

News, Notes, and Prayers

from St. Stephen Lutheran Church

January 2018

Who We Are

St. Stephen Lutheran Church is God's people in South Plainfield, Piscataway, and Edison.

Staff

Kathleen Cortese, office secretary

ststephen.edison@gmail.com

Vincent Rone, director of music

Rev. Chris Halverson, pastor

pastor.eli@gmail.com

Congregational Council

Barbara Cibak

Mary Flannery

Kathy Gerling

Randy Gerling

Sharon Gianneschi

Linda Hansen

Patricia Klatt

Cathy Newman

Dale Newton

Linda Nieman

Judith Zaccardi

Office

3145 Park Ave., South Plainfield, NJ 07080
908/757-4474

What's Happening

Sundays

9:30 a.m. + Sunday School

10:30 a.m. + Worship with Holy Communion

Saturday, January 6th - Epiphany of Our Lord

5:30 p.m. + Cluster wide Epiphany Service at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Edison

Tuesday, January 9th

8:00 – 9:00 p.m. + "Pub Theology" with Pastor Chris

Sunday, January 28th - Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Annual Congregational Meeting after Worship



St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

3145 Park Avenue
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080
908-757-4474

Address Correction Requested

From the Pastor's Pen: Mark's Gospel and Our Own

Well, we've now been in Mark's Gospel for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. You may have noticed his staccato style, his excessive use of the word "Suddenly", that the whole thing feels short and breathless. I compare it to a Beat Poem—it is a relentless Gospel.

I would encourage everyone to take a little time and read it through, in one sitting if possible. It takes about an hour and a half. I've been accused of asking too much from parishioners lately so I hesitate to recommend giving this much time, but then I look at national statistics, the average American spends 3 hours a day online and 5 hours a day watching TV—so perhaps asking you all to look away from a screen for an hour and a half isn't the worst thing in the world... at any rate, read through Mark's Gospel—notice the patters that emerge much more clearly when you see it not only in its parts, but in its whole—listen to his voice. He wants you to know this Gospel that has caught his heart on fire. Perhaps, by consuming it all in one go you too will be renewed, will be called to do as he did, tell the good news of God to your neighbors.

And we need to consider who our neighbors are. I was reading Presiding Bishop Eaton's latest message. She wrote about a friend trying unsuccessfully to explain Advent to her neighbor. In the midst of this experience it hit her, "a growing segment of our population has had little or no connection with the church or any other religious tradition. They don't speak our language. They don't know our stories. They don't measure time the way we do... They literally don't know what we are talking about."

To many of our friends, neighbors, and relatives we speak "Church Speak"; when it comes to matters of faith, we are unintelligible. This should scare us a little—after all as Lutherans we affirm that faith comes by hearing, and if people in our culture simply can't hear what we're saying, we have a problem. But, it shouldn't be a woe is me kind of scary, but instead an energizing, invigorating call to action—to a collective reflection upon the language we use to tell people about Jesus—a kind of scary that steers us to tell our story in such a way that it might be heard by our neighbors!

A kind of scary that sent Mark out into the world with his Gospel.

"Have you heard the good news?"

"No, what good news?"

"The good news about Jesus."

"Jesus who?"

"Jesus, the Christ."

"The Christ."

"Yes, even the Son of God!"

"The Christ, the Son of God?"

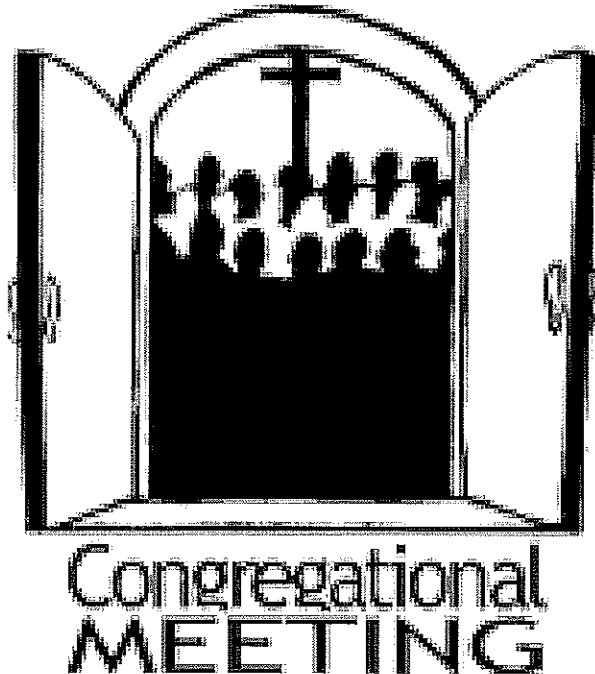
"Yes, the one of whom Isaiah the prophet wrote."

