



St. Stephen Lutheran Church

APRIL/MAY 2024

News & Notes

3510 72nd Street • Urbandale, IA 50322 • 515-276-4628 • office@ststephenlutheran.org



COME HOME
TO KOINONIA!



THURSDAY,
APRIL 4
2:00 P.M.



Care Companions invites you to our next St. Stephen gathering on **Thursday, April 4 at 2:00 p.m.**

We've named our event Koinonia, which is Greek for fellowship, partnership, and community.

A short worship service is planned, followed by a time for visiting together and enjoying some yummy spring treats. If you need a ride to church on April 4, we will have drivers available.

Please call Pastor Chris Lang at 515-293-2293 to let us know that you are coming and if you need a ride. Leave her a message if she doesn't answer.

We look forward to seeing you!

News & Events

Highlights of February 20 Council Meeting

- Congregation Council elected new officers. Alma Grove, president; Audrey Jones, vice-president; Peg Gilchrist, secretary; Greg Dahm, treasurer.
- Welcomed new council members: Bill Freeman, Jane Burger, and Greg Dahm.
- Two members of the Staffing Assessment Task Force, Cathy Edmondson and Carol Koepplin, shared highlights from the report. The congregation council will review the Task Force’s insights and consider action on their recommendations at the next meeting.
- January 2024 financial report:
 - * \$32,503 in revenue (\$6,622 less than budgeted)
 - * \$29,999 in expenses – excluding mortgage principal (\$13,487 less than had been budgeted for the month)
- Council meetings will be moved to the fourth Tuesday of the month for the rest of this year.
- Next meeting is April 2 at 7:00 p.m.



Coffee Hour with RFC



On March 17, visitors from Redeemed Fellowship Center (RFC) joined the St Stephen community for after-worship coffee, chai, and fellowship. Many thanks to the Brown Bag Book Club for organizing this event and helping us forge a more personal connection between our two congregations.



Staffing News

Our Office Guild and Bookkeeping Guild volunteers continue to share their time and support our office and financial operations. Thank you!

The Congregation Council is continuing its work to discern future staffing needs based on the Staffing Assessment project and staff input. Following this, they will provide instruction to the Personnel Committee to guide future recruitment and hiring. Once recruitment begins, job information will be shared via the church website and our other online communications.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this season of change!



News & Events (continued)

LSI Ministry Highlight: Host Homes Ministry

At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we believe every Iowan deserves the independence they need to thrive. LSI's Host Homes is an innovative way LSI is serving adults with disabilities. Through this program, an individual moves from Supported Community Living into a private family home with a carefully selected mentor. This program is built entirely around an individual's goals and interests, and LSI's extensive matching process ensures the mentor and mentee are a great fit.

Take a moment to read the following story from a Host Homes mentee:

“My journey with LSI's Host Homes started in early 2023. I've known my mentor for a few years while he provided hourly services to me. We learned about Host Homes and thought it would be a good fit for us. I moved into my mentor's home where he helps me maintain a daily routine with schoolwork, household tasks, daily living skills, improving independence, and more.

I attend a college nearby and go to classes a few days a week. I am able to navigate the local bus system to access my community to attend classes and visit friends. My mentor is always available to transport me into the community as needed.

This summer, I went on a trip across the country with one of my classes. While on this trip, I was able to maintain my independence with limited support,



but I knew my mentor would be available by phone to assist me with my coping skills and problem solving. This trip was a big success for me knowing I had support only a phone call away.

I like LSI's Host Homes Program because my mentor supports me in the way I want to be supported, assists me with some daily tasks I struggle with, and understands me.”

If you are interested in becoming a Host Homes mentor and helping a fellow Iowan achieve independence, please visit LSIowa.org/HostHomes for more information.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

The Table — Last Week is May 1

Thank you to everyone who has joined us on Wednesdays for Supper and Worship at The Table during the 2023-2024 program year! It's been great to see youth, families, mentors, choir members, and friends join us for our mid-week gathering and community-building.

As we get ready for The Table to take a summer break, we wish to thank you to the many volunteers who have taken turns providing hot meals for 35-50 people:

- Janet Davis • Jane Dieseth • Peg Gilchrist • Gina Moriarty • Karen Huntley • Rick and Sharon Jorgenson • Donna and Dan Schroeder • James Twedt • Jeff Lorenz • Eric Gude • Brad Edmondson • Marybeth Lytle

Special Thanks to Janet Davis, Peg Gilchrist, and Gina Moriarty, who've provided kitchen leadership throughout the year. Together, they've provided healthy salads and yummy deserts each week and have taught everyone how to use the dishwasher!



