

# November



## 2023

## St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

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Stephenson, MI 49887

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**Sunday**

**Worship**

**10:30a**

**(Fellowship**

**BEFORE)**



<b>Birthdays, Anniversaries, Prayer, Remembrances</b> .....	<b>2</b>
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## All Saints' Day



During Worship on **All Saints' Sunday**, November 5, 2023, we will say aloud the names of your loved ones who have died in the past year.

***May those who we remember rest in peace and rise in glory.***



MidCounty Ministerium

## Food Pantry

**MANY** thanks to those who have dropped off food items, mailed in money, or spent time at the **Food Pantry** over the last month.

**EVERY** moment, **EVERY** dollar helps our community! **Keep it up!**

- 4 Cheri Leiphart
- 5 Dennis Davis, Taylor Schultz
- 6 Tammy Francour
- 9 Ken Chaney, Gma Dot turns 95!
- 13 Dorothy Davis
- 15 Kyle Salo
- 24 Jennifer Anger, Brock Bergquist

*We invite you to pray for those serving in the military:*

*Jordan Baril, Jay Chapple, Ken Dams, Trish Dams, Brent Jurmu, Jared Jurmu*



## **We continue to hold the following in prayer:**

**Callan** Johnson

**Madelyn** Mack

**Priscilla** Salo

**Karen** Raether

**Rob** Boe

**Zeke** Gill

**Ronnie** Anderson

**Tammy** Parrett

**Tony** Hofer

*We offer the comfort and hope of the resurrection to the family and friends of*

**+Tim Bruce+** (cousin of Mary Jo Mahaffy - G)

**+Cindy Gochis+** (Daughter of Norma Elmer – St.)

**+Kenny Turek+** (Cousin of Doug Klein, Friend of the Community)



**Hospitalized? Welcome a visit?** Contact the Office at **906.753.4932**, or reach out to **Pr Brenda** directly at **720.989.8218** (call/text), and we'll make it happen!



## We Do!

Rev. Brenda L. Greenwald

### Dear Church,

On Sunday, **October 8, 2023**, at Gethsemane Lutheran Church, we celebrated the double baptism of **+Lena** Alexis and **+Neva** Evalynn Stage, twin daughters of Alicia Stage, and little sisters of big brother, **Everit**.

We all watched as their mama **promised** to live into the Christian responsibilities of a parent: to **live** with the girls among God's faithful people, to **bring** the girls to the word of God and the holy supper, to **teach** them the Lord's Prayer, Creeds, and 10 Commandments, to **place** in their tiny, little hands the holy scriptures, and to **nurture** them in **faith** and **prayer**.



She promised to nurture **Lena** and **Neva** (*as she did with Everit when he was a baby*) in the Christian faith as **empowered** by God's Spirit, and to **help** them live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church. Then, **WE**, as the gathered **People of God**, made promises to support both **Lena** and **Neva** and **pray** for them in their lives in Christ.



Then, just **ONE** week later, these **SAME** promises were spoken over **Dorothy Davis** at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church on Sunday, **October 15, 2023**. In the span of just 7 days, **three** daughters of God were washed in God's holy waters! *Glory, hallelujah!*

These are **POWERFUL** promises, Church! A **sacrament** isn't just a fancy process we do, just so folks can say they've been baptized, and then move on with life. Baptism **isn't** just one of those things you check-off your list of things to **do** – Baptism is one of those things you get to **BE**. We get to **BE** a part of the greater story of life and death and life again in Christ. We get to **BE** sealed by the Holy Spirit. We get to **BE** part of the Family of God, and we get to **BE** washed in the cleansing water of God's love.

We get to join parents and sponsors – and even adults – when we say a hearty **"WE DO"** when asked if we will actively help the baptized **LIVE INTO** their life in Christ. These include **LOFTY** instructions, **HEAVY** responsibilities...and (*most importantly*) absolutely, **BEAUTIFUL** assurances! These three, daughters of God get to **BE** blessed by your ongoing support and prayers, Church. Let the **"WE DO!"** you proclaimed so heartily during worship translate into a continued relationship with these daughters in Christ.

Washed in the promises,

*Fr. Brenda*



**The Boxcar Bunch: 50 congregations** in the **UP** and **WI** make quilts/kits for this cause each year!



Confirmant **Kenzie Bright** and her friends and family helped load the boxcar, which included **71 quilts, 60 backpacks, and 12 fabric kits** from our friends at Gethsemane!



