

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Member congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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July 23, 2023 † Pentecost 8



We Welcome Our Visitors who are with us this morning.

We hope that you are uplifted by the Gospel at our worship service.

We invite you to join us every Sunday.

† Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 65 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) †

**Our Worship Services will be Posted to Our Website Each Sunday Evening.
To Watch our Worship Service Online Please Click This Link:**

<https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>

Opening Hymn: 545 *Word of God, Come Down on Earth*

LSB 545

1 Word of God, come down on earth, Liv - ing rain from
2 Word e - ter - nal, throned on high, Word that brought to
3 Word that caused blind eyes to see, Speak and heal our
4 Word that speaks God's ten - der love, One with God be -
heav'n de - scend - ing; Touch our hearts and bring to birth
life cre - a - tion, Word that came from heav'n to die,
mor - tal blind - ness; Deaf we are: our heal - er be;
yond all tell - ing, Word that sends us from a - bove,
Faith and hope and love un - end - ing. Word al - might - y,
Cru - ci - fied for our sal - va - tion, Sav - ing Word, the
Loose our tongues to tell Your kind - ness. Be our Word in
God the Spir - it, with us dwell - ing, Word of truth, to
we re - vere You; Word made flesh, we long to hear You.
world re - stor - ing, Speak to us, Your love out - pour - ing.
pit - y spo - ken, Heal the world, by sin now bro - ken.
all truth lead us; Word of life, with one bread feed us.

Text: James Quinn, 1919–2010
Tune: Johann Rudolph Ahle, 1625–73, alt.
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SERVICE OF THE WORD

(Worship Supplement, p. 12)

Invocation

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve Him as His dear children. But we have disobeyed Him and deserve only His wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to Him and plead for His mercy.

G **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against You and do not deserve to be called Your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy upon me according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

P God our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, He has removed your guilt forever. Through faith in Him, which was created in you by the Holy Spirit, you are His own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to His will.

G **Amen.**

Kyrie *Latin for "O Lord." We approach our Lord with a cry for help in all the needs of our earthly life.* W.S. p. 13

♪ Lord have mercy on us. Christ have mercy on us. Lord have mercy on us.

Gloria in Excelsis *Latin for "Glory to God in the highest."* W.S. p. 13

**♪ Glory to God, we give You thanks and praise;
Of heav'nly joy and peace on earth we sing.
We worship You, to You our hearts we raise,
Lord God, almighty Father, heav'nly King.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son,
You bore for us the load of this world's sin.
O Lamb of God, Your glorious vict'ry won,
Receive our prayer, grant us Your peace within.**

**Alone, O Christ, You only are the Lord,
At God's right hand in majesty most high:
Who with the Spirit worshiped and adored,
With all the heav'nly host we glorify.**

Prayer of the Day

P We pray:

Almighty God, You have built Your Church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone. Continue to send Your messengers to preserve Your people in true peace that, by the preaching of Your Word, souls may be saved, faith may be strengthened, and Your Church may be kept free from all harm and danger. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 55:8-11 (EHV)

***⁸ Certainly my plans are not your plans,
and your ways are not my ways, declares the Lord.***

***⁹ Just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so my ways are higher than your ways,
and my plans are higher than your plans.***

***¹⁰ Just as the rain and the snow come down from the sky
and do not return there***

***unless they first water the earth, make it give birth, and cause it to sprout,
so that it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater,***

***¹¹ in the same way my word that goes out from my mouth
will not return to me empty.***

***Rather, it will accomplish whatever I please,
and it will succeed in the purpose for which I sent it.***

Second Reading

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (NKJV)

P The second reading is from Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23.

C Sanctify us by Your truth, O LORD. Your Word is truth!

On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. ² And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. ³ Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ "And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ "Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no


depth of earth. ⁶ "But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"...

[Jesus' explanation of the parable] ¹⁸ " Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

P Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it!

