

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

Physical: S214 Willow Street, Mailing: P.O. Box 435
Stephenson, MI 49887

Heather Esmahan, Office Manager

(906) 753-4932 Soffice@gsslutheran.org

Reverend Brenda L. Greenwald

Phone/Text: 720.989.8218

E-mail: Pastor@gsslutheran.org

Sunday Worship: 9a (Fellowship AFTER)

2024



December Calendar: Advent + Christmas	1
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December Calendar: Advent + Christmas

- December 1:** 1st Sunday in Advent: 9a Worship, Fellowship after
- December 8:** 2nd Sunday in Advent: 9a Worship, Fellowship after
- December 15:** 3rd Sunday in Advent: 9a Worship, Fellowship after
Carols, Cookies, & Cocoa: 1p, Gethsemane Fellowship Hall
- December 22:** 4th Sunday in Advent: 9a Worship, Fellowship after
- December 24:** **Christmas Eve** Worship: 4p Geth and 5:30p at St. St. (No Fellowship)
- December 29:** First Sunday in Christmas: **9a** Joint Worship at St. Stephen's
Potluck Lunch to follow worship - bring a dish to pass!

Birthdays Blessings

11 Pat Kaczmarczyk
18 Wayne Thill
24 Steve Tickler
28 Norma Elmer
30 Fred Belec, Jim Voss

Happy Anniversary

12 Keith & Shirley Olson
30 Bob & Shelley Berglin

We invite you to pray for those serving in the military: Jordan Baril, Jay Chapple, Ken Dams, Trish Dams, Brent Jurmu, Jared Jurmu

We continue to hold the following in prayer:

Macy Berzsenyi-Kienitz Rob Boe
Tammy Parrett The Sorensen Family

We offer the **comfort** and **hope** of the **Resurrection** to two families:



+Barbara Vretener+

May 7, 1954
Sept 30, 2024



+Gary Klatt, Jr.+

Sept 7, 1974
Nov 12, 2024



Hospitalized? Welcome a visit? Contact the Office at **906.753.4932** or reach out to **Pr Brenda** directly at **720.989.8218** (call/text), and we'll make it happen!

**SATURDAY
Morning**



10a on Dec. 7



**Bring a DISH to
pass for food
after decorating!**

*Hanging
of the
Greens
at
St. Stephen's*



**Carols
Cookies
Cocoa!**

**December 15th
1p at Gethsemane**



*From Frosty to
Silver Bells to Silent
Night, come join us
for an afternoon
of festive fun!*



BACK AGAIN this year: a *Silent Auction* will feature donated items, available for bidding, just **BEFORE** and **DURING** the gathering, with proceeds supporting a new HVAC system at Gethsemane.



Lots of new, handi-capable parking spots on the side and in back!



Bring a canned food item for the Mid-County Food Pantry!

