

News & Notes

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

Celebrating Kris Shay — 20 Years as SSLC Chapel Chimers Director

Kris Shay and her family have been members of St. Stephen Lutheran Church for 40 years. For 20 of those years we have seen Kris as she directs the Chapel Chimers.

Twenty years ago a very persistent Pastor Ron Mohr begged (coerced) Kris to lead the bell choir. Kris already played the violin and the recorder but wasn't very knowledgeable in hand bells. She sought out a local talent by the name of Beth Ann Edwards and also a family member, sister Linnea, whom she describes as the "Goddess of Bells." Through their mentorship she learned to be proficient in ringing and learned how to direct the Chapel Chimers. In order to help those members who do not read music Kris not only uses one hand to count the measures but she also mouths the measure numbers.



Kris followed Linda Greethurst as director by several years but continued with some of Linda's practices, such as color coding all the music. This and the "ability to count to four or sometimes six" enables anyone to ring bells per Kris. Along with practicing the pieces that are chosen to be played for a service, Kris also needed to train the ringers how not to have any facial expressions except for smiles. No "grimaces when they make a mistake, looking inside the bell when it doesn't ring, and the startled look when they clang the bells putting one down and picking up another, or moving their lips when counting."

Since becoming Director, Kris has ventured out from merely "ringing" the bells. Linda Greethurst states "she has expanded our ringing techniques to include thunking, plucking, wow-wows, shaking and singing bells."

Jennifer Ewing, a 20-year ringer, told me "I always say that bell choir is as much fun as a bunch of middle aged women and Dave can have without getting arrested."

But I think that the best part of having Kris as Director is that she says "All the music is to the glory of God."

Thanks Kris for your devotion to St. Stephen Lutheran Church, for your devotion to the Chapel Chimers and for your devotion to God.

Sharon Jorgenson, Personnel Committee

(See more photos of the September 14th Celebration for Kris Shay on the following page.)

A Note of Thanks from Kris Shay

I wish to thank my fellow members of St. Stephen for the special recognition I was given to honor my 20 years of service as Director of Handbells. From all the signatures on the huge greeting card, the cake, bringing in two of my close friends to play violin and cello, but especially to the new half-octave of handbells that the church has purchased for our ensemble to use — let's just say I was blown away. The bell group would not exist if not for the efforts of the ringers who volunteer to play, and I am so grateful for their time, talent and friendship. St. Stephen is so blessed to have people willing and able to volunteer their time helping in the kitchen, with communion, as readers and ushers, AV desk, Sunday School, property maintenance, food pantry, backpacks, and everything that keeps our church functioning well. I am honored to be part of this community of faith.

Gratefully, Kris Shay

Celebrating Kris Shay — 20 Years as SSLC Chapel Chimers Director



Capital Campaign News

Built on a Firm Foundation Capital Campaign

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Built on a Firm Foundation Capital Campaign this summer. Through your generosity we will be able to tackle an array of projects to keep our facility functioning at its best. Final results will be shared in the Friday emails.

From infants in strollers, those using walkers and wheelchairs, volunteers organizing events, and each person who walks through our doors for worship, our facilities will continue to be a welcoming space for all who enter to gather, form connections, and grow as disciples.

With much appreciation,

The 2025 Capital Campaign Committee:

John Dieseth, Alma Grove, Ron Hintz, Lynn Niceswanger, Ron Niceswanger



Thanks to early contributions to the capital campaign, we completed the re-grading on the east and south side of the church. During rains, we had flooding issues in the mechanical room and banner room which led to frequent maintenance.

East side of building:



South side of building:



News & Events

Welcome Pastor Rachel!

The Rev. Rachel Thorson Mithelman has served congregations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, California and Iowa through 42 years of ordained ministry. Since retiring as Senior Pastor of St. John's Lutheran in Des Moines at the end of 2020, she has continued to lead worship and preach in a supply capacity in congregations in the Des Moines metro area and central Iowa.