Alleluia and Verse

When God speaks to us in His Word it is natural for us to respond. We sing "Allelujah!"—meaning, "Praise the Lord!"

 **Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**
These words are written that we may believe
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Apostles' Creed *We boldly confess what we believe.*

W.S. p. 15

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

→

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Hymn of the Day: 827 Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling

LSB 827



1 Hark, the voice of Je - sus call-ing, "Who will go and work to - day?
2 Some take up His task in morn-ing, To their Lord re - spond-ing soon;
3 For as rain and snow from heav - en Wa - ter seeds in dust - y soil,
4 Hear - ken to the Lord whose com - ing Marks the time when grace shall end,



Fields are white and har-vests wait-ing—Who will bear the sheaves a - way?"
Some are called in heat of mid - day, Oth - ers late in af - ter-noon;
Caus - ing them to bud and flow - er, Giv - ing bread to those who toil;
When with His an - gel - ic reap - ers He in glo - ry shall de-scend.



Loud and long the Mas - ter call - eth; Rich re - ward He of - fers thee.
E - ven as the sun is set - ting, Some are sent in - to the fields,
So the Lord sends forth His prom - ise, Words of life and joy and peace—
Soon the night, the fi - nal har - vest; Soon the time for work shall cease.



Who will an - swer, glad - ly say - ing, "Here am I, send me, send me"?
There to gath - er in the boun - ty That God's Word so rich - ly yields.
Nev - er void to Him re - turn - ing, Bear - ing fruit with great in - crease.
Then the souls His grace has gar - nered Shall en - joy His Sab - bath peace.

Text (st. 1): Daniel March, 1816–1909, alt.; (sts. 2–4): Stephen P. Starke, 1955

Tune: Joseph Barnby, 1838–96

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Text (st. 1) and tune: Public domain

Sermon Text: Romans 8:18-25 (EHV)

¹⁸ For I conclude that our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ In fact, creation is waiting with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope ²¹ that even creation itself will be set free from slavery to corruption, in order to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

²² For we know that all of creation is groaning with birth pains right up to the present time. ²³ And not only creation, but also we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we eagerly await our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ Indeed, it was for this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for something we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patient endurance.

Sermon Theme: Heavenly Hope in Hard Times

- ✠ What does Paul say about the **“sufferings”** of this life (v. 18)?

- ✠ Paul uses the word **“hope”** five times in these eight verses. What is this **“hope”** he is speaking of? (see v. 23-24)

- ✠ While we are still here in the midst of a painful, “groaning” creation waiting for Jesus’ return, what will we do? What do we do?

Offertory

W.S. p. 16

♪ *Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Your presence, Take not Your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Uphold with Your Spirit free.*

Offering *We offer our gifts to the Lord, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.
(✠ If you have an offering to give today, please place it in the plate in the church entryway. ✠)*

Sermon Hymn: 727 On Eagles' Wings

LSB 728



1 You who dwell in the shel-ter of the Lord, Who a -
 2 snare of the fowl - er will nev - er cap-ture you, And
 3 You need not fear the ter - ror of the night, Nor the
 4 For to His an - gels He's giv - en a com - mand To



bide in His shad - ow for life,
 fam - ine will bring you no fear;
 ar - row that flies by day;
 guard you in all of your ways; Though
 Up -



Say to the Lord: "My ref - uge, My
 Un - der His wings your ref - uge, His
 thou - sands fall a - bout you,
 on their hands they will bear you up, Lest you



rock in whom I trust!"
 faith - ful - ness your shield.
 Near you it shall not come.
 dash your foot a - gainst a stone.