News & Events *(continued)*

Update on Worship & Music Ministry

Dear St. Stephen community –

I am writing to share a recent development regarding St. Stephen’s Worship & Music ministry. Regrettably, Mr. Brian Copple will not be joining our staff as previously planned.

The hospitalization of Brian’s spouse had delayed previous plans for his arrival on March 18. There have now been further health complications, including a new diagnosis of progressive lung disease. Consequently, Brian has chosen to remain in Australia indefinitely so that his spouse can continue in the care of his trusted medical team.

While we are saddened by this news, we understand that family comes first. Please join me in extending our understanding, support, and prayers to Brian and his spouse during this time.

After Easter, St. Stephen leaders will regroup and explore new opportunities to fulfill the needs of our congregation. I am confident that we will find the right fit for our church community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or a member of the Congregation Council.

Sincerely,

Pastor Andrea

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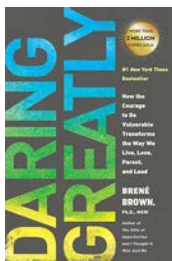
We give thanks for Caroline Kinney as she concludes her service as Interim Organist and Choir Director. She is pictured here with the Chancel Choir as they prepare for Holy Week and Easter services.

News & Events (continued)

Brown Bag Book Club

Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m.

The book club gathers each Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. in the office Conference Room. We are reading *The Way of Integrity* by Martha Beck through April and will begin our next book, *Daring Greatly*, by Brené Brown, in May.



Backpack Packing

After Worship on **Sundays, April 7 & May 5**, St. Stephen continues our partnership with Olmsted Elementary School for the 2023-2024 school year, providing food to help 100 children get through the weekend without going hungry. This ministry is made possible by your regular offerings as well as designated gifts. Please join us for our packing event after worship. If you'd like to get more involved with this ministry, please contact our project coordinator, Carol Mahlendorf: 515-991-3586.



Grandview University Choir Concert

Sunday, April 7, 5:00 p.m. at Luther Memorial Church (1201 Grandview Ave, Des Moines). The Grandview Choir celebrates the conclusion of their 2024 concert tour with a program called "Of Light and Life."

"Earth and Sky" Concert

Umeri, the Drake University alumni choir, conducted by Aimee Beckmann-Collier, will present Earth and Sky, a musical examination and celebration of our complicated relationship with the natural world, on **Saturday, April 6, 7:30 pm**, in Sheslow Auditorium. There is no admission charge. This 50-minute concert will feature works by Jake Runestad, Johannes Brahms, Giselle Wyers, and Eriks Esenvalds.

Property Day

Saturdays, April 20 & May 18

We need your help to maintain and beautify our church. We typically work for 2-3 hours as needed. Please check the Friday email for any special instructions. If Saturday morning doesn't work, contact Jerry Strawman, (515) 402-3357, for alternative time.



Supper Club

Fridays, April 19 & May 17

6:30 p.m.

We hope you'll consider joining your church family for this fun event on the third Friday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the host's home. All you need to do is RSVP to our hosts: Donna and Dan Schroeder for April (donna.schroeder@gmail.com) and Ardie and Jerry Strawman for May (aestrawman@yahoo.com). Let them know if you're coming and ask questions if you have them. Just bring a dish to share and your beverage of choice.



Update Your Online Directory Info!

Our Online Directory is a great tool! You can access it at www.stephenlutheran.org, or download the "Online Member Directory" app to your smart device and enter our mobile code: STSTEPHENLUTHERAN.

We're actively working to update the information in the online directory — and you can help! Each member can update their own photo and contact information. If you don't have your login information, email Audrey Jones at audreyjones516@gmail.com for the link and password to access your information.

With the Online Directory, you can see members' photos and contact info. It's good to connect faces and names. Before you know it, you will be greeting pew mates by name when you share the peace!

Youth

Mission & Goals of the ELCA Youth Gathering:

The Gathering’s mission of faith formation in young people is the hub which all things come for the Gathering. The goal is to create environments and opportunities for faith formation through worship, interactive learning, Bible study, service, and fellowship. While some of the experiences can be replicated at home, some are unique and special to the Gathering because of the size and scope of this ministry.

There are five core goals that we have for ministry:



The hope is to accomplish these goals at the Mass Gatherings, where participants come together for music, speakers, and worship. Others might tackle these goals in the Interactive Learning space, where they can experience exciting things that the ELCA and our partners are doing. Or maybe it’s experiencing God’s work already being done in New Orleans, LA., on the Accompaniment Day. It might just happen during Community Life or the nightly congregational devotion and debrief called the Final 15.