**Chili Supper  
2023**





## Got Hope?

Pr Jim Duehring, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission

Several years ago, a very wise, incompetent person said to me, "Hope is not a strategy. "The context was not about church matters, but about a significant project involving lots of money and many, many action steps. Barriers to the goal were multitude, yet the vision of the project remained. The key people on the project were not wanting or willing to give up. I think really what he meant to say was that "wishful thinking "or "magical thinking "is not a strategy to help us move forward to achieve the outcome we want.

The Bible says a lot about HOPE. Probably the most famous passage about HOPE is from Jeremiah 29:11: **"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."** (NRSV) Romans 8:25 is helpful: **"But if we hope for what we do, do not see, we wait for it with patience."** (NRSV)



Pastor Eugene Petersen, author of the message version of the Bible, wrote the following in his book, **A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society**:

*Hope defined, hoping does not mean doing nothing... It means going about our assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and the conclusions. It is not compelled to work away at keeping up appearances with a bogus spirituality. It is the opposite of desperate and panicky, manipulations, of scurrying and worrying. And hoping is not dreaming. It is not spinning and illusion, or fantasy to protect us from our boredom or our pain. It means a confident, alert, expectation that God will do what he said he will do. It is imagination put in the harness of faith. It is a willingness to let God do it his way, and in his time. It is the opposite of making plans that we demand that God put into effect, telling him both how and when to do it."*

I really like what Petersen says about **HOPE**. There's a lot of solid wisdom, and perspective contained in those words above. I'm glad we have many churches with HOPE in their name. Here in Marquette, we have HOPE – a shared ministry of four Methodist ministries. I've never run across a church named, "No Hope Here."

There are a lot of things and institutions that we have lost hope in. Most people have no hope that Congress can run efficiently. I still don't want to give up. Hope in that matter because we need good leadership and decision-making in Congress. I will try to stay informed. I will vote. Most importantly, I will pray for our nation's leaders, no matter my personal feelings about them.

I don't have hope that I will get back to my weight at age 17. But, I'm still trying to lose some weight and exercise. I don't have hope that I will become an astronaut. That was my dream as a young boy, but I will keep looking up at the stars, and stand in amazement of it all. I don't have hope that all our churches will see a grand influx of youth, coming back to our churches, or all our adults, engaging in Bible Study, or all our budget projections being perfectly met, or all of our pastors/LLM's and council leaders always agreeing with each other, and never experiencing challenges and conflicts. But I have HOPE in the power of God to look at the "dry bones "of our lives and church institutions, and declare to us, "you are my beloved. I can still breathe my spirit in you. I'm not going to abandon you, even though you may have abandoned me. "

I have hope not, because I have a crystal ball for the future, but because I have seen and felt God and God's people come through many a storm in the past. I also read throughout the scriptures that God is a God of hope. Without a sense of hope, we can lapse into nihilistic, chaotic, self-fulfilling, doom, and gloom. I don't want to live like that. I don't want to see the people and the world around me like that.

I will continue to cling to (NRSV), not as a magical dream, but as my faith in a God, who loves this world. And I sure hope that God will help me and you live out the vision of God's loving and just purposes for all. God gave us **HOPE!**



# Dwelling in the Word

## November 2023: Luke 16:1-13 – “The Dishonest Steward”

<sup>16</sup> Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. <sup>2</sup> So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’



<sup>3</sup> Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup> I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ <sup>5</sup> So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup> He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ <sup>7</sup> Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’

<sup>8</sup> And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

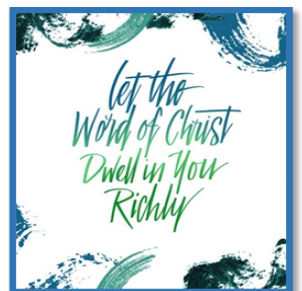
<sup>10</sup> “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. <sup>11</sup> If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? <sup>13</sup> No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

1. What catches your attention?
2. What questions does this passage raise for you?
3. Where might God’s Spirit be nudging you in this passage?

## Join the whole Northern Great Lakes Synod in Dwelling in the Word.

Visit <https://bit.ly/DwellNGLS> for monthly Scripture passages that you can use to begin your meetings: Council, quilting, Faith Formation, Women's Group - whatever meeting you have, begin with this brief devotion and Dwell in the same Word together.