Gethsemane Lutheran Church



N6095 US Highway 41 – Wallace, MI 49893

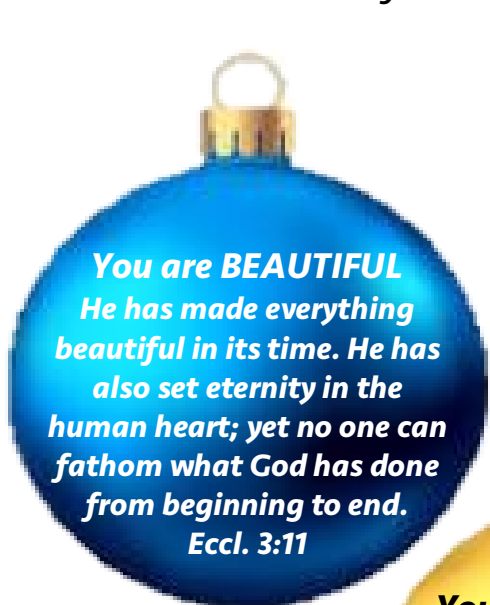


Gifts from God

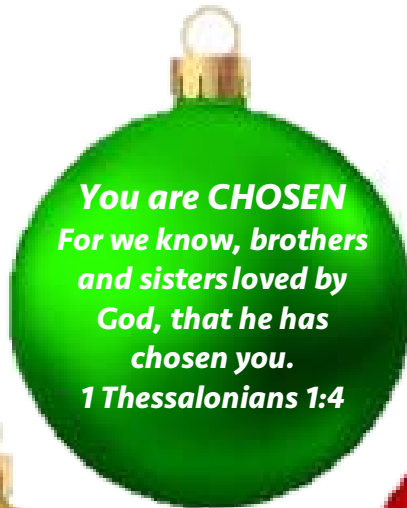
Rev. Brenda Greenwald

Dear Church,

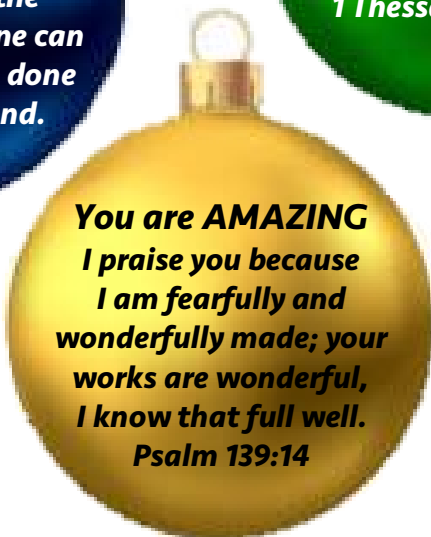
*I have a delightful and encouraging mug on my desk that reminds me of the many gifts we are given by a gracious and benevolent God. In this season of gift-giving, I want **YOU** to hold some of these gems close to **YOUR** heart:*



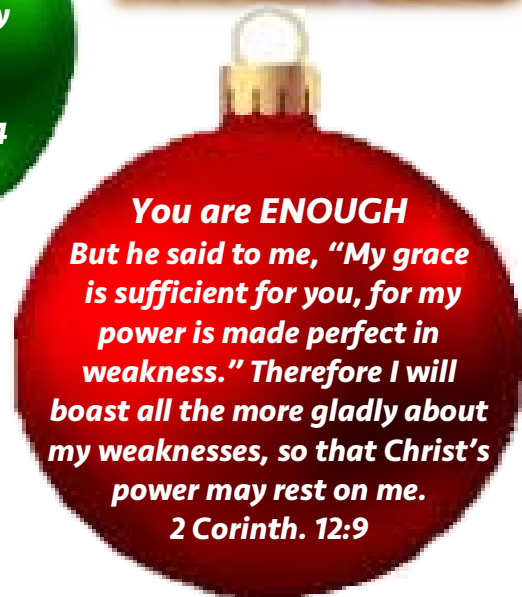
You are BEAUTIFUL
He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.
Eccl. 3:11



You are CHOSEN
For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you.
1 Thessalonians 1:4



You are AMAZING
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
Psalm 139:14




You are ENOUGH
But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.
2 Corinth. 12:9

PONDER these things in your hearts, dear Church, as Jesus's mother did, awaiting the birth of her Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Pr. Brenda

Speaking of gifts, give the gift of LIFE by signing-up to donate blood on Tuesday, December 10th. The Red Cross will be at Gethsemane between 10a and 3p. Sign-up at [RedCross.org](https://www.RedCross.org) today!



American Red Cross Blood Drive

Save a Life, Give Blood

Gethsemane Lutheran Church, ELCA
Spacious Hall • Delicious, After-Donation Snacks
N6095 US Hwy 41 • Wallace, MI 49893 • 906.788.4234

December 10, 2024 • 10a – 3p

Schedule Online: [RedCrossBlood.org/](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/)
Event Coordinator: Wendy Hanson

Daily Bible Readings - December 2024

Sun. Dec. 1 — First Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16, Psalm 25:1-10, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36

Prayer of the Day: *Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.*

Mon – Dec 2	Numbers 17:1-11	2 Peter 3:1-18	Psalm 90
Tue – Dec 3	2 Samuel 7:18-29	Revelation 22:12-16	Psalm 90
Wed – Dec 4	Isaiah 1:24-31	Luke 11:29-32	Psalm 90
Thu – Dec 5	Malachi 3:5-12	Philippians 1:12-18a	Luke 1:68-79
Fri – Dec 6	Malachi 3:13-18	Philippians 1:18b-26	Luke 1:68-79
Sat – Dec 7	Malachi 4:1-6	Luke 9:1-6	Luke 1:68-79

