

# The Evangel

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Justified by grace, we are a Community of Servants who follow Jesus' example by living lives of service to others.

February 2019

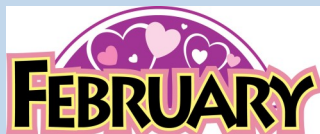
Volume 60, Issue 2

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In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to hold on to in this world is each other.

—Linda Ellerbee



## From the Pastor...

Dear Members and Friends of St. Stephen,

*You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14)*

These are powerful and familiar words, spoken by Jesus to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount. We heard them this past Sunday in worship. We speak these words at every baptism as a lighted candle is presented to the newly baptized. They are words of great affirmation that Jesus speaks to his church. And they are words of great challenge, calling us to reflect the light of Christ and his love in all we say and do.

Episcopal Bishop Michael Curry tells the story of once being with a group of young children who kept saying to him, "Hi, God." He told them, "I'm not God, but I work for God." But that didn't do it. They kept saying to him, "Hi, God." As he reflected on this, he said that perhaps the children had something right. When the world looks at Christians they see a reflection of God. Let your light so shine before others, Jesus said, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

We had a wonderful congregational meeting on Sunday and a good turnout of people too. St. Stephen Lutheran Church is a beacon of light in our community. In so many ways the light of Christ shines in and through this congregation. This coming Sunday, February 3, we have a "Potluck with a Purpose" after the worship service. The focus will be on the Call Process. We'll hear from our Call Committee chair, Lynn Kriser, and learn about the call process for a new pastor at St. Stephen. We'll learn a lot and have some good discussion. Hope you can join us for this time of learning and fellowship.

We will be starting a "Green Team" (Environmental Stewardship Team) at St. Stephen this winter and spring. If you are interested in caring for the environment, ecology, recycling and/or energy conservation please come to a brief (15 minutes) opening meeting on Sunday, February 17, during Coffee Hour in the fellowship hall. We'll briefly discuss forming a Green Team and set a date for our initial meeting in the spring.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6. Plan now to join us for worship throughout Lent on Sundays and Wednesdays. For our midweek Lenten suppers and evening prayer, we will be continuing our Global Meals and learning more about the work of our church through ELCA World Hunger. This was very well received last year. If you'd like to provide soup some Wednesday, or try your hand at preparing a dish from one of our global meal countries, please see the sign-up sheet on the Serve Table in the fellowship hall. Hope you can join us. God's love and peace be with you all.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Erick Johnson



## Finance Matters

### *MSU Safe Place*

Thank you for generously supporting our second offerings in December designated for MSU Safe Place. Your gifts in December totaled \$551.

### *Living Water Ministries*

During the month of February, our second offering supports Living Water Ministries, the camping ministry owned by the North/West Lower Michigan and Southeast Michigan Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Living Water Ministries provides spiritual formation opportunities for all ages and has been recognized for their effective anti-racism work through their Bridgebuilders Program.



ASH WEDNESDAY

**March 6**

Plan now to join us on Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent:

6:00 p.m.— Soup Supper

7:00 p.m.— Ash Wednesday Liturgy with Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion



8 Cindy & Mike Jenks  
14 Carlos & Judy Vallin  
Robert & Naida Schelter



2	Sandy Hawkins	12	Terry Greiner
4	Bea Stoinmenoff	17	Lindsey Hall
6	Chelsey Satterlee	20	Kirk Hansen
7	Pam Lind	23	Andrew Dartt
8	Josh Borta	25	Cynthia Bruch
9	Sandi Kotajarvi	26	Judy Vallin
10	Jill Bielawski	28	Linnea Arksey

## From the Council

We would like to thank you all for attending the Annual Meeting last Sunday, January 27. We had a great turnout, elected new council members for 2019, and had some good questions and discussion. We also elected (for a three-year term) an endowment fund team member, Paulette Piirainen. We expect to appoint the treasurer (Rebecca Bossenbroek), recording secretary (Margaret Sheffer), and one endowment team member (for a two year term) at our next Council meeting. We are very much looking forward to a wonderful, rewarding, and fulfilling year together.

Gratefully,

Jacquelyn Williams-Armstrong, President  
Margaret Sheffer, Recording Secretary  
Rebecca Bossenbroek, Treasurer  
Brian Yusten, Facility Development Team Leader  
Amber McPherson, Financial Development  
Gary Hansen, Welcome Ministry Development  
Julie Dartt, Nourish Ministry Development  
Claudia Cameron, Serve Ministry Development



## Faith Book Group

The Faith Book Group will have a potluck supper at Paulette Piirainen's house on Friday, February 22 and we will discuss *Gilded Years* by Karin Tanabe. We welcome new participants! Please contact Margaret Sheffer (Sheffer.1283@yahoo.com) or Paulette (paulette343@yahoo.com) for any questions. The March book will be *Traveling Mercies* by Anne Lamott.