Also, you are invited to join the **Synod Council** (*Pastor Brenda will be there*), via **Zoom**, to Dwell in that monthly Word the first **Thursday** of every month. The Zoom link will be on the Synod website.



**May our Synod be blessed as we listen to God through Dwelling in the Word!**

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## Daily Bible Readings, Year A

*Year A focuses on the Gospel of **Matthew**. The semi-continuous Old Testament readings focus on major Genesis narratives, the covenant with Moses, and the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land. The second, New Testament, readings are from Romans, Philippians and 1 Thessalonians.*

Wed – Nov 1	Proverbs 16:1-20	Matthew 19:16-22	Psalms 119:41-48
Thu – Nov 2	1 Samuel 2:27-36	Romans 2:17-29	Psalms 43
Fri – Nov 3	Ezekiel 13:1-16	2 Peter 2:1-3	Psalms 43
Sat – Nov 4	Malachi 1:6-2:9	Matthew 23:13-28	Psalms 43

## Sunday Nov 5 – Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

*Micah 3:5-12 | Psalms 43 (3) | 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13 | Matthew 23:1-12*

**Prayer of the Day:** *O God, generous and supreme, your loving Son lived among us, instructing us in the ways of humility and justice. Continue to ease our burdens, and lead us to serve alongside of him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Amen.*

Mon – Nov 6	Jeremiah 5:18-31	1 Thessalonians 2:13-20	Psalms 5
Tue – Nov 7	Lamentations 2:13-17	Acts 13:1-12	Psalms 5
Wed – Nov 8	Proverbs 16:21-33	Matthew 15:1-9	Psalms 5
Thu – Nov 9	Amos 1:1-2:5	Revelation 8:6-9:12	Psalms 70
Fri – Nov 10	Amos 3:1-12	Revelation 9:13-21	Psalms 70
Sat – Nov 11	Amos 4:6-13	Matthew 24:1-14	Psalms 70

## Sunday Nov 12 – Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

*Amos 5:18-24 | Psalms 70 (5) | 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 | Matthew 25:1-13*

**Prayer of the Day:** *O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Amen.*

Mon – Nov 13	Amos 8:7-14	1 Corinthians 14:20-25	Psalms 63
Tue – Nov 14	Joel 1:1-14	1 Thessalonians 3:6-13	Psalms 63
Wed – Nov 15	Joel 3:9-21	Matt 24:29-35	Psalms 63
Thu – Nov 16	Ez 6:1-14	Rev. 16:1-7	Ps 90:1-12
Fri – Nov 17	Ez 7:1-9	Rev 16:8-21	Ps 90:1-12
Sat – Nov 18	Ez 7:10-27	Matt 12:43-45	Ps 90:1-12

**UPDATING  
OUR WEBSITE**

Please be patient with us as we work out all the bugs!

For Questions call 906-228-2300 or email [ngls@nglsynod.org](mailto:ngls@nglsynod.org)



## Sunday Nov 19 – Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

*Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 | Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12 (12) | 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 | Matthew 25:14-30*

**Prayer of the Day:** *Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Amen.*

Mon – Nov 20	Zechariah 1:7-17	Romans 2:1-11	Psalm 9:1-14
Tue – Nov 21	Zechariah 2:1-5, 5:1-4	1 Thessalonians 5:12-18	Psalm 9:1-14
Wed – Nov 22	Job 16:1-21	Matthew 24:45-51	Psalm 9:1-14
Thu – Nov 23	1 Kings 22:13-23	Revelation 14:1-11	Psalm 85:1-7a
Fri – Nov 24	1 Chronicles 17:1-15	Revelation 22:1-9	Psalm 95:1-7a
Sat – Nov 25	Isaiah 44:21-28	Matthew 12:46-50	Psalm 95:1-7a

## Sunday Nov 26 – Christ the King Sunday

*Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 | Psalm 95:1-7a (7) | Ephesians 1:15-23 | Matthew 25:31-46*

**Prayer of the Day:** *O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.*

Mon – Nov 27	Esther 2:1-18	2 Timothy 2:8-13	Psalm 7
Tue – Nov 28	Esther 8:3-17	Revelation 19:1-9	Psalm 7
Wed – Nov 29	Ezekiel 33:7-20	John 5:19-40	Psalm 7
Thu – Nov 30	Zechariah 13:1-9	Revelation 14:6-13	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