So too, we are called to speak freshly about the Gospel of our Lord.

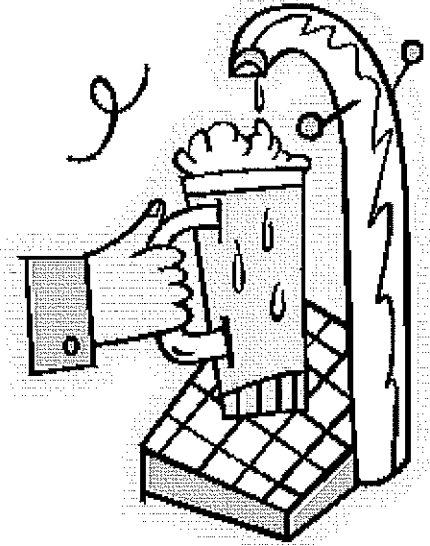
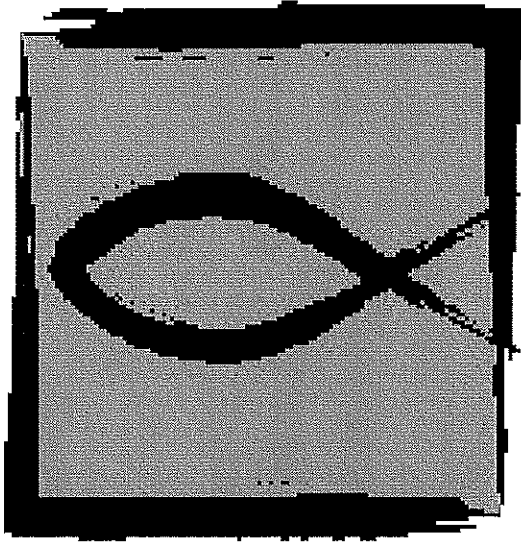
Here was Bishop Eaton's attempt to name our faith using fresh words, "We stake our lives on the truth of Jesus' death and resurrection. This brings freedom and life to us so we can invite others into God's freedom and life."

What will you say?

Annual Report Deadline – Tuesday, January 9th
Please email your report to the church's email address:
ststephen.elca@gmail.com



On Sunday, January 28, 2018
following the worship service,
St. Stephen Lutheran Church will be having the
Annual Congregational Meeting
to go over the committee reports and
to vote on air conditioning the Sanctuary and
installing new windows in the main building.
Please remember to be there to vote.
We look forward to seeing you all there.



"Pub Theology" *with Pastor Chris*

Where: Flanagans, 2501 Plainfield Ave., So. Plainfield

When: Tuesday, January 9, 2018

8:00-9:00 PM

Topic: "Who is Paul?"

This is an informal gathering for fellowship, refreshment and discussion. It's open to the public, so bring your friends and neighbors.

January's Servant-Leaders 2018

	January 7 10:30 a.m.	January 14 10:30 a.m.	January 21 10:30 a.m.	January 28 10:30 a.m.
Deacon	Linda Nietman	Pat Klatt	Bill Cochrane	Mary Flannary
Comm. Assistant	Cathy Newman	Linda Nietman	Linda Goetz	Linda Hansen
Lector	Dale Newton	Kathy Gerling	Linda Goetz	Linda Hansen
Acolyte & Crossbearer	Kenneth Yao	Justin Billich	Jessica Craggan	Cassandra Newton
Usher	Logan Flannary-Miller, Amelia Flannary, Peggy Flannary	Kathy & Randy Gerling	Marilyn & Joe Scalisi	Linda Nietman Judy Ziccardi
Greeter	Doris & Mike Glowacki	Doris Hansen	Cathy Newman	Kathy Cortese
Altar Guild	Sharon Gianneschi Marlene Young	Doris Hansen Kristen Hansen	Cathy Newman Carol McCarthy	Miriam Skrzypczak Pat Benward

Thank you. Your servant-leadership sets the table for worship and helps invite us into the living presence of God.

If you are unable to serve as scheduled, please find someone to cover you. Drop us a line in the office (908/757-4474 or ststephen.elca@gmail.com) no later than Wednesday morning, so that the correct information may be printed in the Sunday bulletin. Thanks again.