Pastor Mithelman is a graduate of Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa and Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. She and her husband, Pastor Jack Mithelman, are the parents of two adult children and grandparents of the beautiful Piper Mithelman, age 9, of Sioux Falls, SD. In retirement, Pastor Mithelman serves on the Board of Directors of two non-profit organizations and volunteers for IRIS (Iowa Radio Reading Information Service), LifeServe Blood Center and the DMARC Food Pantry Network. She reads murder mysteries, plays the piano, and walks and bikes on the beautiful Des Moines area trails.

Pastor Rachel will be serving as our Worship Leader for both Sunday and Wednesday worship services over the next few months in Pastor Andrea's absence. We welcome her!



Nominations Announcement

The Nominating Committee has begun its work to invite St. Stephen members to serve as spiritual leaders beginning in February 2026. We will again utilize a process called "Ecclesiastical" or "Churchly" balloting. The process allows for all members of the congregation to lift up a name of someone whom they think has the gifts of discernment, holy wisdom, or the gifts of the Spirit (love, patience, peace, and self-control) and a passion for the mission of St. Stephen Lutheran Church. For 2026, we are seeking leaders for the Congregational Council, Audit Committee, Personnel Committee, Finance Committee, and Trust Fund.

The committee invites you to begin praying for this process and to consider which members of this community might have these attributes. (That person might be YOU!) **The churchly balloting process will take place during Sunday worship on October 12 and 19, and during Wednesday worship on October 15 and 22. An online ballot will also be available through October 24.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any Nominating Committee member listed below.

Audrey Jones (audreyjones516@gmail.com)

Ardie Strawman (aestrawman@yahoo.com)

Marcia Klindt

Jane Dieseth (jdd156@hotmail.com)

Care Companions Meeting Time Change

Our Care Companions Team will now begin their meetings at 4:00 p.m. rather than 5:00 p.m. The reason being that our meetings may be a bit longer due to a change in our purpose!

After we have conducted our meeting in our usual routine, we will enter the sanctuary, spread out and spend some time in intentional prayer time! We will be in prayer for those on our list of people that the team reaches out to in many ways. We will also pray for those on our church prayer list ... and for each other on the team.

Pastor Andrea and Pastor Ronald will be top of the list!

If you are interested in being part of the Care Companions Team, please contact Pastor Chris Lang, Visitation Pastor.

News & Events



Join us at
The Table
Wednesdays

- 5:15 p.m. Supper • 6:00 p.m. Worship
- 6:30 p.m. Faith Formation

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

Please join us for our first Supper Club of the fall season! 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, Sharon and Rick Jorgenson (rwjorgy@gmail.com) know that you will be attending.



Fall Choir Schedule

Please speak with Jana Taylor if you would like to be added to the Choir email list!



Tues., Oct. 7:

Rehearsal (Sanctuary), 6:30 p.m.

Sun., Oct. 12: Worship Performance; 9:15 a.m.
warm-up

Tues., Oct. 21: Rehearsal (Sanctuary), 6:30 p.m.

Tues., Oct. 28: Rehearsal (Sanctuary), 6:30 p.m.

Sun., Nov. 2: Worship Performance; 9:30 a.m.
warm-up

Property Day, Saturday, Oct. 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 Oct. 17 for any special instructions. If Saturday morning doesn't work, contact Jerry Strawman for an alternative time.



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

The book club gathers each Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. in the office Conference Room. We are reading ***Learning to Walk in the Dark*** by Barbara Brown. All are welcome!



Regular office hours return
September 30:
Tuesday, Wednesday, &
Friday,
8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Fall Kick-off Celebration, Sunday, September 7



Fall Kick-off Celebration, Sunday, September 7



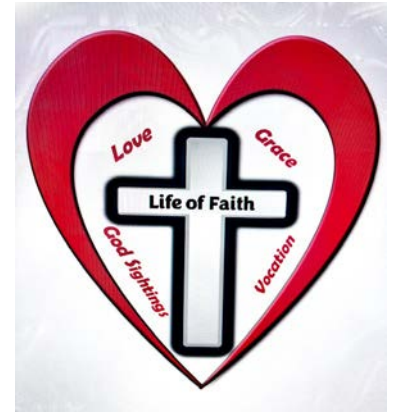
Around the Church

Life of Faith — God Sightings

This fall we are looking for God Sightings. What is a God Sighting? A God Sighting is a spiritual practice of being alert to the presence of God in our daily lives. This practice tunes our awareness and attention so that we more intentionally look and listen for signs of God's activity in and around us. By sharing our stories of God Sightings with others, we gain practice in speaking words about God (also known as theology). By hearing the stories of others, our imagination is deepened so that we anticipate and expect to see signs of God's presence among us.

