



St. Stephen's Newsletter April-May 2025

Devotional Thought

How Happy Can I Be?

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

Revelation 14:13

Many things are scary. Watching your infant wiggle out of the car carrier that you had momentarily set on the table—that's scary. Witnessing a car swerve into oncoming traffic—that's scary. But of all the scary things, death for many people is the scariest.

It's scary because of what we know and don't know. We know death is certain. Its cloud hangs over us at every traffic intersection, on every consult with our doctor, and during every violent storm. What we don't know is what dying is like or what, if anything, happens after death.

If there is no God, then death is the end and that's it. If so, then death may be final and sad, but it's hardly something to be afraid of. However, if there is existence after death and God is waiting to judge us for all the things we have done, then death is more than sad. It's scary.

God does exist. There are no ifs about that. The Bible pinpoints the greatest fear about dying and facing God: *"It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"* (Hebrews 10:31). Yes, that's scary! So how happy can I be when I'm scared of dying?

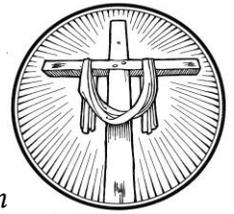
If it were up to us to find happiness in the face of death, we would be on an impossible journey. What we need to calm our fears and to find happiness is for someone to do something about death. The good news is that someone has.

God, who awaits you after death, sent Jesus to destroy death's fear. Jesus began that work by obeying God's laws for you. Then he traded places with you. He gave you his perfect life in exchange for your sins. And so, with your sins laid on him, he suffered a most horrible death, which earned God's forgiveness for you. With all sin forgiven, death lost its power. So, three days after his burial, Jesus rose to life from the dead. He defeated death so that it can no longer hold the lives and bodies of those it has claimed. God will raise all people from the dead.

Believe this good news and know for sure that God waits for you with open arms to welcome you into his heaven. This is why God tells us in the Bible: *"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."*

The unknown experience of death may still be scary for you, but because death has been conquered by Jesus Christ, you can live happily, now and ever after.

WELS Evangelism



Calls Accepted



With thanks to our God we rejoice as Pastor Matthew and Katrina Reis have accepted our calls to serve as Pastor and as 3rd Grade Teacher. Since Mrs. Reis currently teaches in a sister WELS school, they will not move to Beaver Dam until June.

Due to some schedule conflicts, his installation has been planned for July 20.

Worship Opportunities

Regular Service Times

Sundays, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

During Lent, Wednesdays 3:45 and 6:30 p.m.

Easter Season, Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.

Fridays, 1:30 p.m.

Holy Week Schedule

Holy Communion



Holy Communion will be offered throughout Holy Week (Tuesday at 3:45, Thursday at 3:45pm & 6:30 pm) and Easter (in the 8:00am service) to give everyone the chance to receive this personal assurance of Christ's presence and forgiveness.

Palm Sunday Service

On April 13th, our Children's Choir will take part in our Palm Sunday 10:00 Service. They will proceed into the church bringing palms and then offer their song of

praise to Jesus, our King. Palm Sunday begins our Holy week journey with Jesus to his cross.

Holy Week Tuesday

A Confessional **Communion** service will be held at 3:45 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15.

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Worship with **Communion** will be held at 3:45 pm and 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 17.

Good Friday Middy

Good Friday Middy Worship will be at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, April 18.

Tenebrae Service

Our Tenebrae Service will be on Good Friday at 7:00pm. Tenebrae is an ancient service order of increasing darkness. By extinguishing candles and gradually dimming lights we sense the darkness that surrounded Jesus as the burden of the world's sin rested on him. This service is different from the afternoon service. Come to one, or better yet, come to both, to appreciate Jesus' sacrifice for you!

Great Vigil of Easter

Celebration of our Lord's Resurrection and of our Baptism takes place at 7:00 PM April 19th at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, here in Beaver Dam. We remember our own baptismal connection to Christ's death and resurrection. We celebrate the reality of the resurrection in Holy Communion and, with sins forgiven, anticipate our own. Please join our fellow-area WELS congregations for this unique, historic, and beautiful Easter worship opportunity!

