

# SAINT STEPHENS

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## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



SEPTEMBER 28, 2025 | 9:00 AM | SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU ARE ON  
LIFE'S JOURNEY, YOU'RE WELCOME HERE!

## SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

On most Sundays, the children will follow their teachers to Sunday School after the Time for All Ages. On the first Sunday of the month, Communion Sunday, they will start in Sunday School and join their families for Communion during the service.

For those children staying in worship, please use the bookmarks available to mark the pages for today's hymns. Go through the bulletin with your children and circle the things in which they might be interested (Children's time, hymns, helping with the offering). Mark the bulletin with symbols for when it is time to be quiet and listen, join in the hymn, read a prayer aloud, etc.

**Busy Bags** are available in the church entryway. Quite often, children can absorb what is going on in church if their hands are occupied and their minds do not have to focus so much on "behaving." It takes a great deal of energy and concentration for a child to stay quiet and still. Please use the busy bags to occupy their hands so they are free to listen. Nudge them when it is time for a hymn and ask them to sing along with you. Encourage them to come forward for the *Time for All Ages* and to participate in presenting the offering.

### POINTS TO PONDER PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund, Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice, UCC:

*In a time when diversity is misunderstood, preachers can shine God's light of love upon all people who might be feeling afraid of being targeted, stigmatized, and punished because of their neurodivergence.*

*There is nothing broken, sinful, or cursed about being neurodivergent. The church can be a sacred community for authentic belonging, a place where the mask of "normal" can be removed, and we can fully receive God's love without exception.*

### Quick and Easy Electronic Giving!!

To give an offering one time to the church, to a special offering, or to set up regular giving, text **"SAINTSTEPHENS" to 73256** to give using your mobile device. This number will never send unsolicited texts to you. To cancel further messages, text STOP. If you need assistance with text giving, text HELP. Standard text message and data rates may apply. **OR Scan the QR Code** to be connected to our website.



### Stay in the loop!

**Sign up for text alerts to stay updated on all upcoming events and church news. To join, text "Join" and your email to 715-255-1232.**

SOMETHING TO INSPIRE <https://youtu.be/NWuf5FX-hjQ>

WELCOME

PRELUDE

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, beloved children of God:

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

**Praise the LORD!**

**Praise the LORD, O my soul!**

Let us worship God.

**Amen.**

**\*PRAISE HYMN**

*"Christians, We Have Met to Worship"*

#277

**\*INVOCATION**

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray:

**O God, rich in mercy, you look with compassion on this troubled world.**

**Feed us with your grace, and grant us the treasure that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**PASSING THE PEACE**

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

The peace of Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**A TIME FOR ALL AGES**

**A LESSON FROM THE EPISTLES**

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is

a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

#### THE GOOD NEWS

Luke 16:19-31

<sup>19</sup> “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. <sup>20</sup> And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, <sup>21</sup> who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. <sup>22</sup> The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In Hades, where he was being tormented, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup> He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.’ <sup>25</sup> But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus in like manner evil things, but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ <sup>27</sup> He said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house—<sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ <sup>29</sup> Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ <sup>30</sup> He said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ <sup>31</sup> He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’ ”

This is the Good News. In this truth we find eternal life.

**Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

## **ORDER FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

### INTRODUCTION

### QUESTIONS FOR THE PARENTS AND SPONSORS

### CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT

Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to Parklynn as she lives and grows in Christ?

**We promise our love, support, and care.**

### PRAYER OVER THE WATER

### ACT OF BAPTISM

\*PRESENTATION HYMN     *"I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry"*     #75

### PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED

### BENEDICTION

### PASTORAL PRAYERS

### TIMES OF PASSAGE: FAREWELL

...In the name of Jesus the Savior.

**Amen.**

### BLESSING

MISSION FOCUS                      Neighbors In Need

### CALL TO THE OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

\*PRESENTATION OF GIFTS                      *"Take My Gifts"* vs. 1                      #381

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God loves a generous giver! Let us pray with joy as we dedicate these gifts:

**With reverence and awe for your ways,  
we offer our gifts for the work of love and justice,  
the work of healing, restoring and setting free in your holy name,  
God of our hearts. Amen.**

### OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

\*CLOSING HYMN                      *Requests*

**\*BENEDICTION**

...Go forth empowered to love and  
speak God's holy truth each day.

**Amen.**

Go in peace. Remember the refugee.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**     *"There's Bread for the Journey"*

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***There's bread for the journey and friends for the way,  
There's hope for tomorrow and love for today.  
The cup of forgiveness, all blessings release,  
To heal and renew us and bring us God's peace.***

***O Holy Spirit bind us together, now.***

***O Holy Spirit, bring us your peace. (2x)***

POSTLUDE

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## **NATURE CHURCH TODAY!!**

**Sunday, Sept. 28, from 4-6 pm,** we will have our first "Pop up" church in nature at Stanges Park. God speaks to us through scripture and through creation. These outdoor services seek to help us reconnect our spirituality with nature.



## THANK YOU!

**Musicians** today are Darlene Johnson and Tiffany Bucheger.

**Radio Ministry** is in honor of our 47th anniversary on September 30th, from Jon & Gerri Robinson.

**Livestream** is sponsored by Bill & Paula McIntyre. They are in celebration of Bill's birthday on September 4, in celebration of our 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on September 9, and in celebration of and thanksgiving for the Staats and Sholund memorial scholarships.

**Technical Director:** Jody Meyer and Corey Dornbrack

Parklynn Jean was welcomed into the community of Saint Stephens United Church of Christ through the waters of baptism. May her faith in the Lord be courageous and unending. Blessings to Parklynn!



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## TAKING THE LESSONS HOME

Sharing is not a built-in skill. Spend some time with a 3-year-old and you will hear the word “mine” a lot. Sharing must be taught. Today’s readings have dire warnings for people who do not learn to share.

There are books to help teach children to share but the best way is through modelling. Some tips from parents:

Do not order “happy meals.” Rather get the children’s portion but order yourself large fries and make a point of sharing them with your child. Or order a few large servings with more children and serve them family style, reminding everyone to share.

When you give to the church or any organization, show the envelope to your children—or the screen before you hit “send”—and let them know you are sharing some of the money you have earned with a worthy cause and talk about what that ministry does that makes you want to share with it.

The more readily we talk about our sharing, the more our children will want to share their time, talent, and treasure with others.

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