Please join us on **Sunday, October 5 for an Interview Sermon** of a member of St. Stephen discussing their faith and how that member has witnessed God in their life.

We are excited to have you join us Sundays and Wednesdays in October and November to share your God Sightings. Look in the bulletin and weekly newsletter for more updates.



Four Students will Affirm their Baptisms on Sunday, October 26



Mya Gude



Connor Moriarty



Peighton Ritz



Madie Weinberger

Outreach for Pastors Andrea & Ronald Myers

What Can We Do to Help?

Blood Drive in Honor of Pastor Andrea — Tuesday, October 14

A simple question many of us have asked, but often one of the hardest to answer. As Pastor Andrea and Pastor Ronald walk this journey with leukemia, many have reached out with prayers, words of encouragement, and generous participation in the Meal Train via financial gifts and lovingly prepared meals. For this we give thanks.

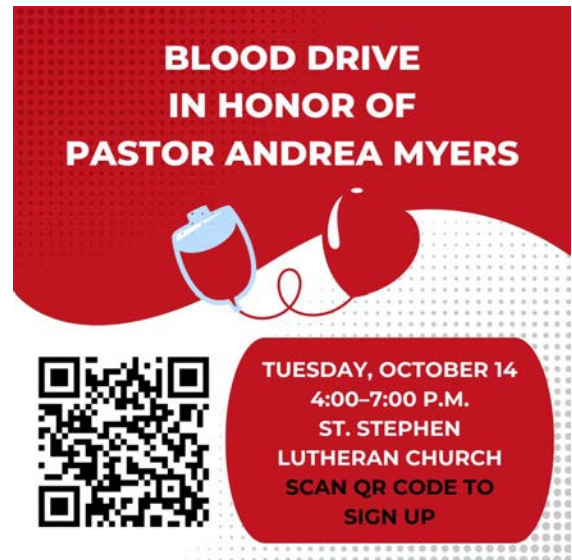
It is natural to long for something tangible to do when someone we love is navigating a profound challenge. Many are placing hope stickers on water bottles and wearing special bracelets, commenting on the CaringBridge site, and finding meaningful modes of support.

Pastor Andrea has shared about her need for numerous transfusions, and her deep passion for blood donation. Even before her diagnosis, she donated as an expression of her Christian vocation to love and serve her neighbors. Now, as she journeys through B-Cell ALL, the need for blood transfusions is ongoing for her as well as so many others.

Donating blood is a powerful, practical way we can come alongside her in this season. On **Tuesday, October 14, from 4:00–7:00 p.m.**, St. Stephen Lutheran Church will host a blood drive in honor of Pastor Andrea. We invite all who are able to participate — whether you donate blood, volunteer at the event, or offer prayers. Together, we embody Christ's call to love our neighbors and to walk with one another on this journey we take with Pastors Andrea and Ronald.

If you would like to donate blood sign up here: <https://forms.gle/kqugkWVR39PEvQ2s6> or scan the QR code above.

If you're interested in helping at the event or have any questions, please reach out to Tori Richard, miceli.tori@gmail.com or 515-669-6017.



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 then search for "Andrea Myers."



MealTrain for Pastors Andrea & Ronald Myers

Meal Train is a free meal calendar tool that makes planning meals among a wide group easy and less stressful. We will be providing some physical meals at this time but continue needing funding for take-out/delivery meals and cash to cover extra expenses.

If you wish to bring a meal or make a donation, scan the QR code to sign up.



In addition, cards/care packages can be mailed to Pastor Andrea and Ronald's home address, which can be found in the directory. Andrea's email address: revandreamyers@gmail.com

Outreach

Urbandale Food Food Pantry Collection for October, 2025

In **October** we will gather **shampoo, conditioner, beans, boxed potatoes, stuffing mix, and pie filling**. 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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Social Ministry Report for September, 2025

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

Urbandale Food Pantry Collection

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

8 Deodorant Men's and Women's	2. Pasta
32 Canned Tuna, Chicken and Spam	6 Miscellaneous
8 Peanut Butter	1 Lotion
7 Cereal	Greeting Cards
11 Beans	83 Total Items (81 lbs.)