Easter Sunday Services

- 6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service
- 8:00 a.m. Easter Communion with music by school children and Senior Choir
- 10:00 a.m. Festival Worship with music by school children and Senior Choir

Church Decorators

Volunteers are needed to decorate for Palm Sunday – Holy Week – Easter. Times are:

- Saturday, April 12th, 9:00am. (10 needed)
- Sunday, April 13th, 11:15am. (10 needed)
- Saturday, April 19th, 9:00am. (10 needed)
- Sunday, April 20th, 11:30am. (10 needed)

Easter Lilies

Sign-up sheet for donated Easter lilies has been placed on the back table. Please have lilies here by 9:00am on April 19th.

Easter Breakfast

Jayme & Jessica Roll have been asked to take the lead for our Annual Easter Breakfast. Donations and baked goods such as sweet rolls, coffee cake, donuts, etc. can be brought on **Saturday, April 19th, from 10:00am. - 11:00am.** Additional volunteers will be needed for clean up. If you are willing to help with the Easter Breakfast by donating supplies or your time, please sign your name and phone number on the sign-up sheet on the table in the entry, click the bitly above, or go to <https://bit.ly/SSEasterBkft2025>. Breakfast will be served continuously from 7:00am-10:00am.



Confirmation



This year 7 young men and women will profess their faith in their confirmation vows.

- The **examination service** with pictures will take place on **Friday, May 2, at 6:30 p.m..**
- The **confirmation service** will be on **Sunday, May 4, at the 10:00 a.m. service.**
- **First Communion** will be **Sunday, May 11 at the 10:00 a.m. service.**

Ascension Day

Our **Ascension Day Worship** will be **Thursday, May 29 at 6:30 p.m.** This will also be our **Graduation Service** for our school. There will be music by the Children's Choir, Junior Choir, and Senior Choir.

Pictorial Directory Information

The time is finally here! St. Stephen's will be having Harmann Studios take our portraits from 1pm to 8pm April 29, 30, May 1, & and 11am to 6pm on May 2. Sign up anytime at book.usession.com/s/NTI6N4S9H or using the QR code, or a call to the office (920-885-3309). Sessions are first come, first serve, so sign up early to get the time and date that is preferred. **There is also a roster in the back to church to review. This is the roster that will be added to the back of the picture directory so please make sure all information is accurate and cross out any information that you would not like in the directory.**

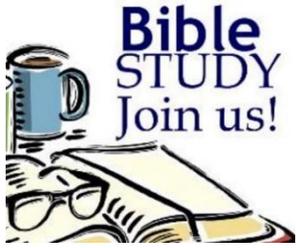


Thank you!

Christian Education Opportunities

For all adults...

Mondays and Wednesdays - a new study begins in late March. We'll read through the Old Testament book of Esther - "Serving Where God Puts You". This study should last through mid-May, when we'll take a break for the Summer. Make use of this opportunity for continual growth in Scripture knowledge and faith!



**Bible
STUDY
Join us!**

Sunday Morning Educational Time

Our Sunday morning Bible Class is studying the same lessons as the Sunday School. Join us on Sunday mornings from 9:10 a.m.-9:45 a.m. in the church basement to learn more!

On the first Sundays of the month, we take off from Bible Class to enjoy a relaxed fellowship time with coffee, juice, and donuts.

Our youth are invited to Sunday School which meets from 9:10 a.m.-9:45 a.m., to learn more about their Savior. Each week they go through a Bible story.

These two opportunities give families a wonderful way to grow in their faith. Please join us on Sunday mornings!

Sunday School for children will go into a Summer recess at the end of April. Adult study time will continue through the summer months.

Library Corner? Have you seen it? Come on down!



There is now a nice display of varied books, CD's, and DVD's in the church basement. Come on down to browse and check out something you find of interest. It is next to our bible study area. Take a look! Find a book! There are also some handmade cards for which you can make a donation.

Do you have any faith based books that you would like to donate? If so, bring them into the church office. The pastors will review them after which they will either be placed in St. Stephen's library corner for check out "or" donated to Twice Is Nice in Jefferson where all profits support Lakeside Lutheran High School in Lake Mills.

Fellowship Opportunities

Beaver Dam Area

WELS Seniors (OWLS)



Area WELS seniors

resume our monthly get-togethers on Tuesday, April 8th at St. Stephen's. We begin with a potluck meal at noon in the church basement. After the lunch there will be a devotion by an area pastor. Mr. Jim Bublitz will be our guest presenter, sharing the work of WELS Kingdom Workers / Builders for Christ. He has just returned from a project at our Apache mission in Arizona.