*Thanks for making the **Chili Supper** a success!  
Over **75** people gathered throughout the night,  
enjoying fellowship and **delicious** chilis!*



*thank you*



*The numbers for the **Sauerkraut Dinner** were not yet available when we went to print, but from the way things are coming together, it's going to be a **great night!***





## Church Council Minutes

### October 11, 2023 - Council Meeting



**Present:** Cheri Leiphart, John Starzynski **Excused:** Pr. Brenda Greenwald **Absent:** Keith Olson, Bob Berglin  
Meeting called to order at **9:02a**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**      **Motion to Accept: John**      **SECOND: Cheri**      **FAVOR**  
**SECRETARY, PASTOR'S AND FINANCIAL REPORTS were not shared at this meeting**

#### MINISTRY TEAM LIAISONS

#### UPDATES / NOTES

- **Finance Team** (John, Cheri, Bob) - A meeting has been scheduled for 11/08/23 following our regular, monthly Council Meeting, to discuss and prepare the 2024 Church Budget.
- **Memorial Fund** (John) - We have received one new memorial in honor of +Nancy Diehm+
- **Property Team** (John, Keith, Cheri)
  - The frame surrounded the outdoor, church sign in front of church has been re-built, repaired, re-shingled, and re-stained! Thanks to all who helped make it all come together. We are waiting on the electrician to finish the lighting for it.
  - Johnston Furnace has performed our annual check on all four furnaces and everything is in working order.
  - Sam Salo has been contacted regarding mowing the church lawn. We are awaiting a price quote.
- **Stewardship Team** (Cheri) - The Chili Supper planning is in full swing with sign-up sheets to be passed through church again this Sunday. Flyers have been posted in local businesses and information shared on Facebook. The event will be added to the digital community sign on the highway.

**Motion to Accept: John**      **SECOND: Cheri**      **FAVOR**

#### OLD / ONGOING BUSINESS

1. **AED Purchase:** The AED (Automated External Defibrillator) has ARRIVED! John will install the box that holds it on the wall of the Fellowship Hall.
2. Status of **Chili Dinner:** Covered in Stewardship Report. Hopefully, more will sign up to participate on the sign-up sheets this Sunday.
3. **Holy Communion/Word + Sacrament:** Discussion tabled until next meeting w/ full Council present.

**NEW BUSINESS**      **None at this time.**

#### NEXT STEPS & ADJOURNMENT

- a. **Next** St. Stephen's Council Meeting: Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm  
(Note time change AND that Budget Meeting will occur AFTER)
- b. *Dwelling in the Word* **Devotion** for **November** 2023: Cheri

**Motion to Adjourn: John**      **Time Adjourned: 9:05**



# FORTUNE LAKE

*A place of grace in Crystal Falls, MI*



**Senior Day** is a wonderful way to reconnect with old friends and make a few new ones along the way. Come and join us for a day of conversation, delicious food, and fun!

Each **Senior Day** begins at **10a CT** and wraps up by **2p CT**.

The program varies, but generally includes the following:

- 10a** Arrival and check-in, coffee, fellowship
- 10:15a** Devotion & announcements
- 10:30a** Presentation morning session
- 12p** Lunch
- 1p** Presentation afternoon session

**Monday, Nov. 13: Thanksgiving**

**Monday, Jan. 15: Program TBD**

**Monday, Mar. 11: Program TBD**

**Monday, May 13: Program TBD**

**\$10 donation**/participant is requested. **RSVP** by the **Friday before** to 906.214.2267 or [hospitality@fortunelake.org](mailto:hospitality@fortunelake.org)



Kudos to the hard-working gentlemen who helped restore our **sign** our front!  
(**Bill C, Keith O, John St, and Dennis D**)



Thanks to the generous **donations** of two families, we now have a working **AED** on-site! **Trainings** to happen shortly!





## Blessing of the Animals

*In honor of St. Francis, patron saint of animals, we held our annual Blessing of the Animals in the backyard of the parsonage! Confirmants helped with the mini-service, and leashes were a lifesaver!*







Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



Northern Great  
Lakes Synod  
[www.nglsynod.org](http://www.nglsynod.org)

# Monthly Newsletter - 2023

***Important DATES and Information inside!***

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
PO Box 435  
Stephenson, MI 49887

