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**Office Hours:**  
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays  
from 8am—3pm

**Deadlines:**  
Bulletin: Wednesday by 8:00 a.m.  
Newsletter: 3rd Thursday of the month.

**Facebook:**  
Join us to watch a livestream service  
every Sunday at 9am at  
<https://www.facebook.com/wausausslc>

**Worship Telecast:**  
Our Worship Services are telecast on  
Spectrum channel 980/TDS channel 17  
on Sundays at 12pm (this is the previous  
Sundays' service), Mondays at 3pm, and  
Tuesdays at 10am and 10:30pm.

**DATE: FEBRUARY 2023**  
Volume 216 • Issue 216

# THE DEACON'S SPIRIT

The newsletter of St. Stephen Lutheran Church



What the Bible  
Teaches About  
*Love*

God is love.  
1 John 4:7-8

God's love is abundant and faithful.  
Psalm 86:15

God's love is personal and unique.  
Psalm 139:1-2, 5

Our love flows out of being loved by Him.  
1 John 4:19

The greatest commandment is love.  
Matthew 22:37-39

The nature of love.  
1 Corinthians 13:4-7

We must love with our actions.  
1 John 3:18

TommyNelson.com

Pastor Karoline Schwantes/Phone: 715-370-5514/Email: prkaroline@sslwkausau.com

February marks six months of ministry together! I was ordained as a pastor in August and am so thankful for my call amongst the people of St. Stephen. I am continually in awe of the Holy Spirit's work and timing to bring me here, as well as the learning and growing which have taken place.



I've experienced my "Pastor's first Christmas," built relationships, and am knee-deep in planning for my first Lent. I've found so much joy in visiting and getting to know you, in our combined confirmation program, and in our shared music ministry. The Choral Service in Advent was an exciting and a fresh return of an old tradition here. I'm loving getting to see the many ministries that are happening around here, the quilters, the Angels, Good Stewards, Women's Bible Study, as well as the presence of our Eucharistic Ministers.

I am incredibly thankful for the amazing leaders with whom I have been able to work. Our faithful and faith-filled staff and council are wonderful! They have been a true gift in diving into the question of what God is up to in our community.

This month we will celebrate the ministry of this congregation at our Annual Meeting. We thank outgoing members of the council who have faithfully served through a difficult time of transition. Many of our council members remain and we are excited to elect new leaders! Together we will celebrate the ministry of our congregation, as well as hold space for grief for those we have lost and for hard transitions. And together we get to ask the questions of who we are as God's beloved children and the mission to which God calls us to share the good news of God's grace and love. What are you looking forward to and what areas for growth do you hope we can lean into? I truly look forward to the opportunity to explore these questions together!

*Pastor Karoline*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

St. Stephen Calendar of Events						February 2023	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
			<b>1</b> 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 Combined Choir	<b>2</b> 8:30 Quilting 6:00 AI-Anon	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 9:00 Stephen's Angels	
<b>5</b> 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	<b>6</b> 10:00 Staff Mtg. 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Bell Choir 7:00 Dartball	<b>7</b> 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 4:30 Executive Comm. Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	<b>8</b> 1:00 Women's Bible Study 6:30 Combined Choir	<b>9</b> 8:30 Quilting 6:00 AI-Anon	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	
<b>12</b> 9:00 Worship 10:15 Annual Mtg. 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	<b>13</b> 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Bell Choir 7:00 Dartball <b>MEMORIAL DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY</b>	<b>14 Valentine's Day</b> 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Council Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	<b>15</b> 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 Combined Choir	<b>16</b> 8:30 Quilting 6:00 AI-Anon 6:00 Special Olympics <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>19</b> 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	<b>20 President's Day</b> 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Bell Choir 6:30 Property Comm. Mtg. 7:00 Dartball	<b>21</b> 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	<b>22 Ash Wednesday</b> 6:30 Ash Wednesday Service at St. Stephen 7:30 Combined Choir	<b>23</b> 8:30 Quilting 6:00 AI-Anon	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	
<b>26</b> 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	<b>27</b> 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Bell Choir 7:00 Dartball	<b>28</b> 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum					



# ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS



## Birthday Blessings

The following people are celebrating February/March Birthdays

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**

### February 1st

Elizabeth Beilke  
Bev Schmidt

### February 2nd

Caroline Kuehl  
Kristine Mohr

### February 4th

Jeff Blomquist  
Carol Sekaney

### February 5th

Adain Martin

### February 6th

Sandra Schilling

### February 8th

Tammy Kromrei

### February 9th

Matthew Christian  
Harold Peterson

### February 15th

Chuck Kershaw  
Marjorie Zweck

### February 17th

Pat Lonsdorf

### February 19th

Ryan Matter

### February 20th

Julianna Strand

### February 22nd

Marjorie Nimz

### February 23rd

Nan Froseth

### February 25th

Kaleb Holster  
Jim Lee

### February 27th

Tim Gritzmacher  
Ethan Schmidt

### February 28th

Caleb Deffner

### March 1st

Theresa Kole

### March 2nd

Jay Pippenger

### March 4th

Joslyn Strand

### March 5th

Ron Felch

### March 7th

Candi den Otter  
Nathaniel Lenoble

### March 8th

Derek Koehler

### March 9th

Vallory Haiker

### March 10th

Phil Giese

### March 13th

Luke den Otter  
Ben Kasten

Dennis Lohrey

Brenda Prieve

Shirlee Shaw

### March 14th

Darlene Zietlow

### March 19th

Lucille Bedish

### March 20th

Darlene Johnson

### March 21st

Debra Johnson

### March 25th

Nelda Hettinga

### March 26th

Darrin Koehler

### March 27th

Dale Seymour

Jeanette Wiskow

### March 30th

Noah Weinke

### March 31st

Susan Brooks



## Anniversaries

The following couples are celebrating their February/March Wedding Anniversaries.

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**

### February 6th

Ray & Jane Stotmeister

### February 9th

Chris & Gina Travis

### February 23rd

Caleb & Jennifer Deffner

### February 28th

Dan & Melissa Peters

### March 4th

Michael & Dianne Meuret

### March 11th

Daryl & Roxanne Christian

### March 26th

Darrin & Vanessa Koehler

### March 31st

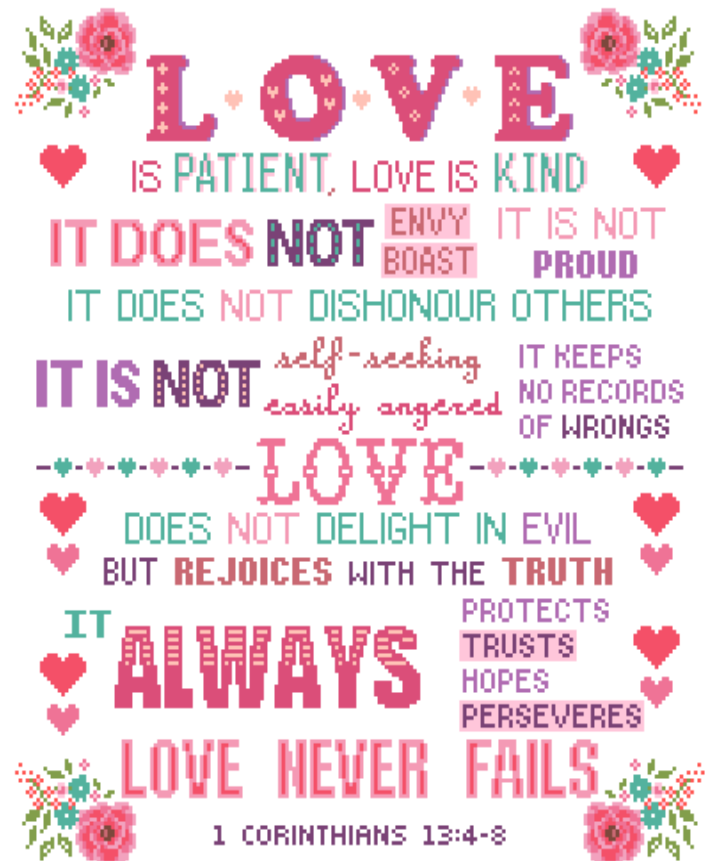
Michael & Leah Holster



## Funeral

"...in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to almighty God..."

**James Johnson ~ November 25, 2022**



## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of St. Stephen Lutheran Church will be held on Sunday, February 12th, 2023, immediately following worship. Reports are available in the back of the church.

