are the numbers as we close our 2023-24 books and enter the '24-'25 cycle.

General Fund Balance: \$ 77,046

Income: \$ 1,162,999

Expenses: \$ 1,085,953

Dedicated Funds Balance: \$ 473,302

The largest Dedicated Funds held locally are:

Restoration Fund: \$ 8,436

Special Improvement: \$ 46,321

Playground Structure: \$ 12,303

New Outside Digital Sign: \$ 10,000

We were blessed to finish our fiscal year with “cash on hand” for our ministry expenses. Some of that is due to “being short” a Pastor and Teacher on our ministry staff. God grant each

of us a willingness to be generous in our offerings TO HIM that our Gospel ministry continues to be fully supported!

## 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 8.** 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 again be conducted together with Good Shepherd. They will meet **Wednesdays, 3:30-4:45pm.** Classes begin **Wednesday, September 4.** A letter with more information will be sent out in August.
- Public School **5th-6th Grade Catechism** classes will also begin **September 4, 3:30pm-4:45 at St. Stephen's.** This class introduces students to Bible History with some Catechism connections in preparation for the 7th-8th grade confirmation years. Watch for a letter in August regarding this class as well.
- 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

miracles, parables, and “dramatic statements” of Jesus through a study called “19 (or more) Minutes with the Messiah”. This will continue at least through August when we may again resume “adult” studies of the lessons children 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 9 & 10. 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 Commandments from Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms. **We will continue this study of the Catechism with The Apostles’ Creed.**

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

Our pastors love to take people through the Bible and answer questions they may have. Beginning **Thursday, September 5**, 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 is blessed to be able to award 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 (Senior at MLC) \$3,000
- Alexis Yerges (Senior at LPS) \$1,000
- Austin Yerges (Junior 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) \$ 500
- Austin Yerges (LPS) \$ 300

#### *Lakeside Lutheran Assistance Fund*

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

- Elena Loest (Senior) - \$1,000
- John Loest (Senior) - \$1,000
- Bryce Tasker (Junior) - \$1,000
- Liliana Balleza (Freshman) - \$1,000

Lakeside Lutheran High School also participates in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP), which is benefiting several St. Stephen’s students. The state awards vouchers to families meeting certain income requirements. These vouchers allow students to attend Lakeside and pay no tuition.

#### *Seminary Student Fund*

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

- Malachi Mortensen (Senior) - \$1,500

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 year MLC matches our grant for our student up to \$1,450.

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 13** 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 on the Horicon Marsh.

Our **September 10** gathering will be at noon at St. Stephen's. Our presenter will be from Christian Life Resources, sharing the ministry of "New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers".

Over 50? Come join us, and bring a friend! Not over 50? We'll let you in, too!!!

### Mark Your Calendars!!

#### Church Picnic – September 15

Our annual church picnic will be on **Sunday, September 15**, starting with **our church service at Lakeview Park at 10:00am**, followed by 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!**

**Coordinators needed!** Help is needed to arrange the picnic as recent years' coordinators are unavailable this year. If interested but have questions, please call the office at 920-885-3309.

### Lutheran Teens

Lutheran Teens is open to anyone in 7th-12th grade, friends are also 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. Most recently, 4 our our teens attended the WELS Youth Rally at Colorado State University along with 2,500+ other teens and leaders.



Matt O'Brion and Jayme Roll, have been 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 4** 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.

## 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" (both men and women) who help us with the task of serving funeral lunches. If you would like to be added to that volunteer list, please contact Carol Lathrop at (920) 887-7250. We realize that there are times that you might not be available, but it is always helpful to add names to be on this call list when needed. Ladies' Aid has also given assistance or donations to St. Stephen's church and school as well as to other WELS groups to support their ministry. We welcome any ladies of our congregation to contact us for our schedule if you'd like to visit a meeting or for additional information if you might be interested in becoming a member of this organization.

After a 2 month recess we will meet on **Thursday, August 1**, at noon for a "picnic" in the Church basement. After this meal leaders of various activities will share what service each "committee" provides. We are using this as a "membership invite" gathering. We hope many women of the congregation can join us. No pressure to join, we just want to share what we do for our Lord here at St. Stephen's.

## Hand Bell Choir

The Hand Bell Choir will be starting practices **September 11th**. 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 7:30-8:30pm. 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, September 12, 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.

## 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 recording sessions will be **Tuesday, September 10**. 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](#).

## Vacation Bible School

Due to a number of schedule and staff factors this year, the Board of Education and Faculty decided to "simplify" our VBS. Our plan is to conduct a Sunday evening (**August 4**) FAMILY VBS that includes a potluck supper, a Bible lesson, activities and some music. The potluck begins at 5:00 p.m., and we plan to conclude around 7:00. Bring the family for an evening of faith-growth and fellowship! Grandpas and Grandmas welcome!

Our Board and Faculty also believe that our recent VBS endeavors have not effectively accomplished some of our objectives. Therefore, intensive study and effort will take place over the next year to provide a "revamped" and hopefully "more effective" VBS experience in future years.

## Good Shepherd's Vacation Bible School

Will take place on August 5th-9th from 1:00-3:00pm for ages 3 - 6th grade. This year's theme is "One Of A Kind Zoo ." Check our website and Facebook page for more information. Registration is open - sign up online, call 920-885-6482, or email [gsbdoffice@gmail.com](mailto:gsbdoffice@gmail.com). Any questions, please contact Kim Steinberg at 920-885-4317 or [gslpreschool@gmail.com](mailto:gslpreschool@gmail.com).

## School News

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

Registration packets were mailed at the end of June as we continue to shift our summer connections to parents. We will continue to do a parent/teacher/pastor/organization orientation/registration combination. We ask that parents remember to fill out the forms and have them completed when you come to the orientation day. 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, and 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. Last year went well and we will continue to tweak how the day works. Please be patient as we work through this together.

**Orientation Days @ St. Stephen's**  
**Sunday August 11, 2023, 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.**  
**Monday, August 12, 2023, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

Please make every effort to attend one of the two listed orientation times. If you are not able to attend, please contact Mr. Schulz as soon as possible to make arrangements.

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 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 [www.ssbdwels.com/school](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.

### **First Day of School**

**Tuesday, August 27, 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 shortly after 8:00 a.m. **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. We will continue to have instrumentalists perform throughout the year as we did last year.

### **Opportunities to help**

Throughout the next school year, there will be opportunities to help out. Keep your eyes open for these opportunities. They could range from reading to children to helping at sporting events.

The school is also looking to replace two bigger items on the property. The school play structure is over 20 years old and has started to deteriorate. Replacement is a better option as parts for the current would not be cost effective. Replacement of the current structure will cost between \$50,000 and \$80,000 depending on the structure we choose for replacement.

The second is the replacement of the bleachers in the gym. The safety reports for the bleachers indicate that replacement would also be the best course of action. Cost of replacement will be in the neighborhood of \$30,000.

Thank you to all who helped with the fundraisers throughout the past year. We are looking to another year of great success in fundraising for the playground and bleachers.

There will be a brat fry at Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly on Saturday, August 3, 2024 from 10:00-2:00.

Come on out for a great meal and opportunity for fellowship. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Schulz.

### **St. Stephen's Sports:**

Keep your eyes open for opportunities to come watch sporting events at St. Stephen's School. The Lord has given many gifts to the students of our school. Let's show them support as the year goes on.

### **Our 2024-2025 Faculty**

Kindergarten: Mrs. Kendra Barnett  
1st Grade: Mrs. Brittany Trimmer  
2nd Grade: Miss Amber Wenman  
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.**