



News & Notes

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

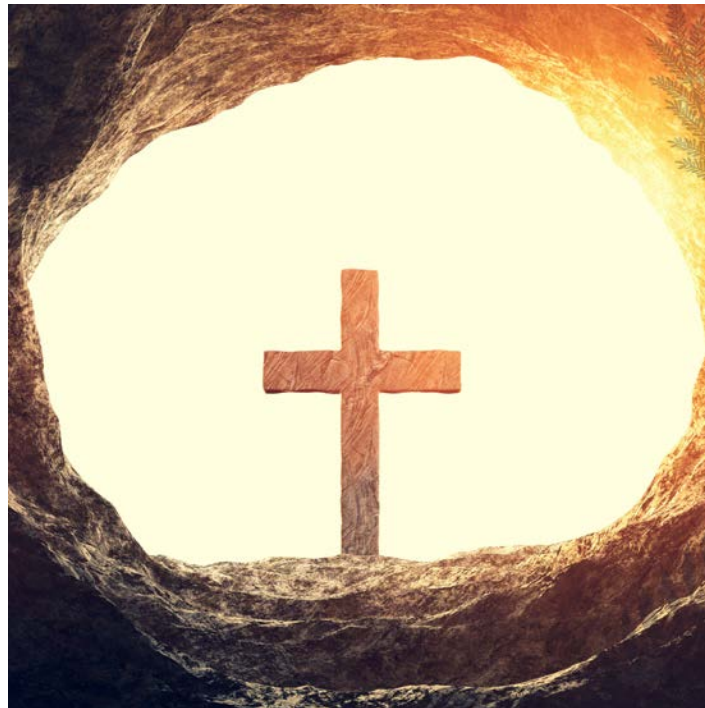
From the Pastor *The Resurrection Difference*

Easter is an exciting day! It is the day we proclaim that Christ is risen; He is risen indeed! Death has been defeated! But will it make any difference in our daily lives?

For the earliest followers of Jesus, the resurrection DID make a difference... an incredible difference! For Paul, faith in the resurrected Christ meant being jailed time and time again. For Peter, as legend has it, faith in the resurrected Christ meant having to bear his own cross.

It's obvious that the "resurrection difference" wasn't an end to life's difficulties and disappointments; but for the followers of Jesus, there was ONE very BIG difference. The "resurrection difference" was knowing that they were living in the presence of a God who had defeated death! And THAT made ALL the difference in the world. The "resurrection difference" turned a small band of disillusioned disciples into people of hope! It turned the disciples into people who would go out and turn the world upside-down with this good news of great joy!

When ordered to hold his tongue, Peter, a changed man because of the "resurrection difference" boldly replied, "We are witnesses of these things; and we cannot help but speak about what we have seen and what we have heard."



The "resurrection difference" made ALL the difference in the world for the disciples. But will it make any difference for us? It CAN make a difference. We can live just like the disciples, knowing the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives, plunging into life with power and purpose, secure in the knowledge that each and every one of us belongs to the Living Lord and Savior; the One who has power EVEN over death.

The church, that was horrified at the crucifixion on Friday, will gather on Easter morning to give thanks and praise to an incredible God! We hope you can join us! Trust me. Life will never be the same when the "resurrection difference" touches your heart.

Pastor Mark

Holy Week & Easter, 2026

Holy Week & Easter



SCHEDULE 2026

Palm Sunday, March 29

10:00 a.m. Worship

Wednesday, April 1

(no Wednesday worship or meal)

Maundy Thursday, April 2

6:15 p.m. Community Meal

(provided by SSLC Congregational Council)

7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship

Music from the SSLC Chancel Choir and a string quartet with Kris Shay, Kathy Naja, Brad Benson, Curtis Barr & Jody Holmes.

Good Friday, April 3

6:15 p.m. Community Meal

(provided by SSLC Congregational Council)

7:00 p.m. Good Friday Worship

Music from Tori Richard & Pastor Mark Holmes.

Saturday, April 4

11:00 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Sunday, April 5

8:30 a.m. Easter Breakfast

10:00 a.m. Easter Sunday Worship

Music from the SSLC Chancel Choir, Chapel Chimers & Praise Band

Invite Your Friends!!

Wednesdays During Lent



News & Events

Supper Club Friday, April 17, 6:30 p.m.