## Pub Theology Group



Our Pub Theology Group's January meeting was cancelled due to the snow and bitter cold. We will meet next on Thursday, February 21, at 7:00 pm at Jackie Williams-Armstrong's home. Jackie's address will be included in the Pub Theology email reminder as the date nears. The discussion questions will also be included and posted on our website ([www.StStephenOnline.org](http://www.StStephenOnline.org)). New members are always welcome! If you are not on the church email list and would like to be, please contact the church office, 517-321-2244 or [Office@StStephenOnline.org](mailto:Office@StStephenOnline.org).

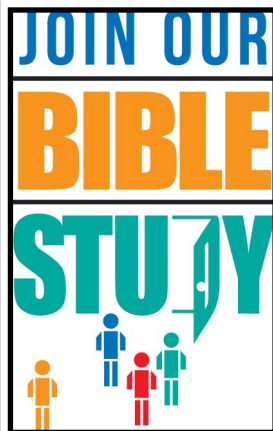
## Food Bank Sunday

Just a reminder that Sunday, February 3, is a Food Bank Sunday. (Food Bank Sundays are the first Sunday of each month.) Please place food items in the Food Bank shopping cart in the fellowship hall. Much needed items are: canned tuna (lots of requests for this item), cooking oil, coffee, hot chocolate, boxed potatoes, syrup, canned fruits & vegetables. Thank you for your help with this important ministry.



## Adult Bible Study Welcomes New Participants

### Soulkeeping: Caring for the Most Important Part of You



A new Sunday Adult Class Study will begin on Sunday, February 17. We'll be doing a study of the book *Soulkeeping: Caring for the Most Important Part of You*, by John Ortberg. Ortberg has been a favorite author for our Sunday class, and this is a good new book:

**When is the last time you thought about the state of your soul?** In an age of materialism and consumerism that tries to buy its way to happiness, many souls are starved and unhealthy and unsatisfied by false promises of status and wealth. We've neglected this eternal part of ourselves, focusing instead on the temporal concerns of the world—and not without consequence. Bestselling author John Ortberg presents another classic that will help you discover your soul—the most important connection to God there is—and find your way out of the spiritual shallow-lands to true divine depth. With characteristic insight and an accessible story-filled approach, Ortberg brings practicality and relevance to one of Christianity's most mysterious and neglected topics.

The course will consist of video presentations by the author and group discussion. Order your own copy or let us know if you need one ordered. Course facilitators will be Lynn Kriser and Pastor Erick. The class meets at 9:00 a.m. Sundays in the library. Hope you will join us on February 17.

## "Green Team" Forming

We will be starting a "Green Team" (Environmental Stewardship Team) at St. Stephen this winter and spring. If you are interested in caring for creation, recycling and/or energy conservation please come to a brief (15 minutes) opening meeting on Sunday, February 17, during Coffee Hour in the fellowship hall. We'll briefly discuss forming a Green Team and set a date for our initial meeting in the spring.



# Green Team



**St Stephen Lutheran Church, Lansing MI**  
**Congregation Finances as of December 31, 2018**

	Dec	YTD
General Fund Revenue		
Envelopes	14,390	137,456
Rent	1,400	16,800
Other	289	5,210
Total General Fund Revenue	16,079	159,466
General Fund Expenses		
Leadership	2,682	31,561
Welcome/Nourish/Serve	1,021	5,047
Staff	3,707	43,124
Building/Facilities	4,886	34,994
Administration	1,083	7,485
Mission Support	1,747	16,086
Total General Fund Expenses	15,126	138,297
Revenue less expenses	953	21,169
Transfers to / from restricted funds	0	(296)
Fund balance at beginning of month / year	10,986	(8,936)
<b>General (unrestricted) fund balance at December 31, 2018</b>	<b>11,939</b>	<b>11,937</b>
	Dec	YTD
Temporarily-restricted fund revenue	2,902	13,481
Temporarily-restricted fund expenses	2,008	24,054
Revenue less expenses	894	(10,573)
Transfers to / from restricted funds	0	514
Fund balance at beginning of month / year	15,034	25,987
<b>Temporarily-restricted fund balance at December 31, 2018</b>	<b>15,928</b>	<b>15,927</b>
	Dec	YTD
Permanently-restricted fund (endowment principle) value change	268	(2,381)
Transfers to / from restricted funds	0	0
Fund balance at beginning of month / year	37,758	40,406
<b>Permanently-restricted fund (endowment principle) balance at December 31, 2018</b>	<b>38,026</b>	<b>38,026</b>



## NARRATIVE LECTIONARY READINGS for February

Friday, February 1, Matthew 5:43-48, *Love for Enemies*

Saturday, February 2, Matthew 6:1-6, *Concerning Almsgiving*

Sunday, February 3, Matthew 6:7-21, *Concerning Prayer*

Monday, February 4, Psalm 20:7, *Psalm*

Tuesday, February 5, Matthew 6:22-24, *Teachings of Jesus*

Wednesday, February 6, Matthew 6:25-34, *Teachings of Jesus*

Thursday, February 7, Matthew 7:15-20, *Teachings of Jesus*

Friday, February 8, Matthew 7:21-23, *Teachings of Jesus*

Saturday, February 9, Matthew 8:1-17, *Healings of Jesus*



Sunday, February 10, Matthew 7:1-14, 24-29, *Judging Others*

Monday, February 11, Psalm 37:16-18, *Psalm*

Tuesday, February 12, Matthew 9:9-17, *Call of Matthew*

Wednesday, February 13, Matthew 8:18-27, *Miracles of Jesus*

Thursday, February 14, Matthew 8:28-9:8, *Healings of Jesus*

Friday, February 15, Matthew 9:18-38, *Healings of Jesus*

Saturday, February 16, Matthew 10:1-15, *The Twelve Apostles*



Sunday, February 17, Matthew 13:24-46, *The Parable of the Weeds among the Wheat*

