

## Singing

Lutherans love to sing, and we have a rich and broad musical tradition. Piano, organ, and other instruments accompany our sung praise and prayer. Our *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW or “red book”) has over 800 hymns. Congregational singing is enjoyed and encouraged at St. Stephen. Don't be shy.



## Scripture in Worship

Lutherans follow a repeating three-year pattern of scripture readings called the Revised Common Lectionary (a list of readings). Over a three-year cycle, we hear a rich and diverse selection of biblical passages. Each Sunday the readings relate to one another in some way.

## The Church Year

The church organizes time by the seasons of the church year, a calendar that tells the story of our God who is beyond time yet active in human history. The colors of the banners and cloths on the altar and pulpit change with the seasons.

## Ministers of Worship

The ordained pastor presides at Communion and preaches (although others are invited to preach at times). Many other people—including the choir, music director, assisting ministers, cross-bearers and candle lighters—make the liturgy alive and meaningful. The Altar Guild prepares the sanctuary. Greeters welcome. Ushers assist. Some work in the office. Others keep the building safe and inviting. **At St. Stephen, everyone is a minister!**

*St. Stephen Lutheran Church is a **Reconciling in Christ** congregation, which means that we welcome and support all people regardless of their sexual orientation, their gender identity or that of their children, parents, siblings or friends.*

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2198 N. Meridian Road

Tallahassee, FL 32303

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Phone: 850-385-2728

### WEB:

[www.st-stephen-lutheran.net](http://www.st-stephen-lutheran.net)

### FACEBOOK:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Stephen-Lutheran-Church-Elca>

### SYNOD WEBSITE:

[www.fbsynod.com](http://www.fbsynod.com)

### ELCA WEBSITE:

[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

**Our church faces North Meridian Road at the corner of North Meridian Road and Pinewood Street, one block south of the major intersection of North Meridian Road and John Knox Road.**

Directions from Monroe Street (U.S. 27):

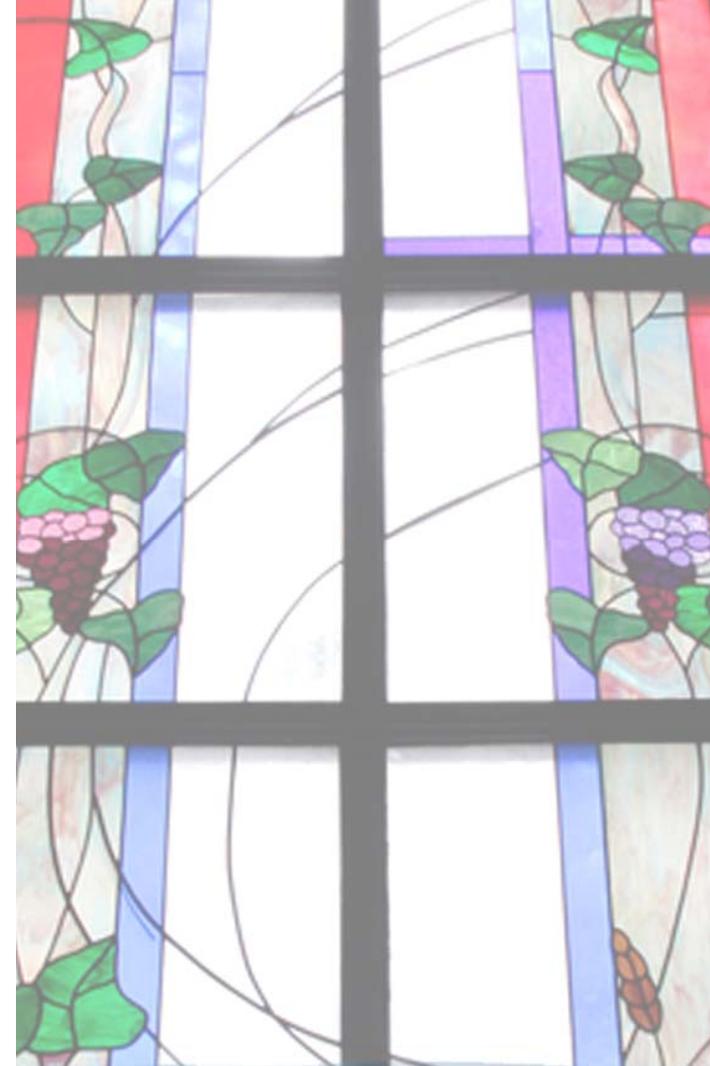
- From Monroe Street turn east on John Knox Road (by the Tallahassee Mall).
- Proceed on John Knox until the road ends at the intersection with Meridian Road. (Look for the traffic light.)
- Turn right (south) on Meridian Road, go one block to Pinewood Street, and turn right.