Please join us for Supper Club! Supper Club provides once per month informal socializing in someone's home. Open to any adult — with hosting not required. Just bring an appetizer to share and your beverage of choice. Please let our hosts, Dan and Donna Schroeder (donna.schroeder4@gmail.com), know that you will be attending.



Property Day Saturday, April 18 8 a.m.

We need your help to maintain and beautify our church. We typically work for 2-3 hours as needed.

Please check the Friday email on April 17 for any special instructions. If Saturday morning doesn't work, contact Jerry Strawman for an alternative time.



Prayers for Healing, Sunday, April 26

Once each month, Sunday worship includes an opportunity for individual prayer for healing and anointing (the sign of the cross placed on your forehead in oil). If you wish to receive this ministry, simply proceed to one of the healing ministers once you've received communion.



ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
INVITES YOU TO

*Koinonia
Fellowship
and
Worship*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22 2026
ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH • 3510 72ND STREET, URDANDALE, IA

St. Stephen's Care Companions invite you to the next Koinonia gathering on **Wednesday, April 22, 2026**. It will begin with a Fellowship supper at 5:15 p.m., followed by the Worship service at 6:00 p.m.

Koinonia is Greek for fellowship, partnership, and community. Our gatherings provide an opportunity to catch up with friends and make some new ones. Feel free to bring a friend to join in fellowship and worship.

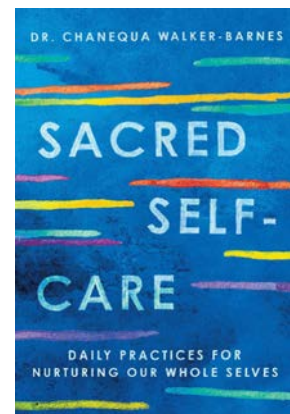
Please contact Pastor Chris Lang at 515-293-2293 to let us know that you are coming and whether you need a ride. Please leave a message if she doesn't answer!

We look forward to seeing you!

Brown Bag & Sacred Self-Care Book Discussions

Sacred Self-Care book discussions (Brown Bag and 4 p.m. group) will continue through **April 22**. There will be no Brown Bag or 4 p.m. group on **April 1**.

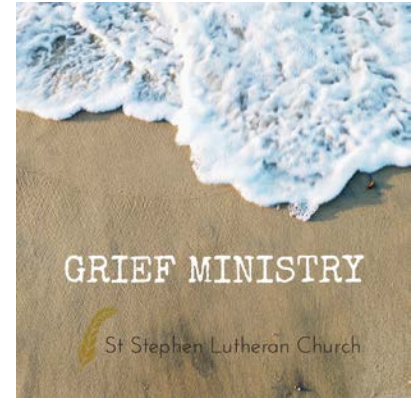
Brown Bag will not meet **April 29**. The next book is *Holy Envy* by Barbara Brown Taylor and will begin **May 6**.



News & Events (continued)

Grief Ministry

We have all been touched by grief at one time or another. Whether it's the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, or maybe some unresolved issue, we will all face it. But we don't have to face it alone. Comfort can be found in shared experiences and by talking about the pain we feel. We invite you to join us as we work through a resource called **Life Recovery Workbook for Grief**. This book will guide our discussion and ask some questions for us to consider. Please join us on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. beginning on May 6. In order to have enough books for all, we ask that you sign up (a clipboard in the Gathering area) or contact Pastor Chris (clang001@luthersem.edu) or Pastor Mark (therevmjh@aol.com).



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Life of Faith – God Sightings

Living Our Faith Every Day

Through “Life of Faith” we seek to intentionally focus on the many and varied forms of service to neighbors through family, workplace, school, local community, and world. Each expression of the church is encouraged to develop approaches and resources in order to make the Life of Faith initiative a vital part of its reason for existence. *(from the Life of Faith website)*



Our congregation is already living out this calling in meaningful ways each day. Through our interview sermons, we've been given a unique window into how God is working through the lives of our sisters and brothers – serving others beyond the walls of the church in everyday settings.

On March 8, Ben Tomjack shared his story with us, and it was truly inspiring. His testimony offers a powerful glimpse into how faith takes shape in daily life and how God calls each of us to serve in our own vocations and relationships. If you haven't had the chance to watch Ben's interview, we warmly encourage you to take a few moments to do so. It's a wonderful opportunity to get to know him more personally and to see how God is at work through his life of service. Just scan the QR code to the right.