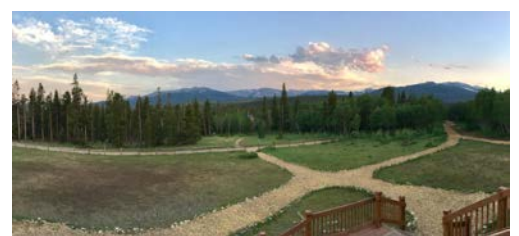
Wherever it happens, we know that this is a powerful and transformational ministry if you are brave enough to let your guard down long enough for the Spirit to enter in, if you can be quiet long enough to listen to someone different from yourself, if your prayer is to be open to what God is calling you to do, if you realize the strong roots of a community will ground you no matter the strength of life’s storms, if you imagine yourself as part of something bigger than you!

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Youth will Visit Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp this Summer

A wonderful and enriching experience is planned for our 7th and 8th grade students at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in Colorado this summer. We will experience the beauty of creation and embrace the simplicity and joy of life in community, seeking to live the Gospel and asking ourselves, “What do I believe?” We will encourage our young people to reflect on their beliefs and fostering a spirit of exploration is key to nurturing their spiritual growth. The experience will surely lay a strong foundation for their lifelong journey.



Youth (continued)

Graduation Recognition

Graduate recognition is **Sunday, May 5** during worship. It's truly heartwarming to witness the journey of these four seniors and the impact they've had on our community. As they embark on their next chapter, may they continue to inspire others with their faith, resilience, and willingness to serve. Join us May 5, and offer them our blessings and support as they step forward into the world!

Graduating Seniors and the colleges they will attend in the fall:



Lainey Drown,
Illinois State University



Ben Edmondson,
Iowa State University



Gavin Freeman,
DMACC



Sam Pattison,
Coe College

Outreach

God's Work. Our Hands

Our next project will be Veteran's Appreciation. We will be purchasing items for the VA Central Iowa Healthcare System in Des Moines.



Look for a Display in the Gathering Area starting on May 1.

You will:

1. Select a gift tag,
2. Purchase the item listed on the tag
3. Return the item to the church unwrapped by Sunday, June 2

Food Pantry Collection for April and May

In **April** we will be collecting **cereal, pasta and peanut butter**. In **May** we will collect **paper towels, multi surface cleaner, bathroom cleaner and toilet bowl cleaner**.

Monetary donations are always welcome throughout the year. You can place your donation in the offering plate, bring it to the office, or mail it to St. Stephen.



Free Little Pantry

Donate "dry goods" groceries by placing them in the Free Little Pantry itself. If there's not enough room in the Little Pantry, overflow can be placed in the designated tote inside the Office Entry door. Please be sure to close and latch the pantry door to keep weather and critters out.



Free Little Library

Donate books for all age groups by placing them in the designated tote inside the Office Entry door. Contact the church office for assistance with an after-hours donation. For assistance with the Free Little Pantry or Free Little Library, please contact our team: Sarah Tomjack, Krista Dial, and Janet Davis.



40 Days of Giving

"You give them something to eat," Jesus says. Through our Easter Offering for ELCA World Hunger, St. Stephen is doing just that. Thank you for your generous support of this important global ministry!

The final day to share your Easter offering for ELCA World Hunger will be **April 25**. Please make checks payable to St. Stephen with "ELCA World Hunger" in the memo. For cash offerings in worship, please use the envelopes in the pew racks with the note "ELCA World Hunger."

April/May 2024 Celebrations

April and May Anniversaries



- April 6:** Carey & Chris Boysen (11)
Dennis & Diane Hubert (53)
- April 7:** Jennifer & Mike Boohar (23)
- April 8:** Larry & Sonja Hunt (35)
Arlys & Wes Ketterling (57)
Jim & Barb Rinell (29)
- April 9:** James & Penny Twedt (36)
- April 10:** Brent & Sherry Arntzen (25)
Rachael & Nick Bartschat (3)
- April 13:** Doug & Brenda Tiffany (11)
- April 26:** Jaymie & Shane Bruse (5)
- May 12:** Brett & Missy Boerner (17)
- May 16:** Curtis & Audrey Jones (31)
- May 17:** Steve & Marlys Ruth (27)
- May 24:** Chris & Deb Nelsen (30)
- May 25:** John & Dianne Chadwick (50)
Nick Dial & Krista Brittain-Dial (10)
- May 27:** Greg & Andrea Arens (6)
Bob & Gayle Johnson (52)
- May 31:** Gentry & Krista Cairo (27)

- April 20** Willie Taylor
- April 21** Dave Kvitne
Zora Tomjack
- April 22** Ian Ehredt
Sharon Sabin
Bob White
Becky Ziemann
- April 24** Diane Hubert
Bill Schaffer
- April 27** Zachary Edmondson
- April 29** Marilyn Gift
- April 30** Noreen Christians
- April 30** Janet Williams