Directions from Thomasville Road (S.R. 61):

- From Thomasville Road turn west on South Ride.
- Proceed on South Ride until the road ends at the intersection with Meridian Road. (At the stop sign, notice our church is right in front of you.)
- Turn right (north) on Meridian Road, immediately get in center turn lane at Pinewood Street, and turn left.



St. Stephen Lutheran Church is a congregation of the **Florida-Bahamas Synod** of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**



*St. Stephen*  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP | HOLY COMMUNION**  
10:30 AM

a celebratory relationship with God through worship



## Why Worship Matters

We gather for worship expecting three things: to experience the presence of God; to know the grace and mercy of the God who forgives and guides us; and to leave refreshed, confident in God's love and sustained for the life of discipleship.

*Thanks be to God!*

## The Liturgy

"Liturgy" is a formal word for worship that simply means "the work of the people."

*Everyone* participates in worship, not just the pastor and assisting ministers. Even so, we believe that the primary actor in worship is God: God gathers us and meets us, washes us in Baptism, feeds us in Communion, speaks to us, forgives our sins, hears our prayers, renews us and sends us out into the world for witness and service. In all these ways, God acts *for* us.

The liturgy has been crafted over the ages, and many of our prayers and creeds have been spoken by countless Christians before us. As we worship we are connected with the communion of saints, believers of every time, past, present and future.

Yet the liturgy is also contemporary. God acts *for* us in our place and time as we bring ourselves and our unique concerns to the encounter with God.

**Rev. Marda Messick, Pastor**  
**Rev. Emory Hingst, Pastor Emeritus**  
**Edwin Weber, Vicar**  
**Katharine Gossman, Music Director**  
**Karen Dennis, Office Manager**

**Mission Statement:** *We believe that God's purpose for St. Stephen is to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.*



## The liturgy has a fourfold shape and order:

Typically during the **GATHERING** we participate in a corporate Confession and Forgiveness, returning to our Baptism to confess our sin and be assured of God's pardon. We sing a hymn that establishes the tone for that Sunday and season. We pray.

In the **WORD** portion of the liturgy, children are invited to come forward for a message. We hear readings from the Old and New Testament and we pray a Psalm. We stand and sing to welcome the Gospel. Lutherans believe that through the Sermon, Christ actually speaks to his people in the here and now. In the proclaimed Word we hear both law—the truth about ourselves—and gospel—God's promise of love and redemption.

We respond to the Word with hymns, a confession of faith (Creed) and an offering. We say Prayers of Intercession on behalf of the church, the world, the creation and everyone in need, and we include a time for the congregation to voice their own prayers.

We exchange the Peace with one another, not as a social greeting like "Good morning" but as a sign that in Christ we are reconciled with our brothers and sisters. Giving and receiving the peace of the risen Lord prepares us to receive Communion together.

We celebrate the **MEAL**—also called the Eucharist, Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper—every Sunday at St. Stephen (except in the absence of an ordained pastor). All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Baptized Christians of every age may receive the bread and wine. Others are invited to kneel at the altar for a blessing.

Lutherans believe that the risen Christ is truly present *for* us in the bread and wine. Through Communion prayers and hymns—including the Lord's Prayer—we ask God to unite us in love and send us out to serve.

Having received God's blessing through Word and Sacrament, in the **SENDING** we receive a blessing, state our mission as a community of faith, and sing as we follow the cross out of the sanctuary. We go forth in joy and peace to serve the God who is *for* us, for the sake of the world.