We look forward to hearing from other members of our congregation in the future. If you feel moved to share your Life of Faith story, please contact Marsha Arens, Leslie Dahm, John Dieseth or Larry Ewing.

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Choir Schedule

The Chancel Choir welcomes all singers, teenager–adult! Contact Jana Taylor with questions. Please note our upcoming schedule below:

- **Thursday, April 2:** Maundy Thursday Worship Service Performance, warm-up at 6:30 p.m.
- **Sunday, April 5:** Easter Worship Service Performance
- **Tuesday, April 21:** Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, April 28:** Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

APRIL OFFICE HOURS

THE SSLC OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAYS IN APRIL. THE OFFICE WILL BE OPEN REGULAR HOURS ON TUESDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS IN APRIL.

Save the Date for Vacation Bible School

YOU ARE INVITED TO

ARTIC ANIMALS CARE FOR CREATION

VBS

June 7-10
5:30-7:30 p.m.
food, stories, crafts,
songs, and games!

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
3510 72nd St
Urbandale, IA
ststephenlutheran.org
tracy@ststephenlutheran.org



Supporting Pastors Andrea and Ronald Myers

Below is Pastor Andrea's Most Recent Post on CaringBridge (March 22)

Day 60: "One Day at a Time"

Last summer, when I was first diagnosed with leukemia, we found it frustrating how often our questions were answered with "it depends."



Then I received some wisdom from my cousin Erin, who is a physician and cancer researcher. She said, "Remember, you're an n of 1." (From a research and statistics point of view, "n" refers to the number of individuals in the sample being studied.) In other words, my case was and is unique. Never before has someone just like me had just this version of leukemia, which means there's no precedent or guarantee for just how treatment will unfold.

"It depends" means I might follow a typical trajectory, or I might not. I might progress faster, or slower. I might have complications, or I might not. It just depends.

I'm incredibly grateful that so far, my path has been a relatively smooth one. We met with my transplant doctor (Dr. Hefazi) last Tuesday, and it was all good news. I continue to outpace "average" in terms of my healing progress. While I've lost quite a bit of weight (due to issues with appetite and nausea), I'm eating better as the nausea steadily improves. I'm able to be physically active, walking around the hospital and in the neighborhood around Gift of Life. I've also tolerated various medications well, for example taking oral Magnesium instead of needing IV infusions.

Dr. Hefazi was astonished to note that I haven't received a red-cell transfusion since last October. Such a transfusion would commonly be required during the early days after the transplant. The fact that I didn't need one seems to reflect how quickly my donor cells engrafted. The rest of my bloodwork also looks good. He's very pleased, and I'm incredibly grateful!

They've now stepped back my appointments so that I only have bloodwork and a provider visit on a weekly basis. This feels particularly strange after the intensity of daily appointments at the beginning. It leaves longer blocks of time for things like reading and knitting (me) or quilting (Ronald). I wouldn't say we're bored, but the potential is there. Thankfully, improving brainpower means I can now hold my own when we play Rummy 500!

The next big step (or series of steps) is to wean me off my immunosuppressant medications. One of the potential complications after a bone marrow transplant is GVHD or Graft vs. Host Disease. As the new donor cells (aka "graft") create a new immune system, they might mistake my own cells (aka "host") as foreign and attack them. This can lead to inflammation in the skin and organs. To avoid this, I'm on a drug that suppresses my immune system, so all my cells get along. Now that I've reached Day 60, we will begin weaning me off this med by reducing the dose each week. This is another "it depends" situation, but the hope is that I'll be down to zero around Day 100.

Once I'm off the immunosuppressing meds, we can ascertain the timeline for getting my vaccinations done. The BMT has reset my immune system to that of a newborn. Over the next year or so I will need to redo the vaccines I've had along the way (TDaP, Hep B, flu, etc). Since I will continue to be immunocompromised from here on, those vaccines are especially important for my general health.

Contemplating these next steps is exciting, but a bit overwhelming. The early days felt like baby steps, and now it feels like we're taking big leaps forward. Each day we count up from the transplant means a step toward "normal." While I occasionally have a "step back" day when I need to nap, or when the nausea is worse, my progress is generally moving in the right direction. Before long, we'll be able to start counting down to our return home.

In the meantime, I want to thank everyone for the continued stream of cards and texts reminding us that we're in your thoughts and prayers. It's amazing how often a card or note arrives at just the right time with a word of encouragement that matches the need of the day. A perfect example is a card yesterday, which offered the reminder to "Just keep going" because "One day at a time is a pretty good pace."