Monday, February 18, Psalm 84:1-7, *Psalm*

Tuesday, February 19, Matthew 10:16-42, *Coming Persecutions*

Wednesday, February 20, Matthew 10:26-42, *Coming Persecutions*

Thursday, February 21, Matthew 11:1-19, *John the Baptist*

Friday, February 22, Matthew 11:20-30, *Woes*

Saturday, February 23, Matthew 12:1-8, *Teachings of Jesus*

Sunday, February 24, Matthew 14:13-33, *Feeding the Five Thousand*

Monday, February 25, Psalm 95:1-5, *Psalm*

Tuesday, February 26, Matthew 12:9-21, *Teachings of Jesus*

Wednesday, February 27, Matthew 12:22-32, *Teachings of Jesus*

Thursday, February 28, Matthew 12:33-45, *Teachings of Jesus*



The Narrative Lectionary readings will also be listed in each Sunday's announcements, posted on the St. Stephen website ([www.StStepheonOnline.org](http://www.StStepheonOnline.org)), and found in the online version of *The Evangel*.





## LAY MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY

**Council Meeting**  
Sunday, February 17  
11:30 am

### St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2900 North Waverly Road, Lansing, MI 48906

Phone: 517-321-2244 Fax: 517-321-2632

Email: [office@StStephenOnline.org](mailto:office@StStephenOnline.org) | Website: [StStephenOnline.org](http://StStephenOnline.org)

Worship: Sundays at 10:00 am

Sunday School Class: Sundays at 9:00 am (Sept — May)

Bible Study: Sundays 9:00 -9:50 am

Church Office Hours: Monday — Friday, 9:00 am — 1:00 pm

#### Staff Members

Erick Johnson, Pastor

Renee Dixon, Office Manager

Rebecca Bossenbroek, Director of Worship

[erickj74@gmail.com](mailto:erickj74@gmail.com)

[office@ststephenonline.org](mailto:office@ststephenonline.org)

[rebeccabossenbroek@comcast.net](mailto:rebeccabossenbroek@comcast.net)

#### Council Members

Jackie Williams-Armstrong, President

Margaret Sheffer, Recording Secretary

Rebecca Bossenbroek, Treasurer

Brian Yusten, Facility Development Team Leader

Amber McPherson, Financial Development

**\*\*Position Open\*\*** Leadership Development Team Leader

Gary Hansen, WELCOME Ministry Development

Julie Dartt, NOURISH Ministry Development

Claudia Cameron, SERVE Ministry Development

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[mcperson613@gmail.com](mailto:mcperson613@gmail.com)

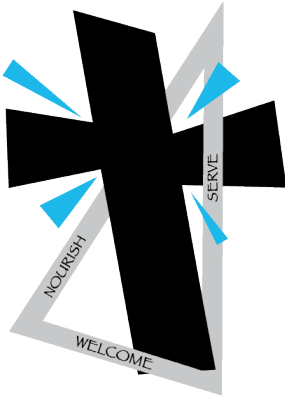
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[juliedartt@gmail.com](mailto:juliedartt@gmail.com)

[cameronw6216@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cameronw6216@sbcglobal.net)



	FEB 3	FEB 10	FEB 17	FEB 24
ALTAR FLOWERS	_____	Cindy Lewis	Carlos & Judy Vallin	Bob & Claudia Cameron
ASSISTING MINISTERS (Paulette Piirainen)	Sarah Holland	Lorri Yusten	Paulette Piirainen	Brian Yusten
USHERS	Terry Greiner	Dave Lyons & Linda Stiffler	Bucht Family	Mike Borta
ALTAR CARE (Claudia Cameron)	Char Seifert for entire month.			
COFFEE HOUR	Potluck w/a Purpose	Paulette Piirainen & Connie Rohrer	Char Seifert & Connie & Joyce Rohrer	Mary Dartt
GREETERS				
OFFERING COUNTERS	Bob Cameron Claudia Cameron Ruth Gaudard	Angie Bennett Gladys Collison Gloria Kandle	Bob Cameron Gladys Collison	Jackie Williams-Armstrong Amber McPherson Gloria Kandle



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Website: [StStephenOnline.org](http://StStephenOnline.org)

DATED MATERIAL

OR CURRENT OCCUPANT



### Potluck with a Purpose

February 3 is our Potluck with a Purpose. The focus will be on the Call Process.

We'll hear from our Call Committee chair, Lynn Kriser, and learn about the call process for a new pastor at St. Stephen. We'll learn a lot and have some good discussion.

Please bring a dish to pass and join us after worship for food, fellowship, and fun!