- May 2** Barb Huey
Tom Zinselmeier
- May 4** Tanya Kruse
Andrea Myers
Michelle Weinberger
- May 5** Mike Newell
- May 8** Lyle Pohlman
Connor Story

- May 10** Scott Quam
- May 12** Amandine Habben
- May 14** Don Rumelhart
- May 16** Steve Quam
Ann Waddell

- May 19** Megan Woolworth
Katherine Chapman
Larry Hunt
Shaun Quam
- May 20** Maxine Andrews
Ken Goering
Julia Hoeger

- May 24** Bryan Townes
Kathy Codner
Marybeth Lytle
Allen Rappold
Chris Zinselmeier

- May 25** Colin Niceswanger
- May 26** Marlys Maahs
Donna Schroeder
- May 27** Noah Harding
Ryan Walker
Matt Zinselmeier

- May 28** Gavin Freeman
- May 29** Curtis Jones
Ronald Myers
- May 30** Brent Arntzen

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April and May Birthdays



- April 1** Shelly Anderson
Roger Willem
Connie Winger
- April 2** Noah Edmondson
- April 4** Andrew Moats
Madie Weinberger
- April 5** Agnes Brown
Michael Le Blanc
- April 6** Kathleen Hawks
- April 7** Barb Pettigrew
Connie Richman
Marion Walck
- April 8** Joshua Chapman
Adrianna Turner
Cory Weinberger
- April 9** Jay Groth
Doug Tiffany
- April 11** Keaton Walker
- April 12** Rebecca Hadley
Denise Hawks
Nick Noah
- April 15** Hudson Barlow
Wanda Malaney
Sue Ziemann-Miro
- April 16** Holly Middleton
- April 17** Katie Rawson
- April 18** Everett Devries

- May 10** Scott Quam
- May 12** Amandine Habben
- May 14** Don Rumelhart
- May 16** Steve Quam
Ann Waddell

- May 19** Megan Woolworth
Katherine Chapman
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- May 24** Bryan Townes
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Chris Zinselmeier

- May 25** Colin Niceswanger
- May 26** Marlys Maahs
Donna Schroeder
- May 27** Noah Harding
Ryan Walker
Matt Zinselmeier

- May 28** Gavin Freeman
- May 29** Curtis Jones
Ronald Myers
- May 30** Brent Arntzen

April 2024 Calendar

Tuesday, April 2

Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 3

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.

Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.

Emerge, 6:45 p.m.

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 4

Koinonia Worship & Fellowship, 2:00 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 6

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 7, Second Sunday of Easter

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.

Emerge Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.

Backpack Buddies, 11:00 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.

Monday, April 8

Faith Formation Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 10

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.

Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.

Emerge, 6:45 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 11

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Chapel Chimers Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 13

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 14, Third Sunday of Easter

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 17

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.

Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.

Emerge, 6:45 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 18

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 19

Supper Club, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 20

Property Committee, 8:00 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 21, Fourth Sunday of Easter

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.

Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.

Emerge, 6:45 p.m.

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 25

Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 27

Joyce Wellendorf Memorial Service, 1:00 p.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 28, Fifth Sunday of Easter

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 30

Life of Faith Team, 6:30 p.m.

Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

May 2024 Calendar

Wednesday, May 1

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.
Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.
Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.
Emerge, 6:45 p.m.
SSLC Band Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m.
ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 2

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 4

Whitney Music Recital, 9:00 a.m.
RFC/SSLC Partnership Meeting, 11:00 a.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 5, Sixth Sunday of Easter

Graduation Recognition, 10:00 a.m.
Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
Backpack Buddies, 11:00 a.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.
Whitney Music Recital, 3:00 p.m.

Monday, May 6

Faith Formation Committee, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 8

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, May 9

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 11

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 12, Seventh Sunday of Easter, Mother's Day

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, May 15

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, May 16

Care Companions, 5:00 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, May 17

Leif Horak Cello Recital, 3:00 p.m.
Supper Club, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 18

Property Committee, 8:00 a.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Conference, 2:00 p.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 19, Day of Pentecost

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, May 23

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 25

Redeemed Fellowship Conference, 2:00 p.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 26, The Holy Trinity, First Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. (also live streamed on Facebook and YouTube)
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 12:00 p.m.

Monday, May 27, Memorial Day

Tuesday, May 28

Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 29

Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.
SSLC Band Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 30

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
3510 72nd St.
Urbandale, IA 50322
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



SAVE THE DATE FOR
VBS 2024!! June 16-19