Just what I needed to hear!! A pretty good pace, indeed.

Supporting Pastors Andrea and Ronald Myers



CARINGBRIDGE™

CaringBridge Page for Pastors Andrea & Ronald Myers

Pastor Andrea and Ronald have created a CaringBridge page, and have been posting regular updates on Pastor’s health journey.

You can view her page at [caringbridge.org](https://www.caringbridge.org) then search for “Andrea Myers.”



MealTrain for Pastors Andrea & Ronald Myers

Scan the QR code if you would like to share gift cards or cash donations.



Delivery of prepared meals is suspended for now.

In addition, cards can be mailed to Pastor Andrea in Rochester: Gift of Life House, Andrea Myers, 724 2nd St. SW, Room 210, Rochester, MN 55902. Andrea’s email address: revandreamyers@gmail.com

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Amazon Wish List for Gift of Life Transplant House

“Our mission is to provide high-quality, affordable accommodations to transplant patients and their caregivers in a supportive, home-like environment. Gift of Life, Inc. is a 501(c)3. EIN #41-1495845 Your donations will be greatly appreciated!”



Pastor Andrea and Pastor Ronald are now in Rochester for a monthslong stay. The Amazon wish list they created has been completely fulfilled! However, you can **scan the QR code and donate items** requested by the Gift of Life Transplant House, the residence at which they will be staying. Be sure to select the shipping address of the house when checking out.

Circle of Support

From Pastor Andrea’s friend Angie: *“Andrea and Ronald have deeply appreciated the immense amount of love and support they have received during their journey with leukemia. I know that will continue as they enter this intense new phase. However, reading about recovery from a transplant, a common theme is isolation. I thought how wonderful it would be to coordinate their circle of support to together ensure a continual stream of reminders they are not alone and to help them feel connected to the broader world.*



This signup is not intended to at all discourage spontaneous reach outs of support! Please think of it as supplemental and not limiting you to only reaching out on any day(s) you commit to on this effort! Each day has slots for sending text or email and for mailing a card.” Please scan the QR code for more details and to sign up.

Outreach

Social Ministry Report for March, 2026

Committee members: Jane Dieseth, Tracy Sabus, Sue Koch, Leslie Dahm

Urbandale Food Pantry Collection

For the month of **February**, we collected:

9 soup	4 pasta	7 cereal	3 toothpaste	TOTAL: 64 items, 51 lbs.
5 peanut butter	2 pasta sauce	10 miscellaneous	3 other items	
19 canned fruit	1 rice	1 shaving cream		



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Urbandale Food Pantry Collection for April, 2026

In **April** we will gather **cereal, peanut butter, pasta, pasta sauce, shampoo, conditioner.** Please place items for the Urbandale Food Pantry in the shopping carts (Gathering Area). Financial gifts marked "food pantry" are always welcome, and can be shared in worship or sent to the church office.



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.

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Gods Work. Our Hands. Clothing Drive for Valerius Elementary

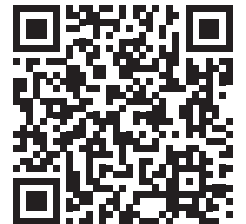
Valerius Elementary school is currently in need of restocking its emergency clothing closet.

- New underwear, sizes 4-12, boys and girls
- Leggings or sweatpants, sizes 4-12, boys and girls, with greater need for the smaller sizes



From the SE Synod: Prayer Shawl & Quilts Needed

Congregations and individuals are encouraged to contribute prayer shawls and quilts for Assembly attendees to wrap themselves in comfort that reflects this year's theme, "Peace be with You." Learn more by scanning the QR code. Projects need to be completed and brought to the St. Stephen office by May 1. Please let Tarra know if you would like to participate! tarra@ststephenlutheran.org



Church Business



Council HIGHLIGHTS

Council Meeting Highlights

March 24, 2026

- Update on new phone system — Eight new phones will be installed soon.
- Review of sabbatical policy. Will finalize policy next month.
- Discussion of Administrative Assistant position as Tarra will graduate next month. She has committed through June. Personnel committee to write up job description with possible outsourcing of accounting portion of position.
- New Member Sunday tentatively set for May 17
- New stained glass window dedication tentatively set for May 31
- Elevator update: Work to begin on May 11
- Discussion of acoustic panels. Will research and bring back ideas next month.
- Discussion about Blood Drive to celebrate Pastor Andrea's 100 Day Homecoming.
- Discussion of Stewardship Drive for Fall. Looking for committee members to lead.