## Donation Drive

This year we are again holding a Donation Drive to help Peyton's Promise. This organization provides support to over 38 organizations in our area. Some of them are: Bridge Street Mission, Jubilee House, church food pantries, Community Food Pantry of Merrill, Fill a Backpack (Fill a Belly), Meals on Wheels Emergency Packs, Blessings of Hope, Salvation Army, and Catholic Charities Warming Center. They are always in need of nonperishable food items, especially canned protein, and canned fruits and vegetables, but they also need baby supplies like baby wipes and diapers sizes 3-7. And some of the least known items like ketchup, mayo, salad dressings, and tartar sauce are needed too. There will be a table located in back of church for any donations you would like to bring in. We will be collecting through the month of February. Thank you for your support! Stephen's Angels

## Lent/Holy Week Worship Schedule

This year we will be combining some services with Pilgrim Lutheran Church. St. Stephen members are welcome to attend services at Pilgrim and Pilgrim members are welcome to attend services at St. Stephen. We will have one service on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd at St. Stephen at 6:30pm. Mid-week Lenten services will be held at St. Stephen at 12:15pm (with soup served during the service) and at Pilgrim at 6:30pm with a soup supper at 5:30pm. If you are interested in making bread or soup for the services at St. Stephen, please let Pastor Karoline know. On Palm Sunday, April 2nd, St. Stephen and Pilgrim will each have their own separate services. Ours will be at 9am. On Maundy Thursday, April 6th, there will be one service at Pilgrim at 6:30pm. On Good Friday, April 7th there will be a service at St. Stephen at 12:15pm and a service at Pilgrim at 6:30pm. And on Easter Sunday, April 9th there will be a service at St. Stephen at 8:30am and a service at Pilgrim at 10:30am. The change in service times for Easter Sunday is to allow the choir to sing at both churches.

## Sunday Custodian

We are looking for an additional Sunday Custodian, 2 to 3 hours per Sunday. Duties include: opening up the church, lighting candles, turning on lights, and turning on and monitoring the sound board. And at the end of the service: turning off the equipment, extinguishing candles, turning off lights, and insuring all doors are locked up. This would be once every 2 to 3 weeks part time. In addition, if available, would be able to do that same process for funerals or special services on other days of the week.

## Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to help with some of the Sunday service duties. Please call or email Nancy in the church office if you are interested in becoming an assisting minister, helping with communion, or becoming a lector.

## Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study Group will be meeting on Wednesday, February 8th at 1pm in the Conference Room. Any women in the congregation who would like to attend are WELCOME!

## Benevolence

Through your support of St. Stephen in the month of December 2022, we were able to contribute to the following ministry:

ELCA National & Synod Support \$686

This is the eleventh month of our unified budget in which we now give four and one half percent (4.5%) of our current expense receipts and loose plate offerings for benevolence. The above amount is based on the income of \$15,251 for December.

## St. Stephen Family Checkbook

For the month of December 2022 and the year to date, the St. Stephen family checkbook looked like this:

### December 1—31, 2022

What we received.....	\$23,595.
What we spent.....	(\$21,982.)
Our balance.....	\$ 1,614.

### January 1— December 31, 2022

What we received.....	\$209,980.
What we spent.....	(\$209,720.)
Our balance.....	\$ 260.

## Order of Importance of Memorials and Other Special Offerings

Primary Funds: Building Improvement/Maintenance Fund, Current Expense Receipts, and Sustainability Trust Fund.

Secondary Funds: Bell Choir Fund, Brick Maintenance (tuck pointing), Choral Fund, ELCA Scholarship Fund, Good Neighbor Fund, Library Fund, Organ Fund, Quilters Memorial Fund, Parish House Alarm, Technology Fund, and WELCA Clean Water Fund.

Other Funds: Confirmation/National Youth Gathering, Faith Enrichment Fund, Major Church Improvement, Missionary Sponsorship, Rooted in Faith (Crossways Capital Improvement) Fund, Seidel/Meyer Scholarship, Seminary Scholarship, and World Hunger.

