

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

West & East Bay, Central Valley, and Southern California

Member congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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August 25, 2024 † Pentecost 14

We Welcome Our Visitors who are with us this morning.

We hope that you are uplifted by the Gospel at our worship service.

We invite you to join us every Sunday. Please sign our guestbook in the entry.

† Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 71 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) †

**Our Worship Services will be Posted to Our Website Each Sunday Evening.
To Watch our Worship Service Online Please Click This Link:**

<https://www.sslctest.org/worship.html>

Note: Sung responses will have musical notes 🎵 next to them.
All other responses will be spoken.

Opening Hymn: 908 Lord, Open Now My Heart to Hear *(Please stand for last verse)*

1 Lord, o - pen now my heart to hear, And through Your
2 Your Word in - spires my heart with - in; Your Word grants
△ 3 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, And God the

Word to me draw near; Let me Your Word e'er pure re -
heal - ing from my sin; Your Word has pow'r to guide and
Spir - it, Three in One, Shall glo - ry, praise, and hon - or

tain; Let me Your child and heir re - main.
bless; Your Word brings peace and hap - pi - ness.
be Now and through - out e - ter - ni - ty.

Text: Johann Olearius, 1611–84; (sts. 1, 3): tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.; (st. 2): tr. Mark A. Jeske, 1952
Tune: Geistliche Lieder auff's new gebessert, 1543, Wittenberg, ed. Joseph Klug
Text (st. 2): © 1993 Mark A. Jeske. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 130003862
Text (sts. 1, 3) and tune: Public domain

THE INVOCATION

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(TLH, p. 5)

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord.

C Who made heaven and earth.

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.

C And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

P Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy will and true obedience to Thy Word, to the end that by Thy grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in His name He gives power to become the sons of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

C **Amen.**

THE GLORIA PATRI

Latin for "Glory to the Father" (TLH, p. 6)

C **♪** ***Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.***

THE KYRIE

Latin for "O Lord." We approach our Lord with a cry for help in all the needs of our earthly life. (TLH, p. 7)

♪ ***Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.***

THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

In Latin "Gloria in excelsis Deo" means "Glory to God in the highest." We rejoice In our Lord who came to earth to bring us His peace. (TLH, p. 7)

♪ *Glory be to God on High, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee.
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord.
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

THE SALUTATION *(Greeting)*

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And with thy spirit.**

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

The main thoughts for the day are "collected" together in this prayer.

- P** We pray:
Almighty and merciful God, defend Your Church from all false teaching and error that Your faithful people may confess You to be the only true God and rejoice in Your good gifts of life and salvation. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

God speaks to us.

First Reading

Joshua 24:1,2a, 14-18 (EHV)

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel at Shechem, and he summoned the elders of Israel, its heads, its judges, and its officers, and they presented themselves before God. ² Then Joshua told all the people, ...

¹⁴ ...“Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve him wholeheartedly and faithfully. Remove the gods that your fathers served in the region across the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵ But if you see no benefit in serving the LORD,^[E] then choose for yourselves today whomever you will serve—whether the gods that your fathers served beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household—we will serve the LORD!”

¹⁶ The people responded by saying, “Far be it from us to forsake the LORD in order to serve other gods! ¹⁷ For the LORD our God, he is the one who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, where we were slaves. He is the one who performed these great signs right before our eyes and protected us on the whole journey that we made and among all the peoples through whom we passed. ¹⁸ The LORD drove out of our presence all the peoples and the Amorites who were living in the land. We too will serve the LORD, because he is our God!”

THE GRADUAL

When God speaks to us in His Word it is natural for us to respond. We sing “Hallelujah!”—meaning “Praise the Lord!”

P Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. Hallelujah!

C Hallelujah!

P The second reading is from Ephesians 5:21-31.

C Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

Second Reading

Ephesians 5:21-31 (ESV)

²¹ *...submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

²² *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.*

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."*

P Here ends our second reading.

C Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

THE APOSTLES' CREED

We boldly confess what we believe. (TLH, p. 12)

C I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary;

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven

And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;

The Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints;

The forgiveness of sins;

The resurrection of the body;

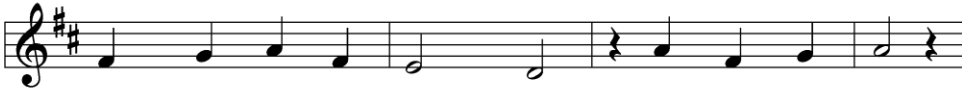
And the life everlasting. Amen

Hymn of the Day: 557 *Seek Where You May to Find a Way*

LSB 557



1 Seek where you may To find a way That
2 Seek whom you may To be your stay, None
3 Seek Him a - lone Who did a - tone, Who
4 My heart's de - light, My crown most bright, O



leads to your sal - va - tion. My heart is stilled,
can re - deem his broth - er. All help - ers failed;
did your souls de - liv - er. O seek Him first,
Christ, my joy for - ev - er. Not wealth nor pride



On Christ I build, He is the one foun - da - tion.
This man pre - vailed, The God - man and none oth - er,
All you who thirst For grace that fails you nev - er.
Nor for - tune's tide Our bonds of love shall sev - er.



His Word is sure, His works en - dure; He o - ver - throws
Our Ser - vant - King Of whom we sing. We're jus - ti - fied
In ev - 'ry need Seek Him in - deed; To ev - 'ry heart
You are my Lord; Your pre - cious Word Shall guide my way



All e - vil foes; Through Him I more than con - quer.
Be - cause He died, The guilt - y be - ing guilt - less.
He will im - part His bless - ings with - out mea - sure.
And help me stay For - ev - er in Your pres - ence.