Our May gathering will be Tuesday, May 13 at Friedens in Randolph, with Gene and Anne Nimmer presenting a "travelogue" of their recent trip to Iceland. Come enjoy the fellowship and learn about places and activities beyond our congregations!

Our group is for members of our area WELS churches age 50 and up. Friends are welcome, too. We've had some nice gatherings of 30-40 folks of late. Please join us for some Christian fellowship!!

Service Opportunities

St. Stephen's Ladies Aid Society

Our Mission - To assist the congregation in maintaining and furthering the program of the Kingdom of our Lord and to grow spiritually in our Christian faith and life. New members are always welcome. Our meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at 1:30pm in the church basement.

We will once again host a Spring Luncheon and invite all those who volunteered to help at one or more funerals in the past year as our guest. It will start at noon with a meal in the church basement on Thursday, May 1st. There is no meeting in June, July, or August.

Lutheran Teens



The Lutheran Teens are planning an event for the end of April. Keep your eyes out for announcements in the bulletin and on our Facebook page for more information.

St. Stephen's Radio Service

Our recording sessions are finished for the season. Recording sessions will continue in September. Support this ministry with an offering. A half-hour Sunday service on WBEV costs about \$70.

Parent-Teacher Society (PTS) Update

The PTS is dedicated to strengthening the connection between parents and teachers while supporting our school community. This year, our focus is on raising awareness and funds for the Outdoor Playground Equipment initiative. We're thrilled to share that our recent Coin Duel fundraiser exceeded not just one, but multiple goals—an incredible achievement!

Looking ahead, we're excited to host our first Fun Run & Walk on Saturday, April 12th, in the morning. If you'd like to participate or volunteer, we'd love your support! Please reach out to the church office for details.

Thank you for being part of this amazing community!

School News

As we near the end of another school year, we take time to reflect on the journey we've shared in Christian education. This year, we have focused on impressing God's Word on our hearts and lives—at home, on the go, in the morning, and at night—just as He commands us in Deuteronomy 6:7.

In the classroom, we have immersed ourselves in Scripture, learning not only its teachings but also how to live them out daily. We have worked to instill knowledge, wisdom, and faith that extend beyond our studies and into every part of our students' lives.

Beyond academics, we have built a Christ-centered community, encouraging love, compassion, and service. Whether at school, at home, or out in the world, we strive to impress God's Word in every moment—through our actions, words, and relationships.

As we approach the end of this school year, let us give thanks for the blessings and growth we have experienced. The seeds of faith planted this year will

continue to grow in the hearts of our students, shaping their lives wherever they go.

In these final weeks, let's remain steadfast, encouraging one another and keeping our focus on Christ. And as we prepare to close this chapter, we do so with gratitude and excitement, knowing that God's Word continues to guide us—morning and night, wherever we are.

Kindergarten Round Up Follow-up:

Kindergarten Round-Up was held in Mid-February. We had a large number of families show up and express interest in our Kindergarten program and our school. Registration information was sent to families that have email addresses on file. **If you know of any families that are interested in Christian education, please refer them to Mr. Schulz.**

Updates:

As we move into April, the stark realization that we only have 8 weeks of school left starts to settle in. Please continue to keep your students focused and engaged in their learning as we wind down this year. We have held quite a few fundraisers to help with the replacement of the bleachers and playground at the school. As of the end of February we had raised about 65% of our playground funds and about 47% of the bleacher funds needed to have them replaced as soon as possible. There are 2 big events coming up in April and June to help raise more funds—keep your eyes open for details. It may be a real possibility that both structures could be replaced before the 2025-2026 school year.

The registration window for the 2025-26 school year has opened. All families need to visit FastDirect and fill out information for your students. **Returning families** need to log in with their current credentials and enter new students or mark returning students.

New families please visit

www.fastdir.com/saintstephens

Click on the Registration tab on the left menu and follow the prompts given.

Upcoming Events:

- April 5-6: LLHS Fine Arts Festival
- April 12: PTS Sponsored Fun Run
- May 2: Public Confirmation Examination
- May 4: Confirmation
- May 19: School Family Night
- May 29: Last day of school
Graduation service—6:30, with Ascension worship.