Sun. Dec. 8 — Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79, Philippians 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6

Prayer of the Day: *Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.*

Mon – Dec 9	Isaiah 40:1-11	Romans 8:22-25	Psalm 126
Tue – Dec 10	Isaiah 19:18-25	2 Peter 1:2-15	Psalm 126
Wed – Dec 11	Isaiah 35:3-7	Luke 7:18-30	Psalm 126
Thu – Dec 12	Amos 6:1-8	2 Corinthians 8:1-15	Isaiah 12:2-6
Fri – Dec 13	Amos 8:4-12	2 Corinthians 9:1-15	Isaiah 12:2-6
Sat – Dec 14	Amos 9:8-15	Luke 1:57-66	Isaiah 12:2-6

Sun. Dec. 15 — Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20, Isaiah 12:2-6, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

Prayer of the Day: *Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.*

Carla Dutkavich offered a beautiful, sign-language rendition of "Amazing Grace" during worship on November 17.



Daily Bible Readings - December 2024 *(continued)*

Mon – Dec 16	Numbers 16:1-19	Hebrews 13:7-17	Isaiah 11:1-9.
Tue – Dec 17	Numbers 16:20-35	Acts 28:23-31	Isaiah 11:1-9
Wed – Dec 18	Micah 4:8-13	Luke 7:31-35	Isaiah 11:1-9
Thu – Dec 19	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Hebrews 10:10-18	Psalms 80:1-7
Fri – Dec 20	Isaiah 42:10-18	Hebrews 10:32-39	Psalms 80:1-7
Sat – Dec 21	Isaiah 66:7-11	Luke 13:31-35	Psalms 80:1-7

Sun. Dec. 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55, Ps 80:1-7, Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45

Prayer of the Day: *Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen*

Mon – Dec 23	Micah 4:6-8	2 Peter 1:16-21	Luke 1:46b-55
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Tue. Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve

Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalm 97, Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:8-20

Prayer of the Day: *Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the rightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen*

Sun. Dec 29 – First Sunday of Christmas

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26, Psalm 148, Colossians 3:12-17, Luke 2:41-52

Prayer of the Day: *Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.*

Mon – Dec 30	2 Chronicles 1:7-13	Mark 13:32-37	Psalms 147:12-20
Tue – Dec 31	1 Kings 3:5-14	John 8:12-19	Psalms 147:12-20



Church Council Minutes

*September 18, 2024 - Council Meeting

*October Meeting did not occur, November meeting to be published next month.

Present: Cheri Leiphart, Pastor Brenda Greenwald.
Devotions: Pr B – Prayers for help

Absent: Kelly Francour, Kami Salo, John Starzynski
Meeting Called to Order: 2:13p

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion to Accept: Pr B

Second: CL

FAVOR

- New Business Item: Concrete Project in Back of St. Stephen's; SCAM/Breach

PASTOR'S REPORT: May 24 – September 18, 2024

Pr. Brenda

CALENDAR

- Baptisms**
 - Baptismal Seminars** (6/13/24) and (8/29/24)
 - Levi Storm Paris** (6/16/24 at Gethsemane
 - Karson Michael Parker** (6/23/24) at Gethsemane
 - Adley Kay Wilczynski** (9/8/24) at Gethsemane
- Funerals**
 - +Herman Schuette+** (5/18/24) at Gethsemane
 - +Chad Wendt+** (6/12/24) at Anderson-Diehm
 - +Zeke Gill+** (6/26/24) at Gethsemane
 - +Mary Dombrowski+** (8/31/24) at St. Stephen's
 - +Jeannie Voelker+** (9/5/24) at St. Stephen's
- SPECIAL Services**
 - (5/19/24): Pent/Confirm/Bap 6/30/24): Joint Church Picnic,
 - 9/8/24: GWOH. 10/6/24: **Blessing of the Animals**, 12:30p – Parsonage
- Weddings**
 - Marnie Schuette/Jay Wangerin** (6/22/24) at Gethsemane
 - Ashley Anderson/Beau Thoney** 9/28/24 at Gethsemane 12p
 - Jordan Crawford/Kellie Haulotte** 9/28/24 at St. Stephen's 3p