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Arthur P. Voss, 1899–1955, alt. Tune: Johann Stobäus, 1580–1646
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Tune: Public domain

THE SERMON

John 6:59-69 (NKJV)

⁵⁹ These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. ⁶⁰ Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" ⁶¹ When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? ⁶² "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? ⁶³ "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. ⁶⁴ "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. ⁶⁵ And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." ⁶⁶ From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

**Sermon Theme: When Bible Teachings are 'Hard Sayings',
we remember that they are the Words of our Lord
and His Words give Eternal Life.**

by Pastor Mark Gullerud - preaching at St. Stephen-West (Mountain View)

Preaching at St. Stephen-East Bay (Hayward): Timothy Blank

THE OFFERTORY

(TLH, p. 12-13)

*♪ Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, And uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.*

THE OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS

In tangible evidence of our gratitude, we offer the Lord the gift of our money, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.

(† If you have an offering to give today, please place it in the plate in the church entryway. †)



1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
 2 "Fear not! I am with you, O be not dis - mayed,
 3 "The soul that on Je - sus has leaned for re - pose
 4 "When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way will lie,
 5 "Through - out all their life - time My peo - ple will prove



Is laid for your faith in His ex - cel - lent Word!
 For I am your God and will still give you aid;
 I will not, I will not, de - sert to his foes;
 My grace, all - suf - fi - cient, will be your sup - ply.
 My sov - 'reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love;



What more can He say than to you He has said
 I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
 That soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,
 The flames will not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign
 And then, when gray hairs will their tem - ples a - dorn,



Who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?
 Up - held by My righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
 I'll nev - er, no nev - er, no nev - er, for - sake!
 Your dross to con - sume and your gold to re - fine.
 Like lambs they will still in My bos - om be borne."

Text: A Selection of Hymns, 1787, London, alt. Tune: Genuine Church Music, 1832, Winchester Text and tune: Public domain

THE GENERAL PRAYER / THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE BENEDICTION

The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).

- ☐ The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

☐ ***♪ Amen, Amen, Amen.***

Closing Hymn: 917 Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name... (please stand for last verse)



1 Sav - ior, a - gain to Thy dear name we raise
2 Grant us Thy peace up - on our home - ward way;
3 Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;
4 Grant us Thy peace through - out our earth - ly life,



With one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise;
With Thee be - gan, with Thee shall end, the day.
Turn Thou for us its dark - ness in - to light.
Our balm in sor - row and our stay in strife;



Once more we bless Thee ere our wor - ship cease,
Guard Thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
From harm and dan - ger keep Thy chil - dren free;
Then, when Thy voice shall bid our con - flict cease,



Then, low - ly bend - ing, wait Thy word of peace.
That in this house have called up - on Thy name.
For dark and light are both a - like to Thee.
Call us, O Lord, to Thine e - ter - nal peace.

Text: John Ellerton, 1826–93
Tune: Edward J. Hopkins, 1818–1901
Text and tune: Public domain

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: **St. Stephen – West** (Mt. View): **Worship – 10am**
Choir – 11am
Conducting worship: Mark Gullerud & Isaac Schmitt

St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward): **Worship – 1pm**
Conducting worship: Timothy Blank

This Week: Tuesday – **Board of Education Meeting** (Mt. View) (Zoom) – **6pm**
Thursday – **Stockton Worship** (Oakmont) – **2pm**
Friday – **No School at SSLS** – In service day / Labor Day Weekend

Next Sunday: **St. Stephen – West** (Mt. View): **Bible Class – 9am**
9/1/24 **Joint Worship Service** (Mt. View) @ **10am**
Congregational Meeting/Call Meeting –11:15am
Farewell Luncheon for Scott & Diane (after the meetings)
No East Bay Worship Service (Hayward)

Online Worship Services - <https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>

In Your Mailbox & Church Entryway – *Daily Rest* Daily Devotional – (Sept. – Dec.)

Thank You! – to Mark Gullerud and Isaac Schmitt (Mt. View), and to Timothy Blank (Hayward) for conducting our worship services today. Pastor Luke is out of town officiating a wedding today in Southern California. He will be returning, Lord willing, on Monday afternoon.

Call Meeting – Mountain View – NEXT Sunday, Sept. 1st @ 11:15am – There will be another congregational meeting / potential pastor call meeting next Sunday, September 1st after the worship service in Mountain View at 11:15am. Members at a distance who cannot attend in person will be able to attend via Zoom.

Pastor's Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8729663333>

Farewell Luncheon for Scott and Diane – NEXT Sunday, 9/1 – After the Call Meeting

Please mark your calendar and plan to join us as we bid a fond farewell (or more appropriately, "Aloha!") to Scott Mueller and Diane Fowler as they are moving back to Hawaii in September. We will have a luncheon in their honor following our call meeting next **Sunday, September 1st**. NOTE: Please wear Hawaiian clothes if you have them.

Kinship Sponsors Needed - Kinship is facing the largest seminary sponsorship shortage in many years. Currently there are 18 seminarians in need of support. While we give thanks for the increasing number of overseas seminarians preparing to spread the gospel, we pray for an increased resolve to support their training. Please consider sponsoring a seminary student in one of the many schools partnered with Kinship--Tanzania, India, Nepal, Togo, Congo, and Nigeria. The approximate cost of a sponsorship is \$40--\$50/mo (\$500--\$600/yr). To begin a sponsorship or for more information, please text, call, or email:
Dan Roehl – cell: 507-381-2042 Email: danroehl@hotmail.com