Refrain



And He will raise you up on ea - gles' wings,



Bear you on the breath of dawn, Make you to shine like the



sun, And hold you in the palm of His hand. 2 The

Text and tune: Michael Joncas, 1951

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Prayer / Prayer Requests *We bring our prayers to God.*

Lord's Prayer

- C** Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction *The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



Closing Hymn: 782 Gracious God, You Send Great Blessings (please stand for the last verse)



1 Gra - cious God, You send great bless - ings
2 By Your Word You formed cre - a - tion
3 In His earth - ly life, our Sav - ior
△ 4 Heav'n - ly Fa - ther, may our car - ing

New each morn - ing all our days. For Your mer - cies
Filled with crea - tures large and small; As we tend that
Knew the care of faith - ful friends; May our deeds of
Bear the im - print of Your grace; With the Son and

nev - er end - ing, For Your love we of - fer praise.
end - less trea - sure May our care en - cir - cle all.
ded - i - ca - tion Of - fer love that nev - er ends.
Ho - ly Spir - it, Praise be Yours in ev - 'ry place!

Refrain

Lord, we pray that we, Your peo - ple Who Your gifts un - num - bered claim,
Through the shar - ing of Your bless - ings May bring glo - ry to Your name.

Text: Gregory J. Wismar, 1946
Tune: Columbian Harmony, 1825, Cincinnati
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: **St. Stephen – West (Mt. View): Bible Class – 9am**
Worship – 10am
VBS Teacher's Meeting & Set-up - 5pm

St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward): Worship – 1pm
Bible Class – 2pm

This Week: Mon. – Fri. – **Vacation Bible School (VBS) (Mt. View) – 9am-11:30am**

Next Sunday: **St. Stephen – West (Mt. View): Joint Worship Service w/ Baptisms – 10am**
7/30/23 Church Picnic @ DeAnza Park – 11:30am

No Worship at St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward)

Online Worship Services - <https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>

VBS is this Week! July 24th-28th – Ages 4-13 – 9am -11:30am -

Registration is still open and can be done online through our school's website (**[ssls.org](https://www.ssls.org)**). We currently have 22 students signed up (I had miscounted, sorry!). Praise God!

Welcome TVBS Teachers! –

We welcome our two volunteer teachers from the CLC's TVBS program: Marcie Schierenbeck and her daughter, Jordyn, from Eau Claire, WI. We thank you for assisting us with our Vacation Bible School this week! May our Savior Jesus bless our week as we teach His Word to His little lambs.



If you would like to volunteer to help with our VBS please speak with Pastor Luke.

VBS Snack Sign-Up / Lunches for VBS Volunteers – We are in need of volunteers to bring snacks and drinks for the VBS students. If you would like to do so please sign the sheet in the church entryway. NOTE: Please do not bring snacks that contain peanuts or cashews. Also, we will be providing lunch for our VBS teachers and staff each day. If you'd like to help provide lunch on one of the days please sign the sheet in the entryway.

VBS Donations – Meals & Sightseeing – We will be doing some sightseeing in the Bay Area with our TVBS teacher volunteers as a “thank you” for all their hard work and help. We will be doing three sightseeing/activity trips in the afternoon/evening during the week of VBS. If you would like to make a donation to help pay for some of the costs of meals and sightseeing expenses please mark your offering envelope “TVBS.” Thank you!

Church Picnic & Joint Worship Service – Sunday, July 30th - Sign-Up Sheet in Entryway



On Sunday July 30th we will be having a joint worship service in Mountain View at **10am**, followed by our church picnic starting at approximately **11:30am** at

DeAnza Park in Sunnyvale (1150 Lime Dr., Sunnyvale, CA 94087). There is a sign-up sheet in the entryway if you'd like to bring some food to share. Please come and join your brothers and sisters in Christ from both congregations at both our worship service and picnic on July 30th!

Baptisms Next Sunday During Worship Service – July 30th @ 10am –

Natalie and Vincent Lang will be baptized during our joint worship service next Sunday, July 30th. Natalie and Vincent have been students at SSLS for several years. We give thanks to God that He has led these children through His Word to desire to receive the blessings of the sacrament of baptism!

“He [God] saved us through the washing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.”
– Titus 3:5-6 EHV