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St. Stephen

Jan 2018 (Eastern Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 1st Sunday of New Year's Eve 10:30am - Hymn 2pm - NCC	1 New Year's Day	2	3 10am - Katie's 7pm - Property	4 1pm - Bible	5 7:30pm - NCC	6 10am - FIDAC 5:30pm - Epipha 8pm - NCC
7 9:30am - Sunday 10:30am - Worsh 2pm - NCC 2pm - Youth	8 7pm - Confirmati 7:30pm - Monda	9 Annual Reports 11:30am - Rutha 6pm - Assist 8pm - "Pub	10 7:30pm - Congre	11 1pm - Bible	12 7:30pm - NCC	13 10am - FIDAC 8pm - NCC
14 9:30am - Sunday 10:30am - Worsh 2pm - NCC	15 Newsletter 7pm - Confirmati 7:30pm - Monda	16	17 10am - Katie's	18	19 7:30pm - NCC 7:30pm - Worshi	20 Synod Council 10am - FIDAC 8pm - NCC
21 Pastor Chris away at SHAPE Continuing Education 9:30am - Sunday 10:30am - Worsh 2pm - NCC	22 7:30pm - Monda	23 8pm - Bible	24	25 7:30pm - Buildin	26 7:30pm - NCC	27 10am - FIDAC 8pm - NCC
28 9:30am - Sunday 10:30am - Worsh 11:58am - Annua 2pm - NCC	29 7pm - Confirmati 7:30pm - Monda	30	31	1	2 7:30pm - NCC	3 10am - FIDAC 8pm - NCC

We pray, O God...

For the church across denominations and across the globe

For the well-being of all creation

For peace and justice in the world, the nations and those in authority

We pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, our Full Communion partners, and for the whole Church.

We pray for our home, the earth, which you have created and declared good, may it, and all of creation be so, be good.

We pray for those in authority, especially President Trump, Governor Christie, and Mayor Anesh.

We pray for all nations Lord, especially those in severe turmoil, such as Syria, Israel/Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, and North Korea. We pray as well for all refugees, may they find safety.

We pray for all the victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. We pray for all victims of natural disasters throughout the world.

For the poor, oppressed, sick, bereaved, lonely, and for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially:

Sheri Agens
Desmond Bascom
Joe & Joy Billich
Joan Hassard
Helen Henne
Len Merlo
Charlotte Merring
Vera Millet
Jim Moore
Luciano Ruiz
Ken Troy

Melanie Agens, daughter of David Agens
Jim Albert, brother of John Albert
Ruth Alphin, friend of Sonya & Bob Ross
Dakota Binner, friend of Cassandra Newton
Holly Bowen, friend of Sharon Gianneschi
Joyce Citsey, friend of Barbara Cibak
Tony & Helen Cortese, parents of John Cortese
Bonnie & Fred Dauncey, parents of Sandra Cortese
Patti DeSanto, friend of Barbara Hodge

Sue G., friend of Marylou Johnson
James Galambos, friend of Bonnie Conrad
Tom & Arleen Hanlon, cousins of Barbara Pallister
Sue Ifrach, friend of Kathy Cortese
Lydia Johnson, granddaughter of Marylou Johnson
Albert, Tuti, & Billy Kawuwung
Stephanie Kendall, niece of Kathy & Randy Gerling
Tom Koubek, brother-in-law of Eloise Newton
Eric Lissy, grandson of Helen Lissy
Kurt Manz, father of Richard Manz
James Massie
John McGunnigle, friend of Barbara Hodge
Erik Millet, son of Vera Millet
Linda Mueller, friend of Sonya & Bob Ross
Tiffany Pham, friend of Jillian Cortese
John Puppo, brother-in-law of Bob & Cathy Newman
Erna Reihsmann, cousin of Marylou Johnson
Susan Robbins, sister of Pat Klatt
Joe Roberts, friend of Joe Scalisi
Natalie Romeo, friend of Marylou Johnson
Annie Rooney, friend of Michele Billich
Christopher Sachs, nephew of Barbara Pallister
Saul Timisela
Judi Trumpp, niece of Marilyn Scalisi
Cindy Urban, former foster daughter of Vera Millett
Al & Sharon Vastano, uncle & aunt of Melissa Cortese
Amy & Desire, friends of Barbara Pallister
David, friend of Barbara Pallister
Dawn, friend of Pat Benward
Eric, friend of Barbara Pallister
Jake, friend of Bonnie Conrad
Margaret
Padmaja, Rani and Perathyusher
Stephen, friend of Marylou Johnson
Family of Freddie Connors in Puerto Rico

The family of Ethel Ulrich

The family of Roberta Kindred

The family of Louise O'Brien

We give thanks, O God...

For the life and witness of the faithful departed

Ethel Ulrich
Roberta Kindred, aunt of Peggy Albert and Kathy Cortese
Louise O'Brien, mother of Pat Klatt



Cluster wide Epiphany Service

Saturday, January 6th, 5:30 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church,

445 Old Post Rd., Edison.