MINISTRY MOMENTS

- Community**
 - Baccalaureate Service** - Ministerium recommends discontinuing
 - Blood Drives** (5/30/24), (8/27/24) at G. **NEXT:** 12/3/24 at Gethsemane
 - 9/28/24: Mellen Township Fire Department **Auction: Quilt** Donation
 - 10/2/24: **Stewards of Children** Training: Wednesday at Geth. 5-7:30p
 - 10/12/24: **Congo Resource Fair** at Emmanuel. Hymns, Finance, etc.
 - 10/16/24: **Chili Supper** at St. Stephen's. 4:30-6p
 - 10/19/24: **Boxcar** for Lutheran World Relief: Saturday in Marinette
 - 10/24/24: **Dinner That Shall Not Be Named:** Thursday at Geth. 4:30-6p
 (to be shared verbally at meeting)
- Concerns**
- Faith Formation**
 - Shaw** Salo (St) and **Taylor** Schultz (St) – Classes begin 10/13/24
 - Bonfire for **FLLC** (5/31/24), Fall Kick-off **Bonfire** 9/22/24 at Zion
 - Congregation **Day Visit on 6/ 19-** WOW! **Fall Fest** 10/5/24
- Fortune Lake**
- Health Dept**
- Insurance**
- Ministerium**
- NGL Synod**
- Synod Assembly**
 - EACH** event has been vetted - we know which **license** to procure.
 - Phillippo **questionnaire** available. **Parsonage** has water-detector.
 - Elected **President**. **Incredible grant** from Good Dog Foundation!
 - Retreat at **FLLC** 6/7-8/24, Retreat at First 9/13-14/24
 - Hybrid / in-person Rotation. ZION this year.

PASTOR'S REPORT

(continued)

MINISTRY

- Nursing Homes** **Harbors:** Jack Wittgren's 92nd Birthday Party (9/9/24)
 Menominee Health: Worship - 4th Tuesday of each month
 Roubals: Elaine Haban now a resident. Worship services continue.
- Office Managers** **Update:** TC has **returned** from Mental Health Leave.
- Visits** Homes: **29** Hospital: **4** Retire. Home: **6** Office: **23**
 Phone: **DAILY** Text: **DAILY** Squad Calls: **1**

TREASURER'S REPORT + FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Sandy Chaney (T), Danielle Bergquist (FS)

1. Written Reports – **May, June, July, August 2024:** similar in giving to 2023
2. Discussion of Fraudulent charges to a Scammer Selling "QuickBooks"
 - An e-mail offering "6 years of coverage for only \$900" was received by Treasurer. To be fair, this would have been a delightful and cost-effective deal.
 - The Treasurer ran this deal past both Cheri and John of Council, with them agreeing to the purchase, if indeed it was necessary for the Treasurer to do her job. Pastor B, however, was not consulted, and would have been able to catch multiple red flags: QuickBooks rarely locks people in for a multiple-year contract, 6-years is an odd number of years for a deal, the e-mail address itself looked suspicious, and the name of the company was not properly capitalized. Seeing as how Pr B is the main tech-support at St. Stephen's, this was an unfortunate step to skip.
 - The Treasurer then authorized the expense, even after Nicolet Bank called to verify what was flagged on their end as a possibly, fraudulent charge.
 - The Treasurer additionally allowed the Scammers remote, digital access to the main Office computer at St. Stephen's, giving them visual access to our real, QuickBook and bank accounts.
 - Ultimately, the Treasurer realized the error, and notified Pr B.
 - All St. Stephen's accounts (*nearly a dozen*) were frozen by Nicolet Bank to ensure no additional fraudulent charges could be made. Two charges of \$105 were noted, but the money was returned when flagged as fraudulent. As of this meeting, the \$900 was still in question, as it had been verified and allowed by the Treasurer.
 - Pr Brenda had to digitally scrub the Office computer completely clean before the bank would give us internet access to our accounts once again. This meant that Pr B had to save all of the data on each of the 5 accounts on Office Computer (*Treasurer, Office, Financial Secretary, Guest, Pastor*) to an external hard-drive so that our Office files were not lost in the digital scrub. Then, Microsoft 360 (*which provides the software programs of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook*) had to be re-purchased and reinstalled on each of the accounts on this computer, and bookmarks that allowed each user to go about their work needed to be reestablished.