October Celebrations

October Birthdays

Oct 1	Eric Tiffany, Jim Walker
Oct 2	Steve Johnson, Dalton Townes
Oct 3	Karen Fachman, Barbara Knapp, Megan Willem
Oct 4	Dave Kroeger
Oct 6	Sharon Jorgenson
Oct 7	Lucy Thomas
Oct 8	Brian Willem
Oct 9	Kevin Shay
Oct 10	Barbara Guthrie
Oct 12	David Bolender, Harper Henderson
Oct 16	Mary Middleton, Penny Twedt, Betty White
Oct 17	Hugh Ceaser, Beth Willem
Oct 18	Garrett Kroeger
Oct 19	Gayle Johnson
Oct 20	Ben Tomjack
Oct 21	Kathleen Hoegh
Oct 22	Karin Ibrahim, Bob Kirchner
Oct 24	Meghan Walck

Oct 26	Jennie Beckley
Oct 27	Bev Lantz
Oct 29	Brett Boerner, Vickie Ceaser
Oct 30	Kyle Codner, Ardie Strawman, Clayton Weinberger
Oct 31	Krista Brittain-Dial, Charlotte Stole

October Anniversaries

Oct 3	Bob & Beth Halverson, Colin & Tori Richard
Oct 12	Brent & Daphne Monson
Oct 16	Bob & Nancy Kirchner
Oct 17	Mike & Barbara Knapp Newell
Oct 20	Jim & Barbara Guthrie, Allen & Ronelva Reiman
Oct 24	Kay Riel
Oct 28	Tom & Kathy Bailey
Oct 29	Ken & Sandy Goering
Oct 30	Steven & Janet Davis

October Calendar

Wednesday, Oct 1

Brown Bag Book Club, 11:30 a.m.
Supper at The Table, 5:15 p.m.
Worship at The Table, 6:00 p.m.
SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.
EMERGE, 6:30 p.m.
ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct 2

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

Saturday, Oct 4

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1:00 p.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct 5, 17th Sunday after Pentecost

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m. (6th-8th grade)
Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
St. Stephen 101, 11:00 a.m.
RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct 7

SSLC Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct 8

Supper at The Table, 5:15 p.m.
Worship at The Table, 6:00 p.m.
SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.
EMERGE, 6:30 p.m.
ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct 9

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

Saturday, Oct 11

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1:00 p.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct 12, 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m. (6th-8th grade)
Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct 14

Blood Drive, 4:00–7:00 p.m.
Executive Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct 15

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

Thursday, Oct 16

Care Companions, 4:00 p.m.
SSLC Chapel Chimers Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.
AA Meeting, 6:30 a.m.

Friday, Oct 17

Supper Club, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct 18

Property Committee, 8:00 a.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1:00 p.m.
RFC Women's Conference, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct 19, 19th Sunday after Pentecost

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m. (6th-8th grade)
Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct 21

SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct 22

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

Thursday, Oct 23

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

Saturday, Oct 25

Redeemed Fellowship Rehearsal, 1:00 p.m.
Redeemed Fellowship Center, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct 26, 20th Sunday after Pentecost

Spark Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m. (6th-8th grade)
Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation), 10:00 a.m.
Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct 28

SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.
Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct 29

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

Thursday, Oct 30

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

Friday, Oct 31, Halloween



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

Grow in Faith this Fall!

Wednesdays at St. Stephen

- The Table, Dinner served at 5:15 p.m.
- Worship, 6–6:30 p.m.
- Emerge, 6:30–7:30 p.m. (6th–8th grade)
- ELES, 7:30–9 p.m. (9th–12th grade)

Sundays at St. Stephen

- Spark Sunday School: 9 a.m.
(Pre-K–5th grade)
- Breakfast Club for 6th–8th graders on Sunday mornings
from 9–10 a.m. A light breakfast & light-hearted conversation!

Any student is welcome to be part of these programs (don't have to be a member) and all are welcome for meals and worship!