Please Note:

Last Wednesday Supper at the Table, Worship at the Table and activities for this program year will be May 6.

April Celebrations

April Birthdays

April 1 Shelly Anderson, Roger Willem, Connie Winger
 April 2 Noah Edmondson
 April 4 Graham Craig-Huey, Andrew Moats, Madie Weinberger
 April 5 Agnes Brown, Michael Le Blanc
 April 7 Barb Pettigrew, Connie Richman, Marion Walck
 April 8 Cory Weinberger
 April 11 Keaton Walker
 April 12 Denise Hawks, Nick Noah
 April 15 Hudson Barlow, Wanda Malaney
 April 17 Katie Rawson
 April 18 Everett Devries
 April 20 Willie Taylor

April 21 Zora Tomjack
 April 22 Sharon Sabin, Becky Zieman
 April 24 Diane Hubert, Bill Schaffer
 April 27 Zachary Edmondson
 April 29 Marilyn Gift
 April 30 Noreen Christians, Janet Williams

April Anniversaries

April 6 Carey & Chris Boysen, Diane & Dennis Hubert
 April 7 Jennifer & Mike Boohar
 April 8 Sonja & Larry Hunt, Arlys & Wes Ketterling
 April 9 Penny & James Twedt
 April 10 Sherry & Brent Arntzen, Rachael & Nick Bartschat, Jaymie & Shane Bruse

April Calendar

Wednesday, April 1

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 2, Maundy Thursday

Community Meal, 6:15 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Worship, 7 p.m.

Friday, April 3, Good Friday

Community Meal, 6:15 p.m.

Good Friday Worship, 7 p.m.

Saturday, April 4

Easter Egg Hunt, 11 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1 p.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4 p.m.

Sunday, April 5, Easter Sunday

Easter Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

Holy Communion, 10 a.m.

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11 a.m.

RFC Worship, 12 & 5 p.m.

Wednesday, April 8

Brown Bag Book Club, 11:30 a.m.

Sacred Self Care Discussion, 4 p.m.

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

Worship at the Table, 6 p.m.

EMERGE, 6:30 p.m.

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 9

SSLC Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 11

St. Stephen Crafters, 10 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1 p.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4 p.m.

Sunday, April 12

Spark Sunday School, 9 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9 a.m. (6th-8th grade)

Holy Communion & Healing Prayers, 10 a.m.

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11 a.m.

RFC Worship, 12 & 5 p.m.

Tuesday, April 14

Gathering Area Reserved, 11 a.m.

Executive Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 15

Brown Bag Book Club, 11:30 a.m.

Sacred Self Care Discussion, 4 p.m.

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

Worship at The Table, 6 p.m.

EMERGE, 6:30 p.m.

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 16

Care Companions, 4 p.m.

SSLC Chapel Chimers Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 17

Supper Club, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 18

Property Committee, 8 a.m.

RFC/SSLC Partnership Meeting, 11 a.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1 p.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4 p.m.

Sunday, April 19

Spark Sunday School, 9 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9 a.m. (6th-8th grade)

Holy Communion, 10 a.m.

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11 a.m.

RFC Worship, 12 & 5 p.m.

Tuesday, April 21

SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 22

Brown Bag Book Club, 11:30 a.m.

Sacred Self Care Discussion, 4 p.m.

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

Worship at The Table, 6 p.m.

EMERGE, 6:30 p.m.

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 23

SSLC Chapel Chimers Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 25

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1 p.m.

Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4 p.m.

Sunday, April 26

Spark Sunday School, 9 a.m.

Breakfast Club, 9 a.m. (6th-8th grade)

Holy Communion & Healing Prayers, 10 a.m.

Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11 a.m.

RFC Worship, 12 & 5 p.m.

Tuesday, April 28

SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:00 p.m.

Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 29

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

Worship at The Table, 6 p.m.

EMERGE, 6:30 p.m.

SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 30

AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

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



“Wonder on the Go” Facebook Page and Instagram QR Codes

We are launching St. Stephen’s “Wonder on the Go” ministry for the fall the week after Easter. You can help us by following our “Wonder on the Go” Facebook and Instagram pages. You may use the QR codes below. Thanks!

Wonder on the Go Facebook Page



Wonder on the Go Instagram Page