FOLLOW-UP: On October 4th, the \$900 was successful re-captured by Nicolet Bank, resulting in a total of NO MONEY LOST by these devious scammers. Whew!

Motion to Accept Reports: Pr B

Seconded: CL

FAVOR

BRIEF MINISTRY TEAM UPDATES

Bethesda (Pr B)	Faith Formation (Kami)	Fellowship (Kelly)
•Fall Meeting – 2 nd to last week of October	•Classes have been paused, as Pastor B is beyond stretched at this time •Conversations with past Confirmands regarding Faith Formation for littles	(absent)
Finance (John)	Memorial (John)	Property (John)
*Cheri will ask Sandy Chaney if she'd like to attend the Congregational Resource Fair with Pr B on Saturday, October 12. (Helpful, Treasurer material)	Memorials in + Mary Dombrowski's + name	Concrete Blocks for BACK of Property – NOT to be worked on October 6 (Animal Blessing) Tim L came to hang Cheri's musical artwork
Social Ministry (Cheri)	WELCA (Kelly)	Worship/Music (Cheri)
•God's Work, Our Hands Sunday was a great success. FUN and helpful!	•Super helpful with funerals, bigtime thanks to Donna T	•Narrative Lectionary has begun!

Motion to Accept ALL UPDATES: CL

Seconded: Pr B

FAVOR

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Chili Supper** Coordination: Heather will be the main contact, but we're still going to need a lot of help from the congregation to pull this off. Pr B will take care of the Health Department License and Cheri will contact a friend about the vinyl banner.

NEXT STEPS

- **Next** St. Stephen's Council Meeting: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 2:15p
- **Reading the October 2024 Devotion:** (Cheri will be gone...so Pr B)
- **Motion to Adjourn: Pr B** **Time: 3:26p**

CLOSE with THE LORD'S PRAYER



Advent Service Project: ALL of December



Rainbow House Empowerment Beyond Abuse



A little Rainbow House history: In 1978, a group of women concerned with the increase of domestic violence came together and formed a Task Force to pursue the development of a program. The organization operated as an information and referral service for many years prior to acquiring a shelter facility in 1982. Rainbow House provided education and information on stopping the cycle of domestic violence. They've been in their current location, serving survivors since 1984. They established as an independent non-profit in 1993, and continue to serve victims today, through providing prevention, education, and information to communities, families, and schools.

3-Ring Binder: hard-cover
Alarm clocks
Aluminum Foil
Band-Aids
Bathroom Cleanser
Body Wash
Brooms w/ Dust Pans
Can Openers
Cash Donations
Deodorant (men +women)
Diapers: Size 4 + 5
Dish Soap
Fabric Softener
Floor Cleaners
Garbage Bags 13 + 30 Gallon
Garbage Cans
Gift Card: Aldis
Gift Card: Amazon
Gift Card: Fuel
Gift Card: Jacks
Gift Card: Walmart
Hair gel/mousse
Ice Cube Trays
Kitchen Cleaner

Rainbow House
serves victims
and children of
domestic
violence in
Oconto and
Marinette
Counties, WI
and Menominee
County, MI.

All items go
DIRECTLY to
those affected.

AVAILABLE AT:
Amazon
Walmart (look for
Rainbow House on Registry)

Kleenex
Laundry Pods
Laundry Soap (S or Med)
Microwave (new)
Mop Buckets
Mops
Pails/Buckets
Paper Towels
Pizza Pans
Plastic Dish Sets (4, new)
Postage Stamps
Printer Paper
Razors (men + women)
Saran Wrap
Shaving cream (men + women)
Shower Curtains + Rings
SOS Pads
Toasters (new)
Toilet Cleanser
Toilet Paper: 1 ply
Vacuum Cleaner (new)
Windex
Ziplock Bags: Freezer, Gallon
Ziplock Bags: Regular, Gallon

**Look for ornaments
with these items
once our Angel Tree
is put up on
December 7th!**

**Helping is as
easy as 1-2-3**

- 1. Take an ornament**
- 2. Purchase the item**
- 3. Bring the item
to church and
place it under the
Angel Tree!**



Northern Great
Lakes Synod
www.nglsynod.org

Monthly Newsletter - 2024

Important Dates and Information inside!

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
PO Box 435
Stephenson, MI 49887