## JANUARY 2023 MEMORIALS

### **In loving memory of Jim Johnson**

Bell Choir -- \$100

Family & Friends

### **In loving memory of Arnold Lange**

Sustainability Trust Fund -- \$465

Family & Friends

### **Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund**

In loving memory of Merritt & Shirley Gleason, who would have been married 62 years on January 28th –

Deb Gleason

In loving memory of Arnie Lange –

Betty Lou, John, & Harold Peterson

In loving memory of our Parents, Leon & Ruth Zastrow and Roger & Doris Weinke –

Bruce & Jerelyn Weinke

### **Current Expense Fund**

In loving memory of Brandon Pippenger –

Jay & Patty Pippenger

### **Library Fund**

In loving memory of Lillian Gritzmacher –

Tim Gritzmacher

### **Seidel Meyer Pastoral Ministry Fund**

In loving memory of Harold & Sue Kratwell, Kenneth & Sadie Borth, and Norm & Bertha Zietlow –

Sandy & Ron Borth

These are memorials received through Monday, January, 16th.

If you would like a memorial placed in the bulletin and newsletter for February, it needs to be to the office by Monday, February 13th. Thank you!

# COUNCIL MINUTES ~ JANUARY 10, 2023

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**Present:** Pastor Karoline, Sarah Lonsdorf, Lloyd Zimmer, Pat Erdman, Verlyn Oelke, Jim Von Rueden, Pam Hackbart, Kelly Brown, Kathy Robinson, Shauna Robinson, and Vicki Romang. Chuck Johnson attended via ZOOM.

The meeting opened at 5:30 pm with devotions by Pat Erdman.

**A motion was made and passed to accept the December 13, 2022 Council minutes.**

**Pastor's Report:** No written report was provided. Pastor Karoline relayed that she is looking forward to her first Annual Meeting at St. Stephen and exploring our mission going forward. She is exploring funding for getting coaching to set goals as we plan for our future. We will be hosting the Annual Meeting for the Wisconsin River Valley Conference on Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>. Confirmation is going very well, and we are looking ahead to some youth activities.

**President's Report:** A written report was provided in the Deacon's Spirit.

**Treasurer's Report:** A written report was provided. We have \$17,775 in our General Fund. Verlyn gave a brief update on our finances.

**A motion was made and carried to approve Cathy Teske, Sue Holster, and Pam Kohnhorst for the Audit Committee to meet next week to do our Church and Trust Fund audits.**

**A motion was made and carried to accept these reports.**

## **Committee Reports:**

**Education/Youth:** Education Elder is on a one year substitution by Member at Large.

**Good Stewards:** No written report was provided. Lloyd thanked Kelly for her leadership and service to the committee.

**Property:** No written report was provided. Jim let us know that worship banners have been moved to the main floor, and the majority of his written report will be in the Annual Report.

**Worship:** A written report was provided.

**Trust Fund:** No written report was provided; they haven't met yet this month.

**A motion was made and carried to accept these reports.**

## **Old Business:**

- Memorial Fund Review – There **will be no change** to the priority order this month. Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund is number one, Current Expense Fund number two, and Sustainability Trust Fund number three.
- We need one more person to volunteer to be Vice President/President Elect. **PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!**
- May 20, 2023 is the Synod Assembly in Appleton. We are looking for two members to volunteer to represent St. Stephen at this meeting.
- Property continues to work on building security. Discussion followed on re-keying the church vs. installing keypads on interior doors.

## **New Business:**

- **A motion was made and carried** to approve December bills.
- The Annual Meeting Agenda was discussed.
- Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup> is the due date for any articles that need to be included in the Annual Report.
- Lent-Holy Week – Worship Committee is starting to plan. Possibilities are: Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday will be split with Pilgrim, each church hosting one of the services. Easter Service, should we adjust worship times to allow the choir to sing at both services; one at 8:00 am and one at 10:00 am? Midweek services will be 12:15 at St. Stephen with a meal, and in the evening at Pilgrim. We will also explore doing pulpit exchanges with other churches and inviting neighboring parishes to join us. Good Friday will be at St. Stephen at 12:15 pm with the evening service at Pilgrim. **A motion was made and approved to give Worship Committee and Pastor Karoline the authority to make the changes as needed.**
- The Worship Committee is exploring alternative ideas for music accompaniment during services when pianists or organists are not available. There is an option of using pre-recorded music.
- We discussed the difficulties we have with privacy issues and making sure our members and staff are supported in times of need. Pastor Karoline will put out a notice to members to please share their needs with her or Nancy if they require prayers or a visit in a time of need.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm, with Lloyd providing devotions.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Erdman, Council Secretary

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Wednesday, February 22nd  
at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary

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