

Stephen was called to serve the widows and to proclaim the radical words of justice and peace to a weary and unjust world. It cost him his life, but the effects of his words still have positive effects on people today.

April 18, 2021
9:30 Worship
Third Sunday of Easter

“Lord Jesus, Receive my spirit.”

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
“Participating in God’s mission of life”
7104 - 39th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53142

*We are a Reconciling in Christ Congregation
(All are welcome here)*
Email: churchadmin@trinitykenosha.org
Phone 262-694-5050

The mission of God is life. Hope replaces despair. Faith replaces fear. Life replaces death. How are you participating in God’s mission of life?

WELCOME

AM: Welcome and good morning! Trinity is a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We welcome and affirm all persons into the life of our faith community. We extend a special welcome to those watching who are new to our faith community. We invite you to explore our ministries by visiting our website at trinitykenosha.org, or contacting Pastor Tom by email at ptom@trinitykenosha.org or text at 262-287-8098.

Welcome to worship.

GATHERING SONG

♪♪ In Christ Alone

S. Townend, K. Getty

*In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song.
This cornerstone, This solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.*

*What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all
Here in the love of Christ I stand.*

*In Christ alone, who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones he came to save.*

*'Til on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.*

*There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain.
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again.*

*And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me.
For I am His and He is mine.
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.*

*No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me.
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny.*

*No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand.
'Til He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.*

*No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand.
'Til He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.*

© 2001 Thankyou Music

FORGIVENESS AND CONFESSION

P: Christ is risen! He is Risen indeed. Alleluia! We gather in the name of God the source of life, God the risen Christ and God the advocate who journeys with us. Amen.

Trusting in the abundant mercy and everlasting love of God, let us confess our sins before God and one another so that we might be reconciled to God and neighbor.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Risen Lord,

C: ...we admit that we are slow to believe, and even slower to follow where you lead us. We doubt your promise, divide your people, and fail to proclaim the power of your resurrection. We choose to live small lives when you have given us the biggest gift of all: your eternal life. Forgive us. Raise us up to a place where we can serve you faithfully.

P: Christ's victory over death gives us life, mercy and forgiveness of sin! Believe that you are forgiven, and live in the joy of your Lord's resurrection and in the power of God's Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

PRAYER OF THE DAY

AM: Let us pray together the Prayer of the Day. God of might,

C: ...Your messengers' words were not always well received, but they were full of your truth. Give us courage to speak out in the face of injustice and opposition, confident that you will strengthen us by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen

WORD

AM: Through the proclaimed word of God, the Holy Spirit moves to instill and deepen faith.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION - Now the Feast and Celebration #167

AM: We sing the Gospel Acclamation to welcome the Gospel and prepare our hearts to hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

*♪♪ Now the feast and celebration, all of creation sings for joy
To the God of life and love and freedom; praise and glory forevermore!*

Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has freed and united us to be one great people of God.

*Now the feast and celebration, all of creation sings for joy
To the God of life and love and freedom; praise and glory forevermore!*

*Power and riches, wisdom and might, all honor and glory to Christ
forever.*

*Now the feast and celebration, all of creation sings for joy
To the God of life and love and freedom; praise and glory forevermore!*

*For God has come to dwell with us, to make us people of God; to make
all things new.*

*Now the feast and celebration, all of creation sings for joy
To the God of life and love and freedom; praise and glory forevermore!*

P: A reading from the gospel of Luke (Luke 23:33-34a, 46)

³³When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.³⁴Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ⁴⁶Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

L: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

AM: Let us pray... Gracious God, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from you. Bless Don Jambrek, who will read to us the scripture. Make us hunger for the Word of life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60)

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were

being neglected in the daily distribution of food. ²And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, ⁴while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.” ⁵What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

⁸Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. ¹⁰But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. ¹¹Then they secretly instigated some men to say, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” ¹²They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. ¹³They set up false witnesses who said, “This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.” ¹⁵And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

⁷Then the high priest asked him, “Are these things so?” ²And Stephen replied: “Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran.”

⁴⁴“Our ancestors had the tent of testimony in the wilderness, as God directed when he spoke to Moses, ordering him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. ⁴⁵Our ancestors in turn brought it in with Joshua when

they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors. And it was there until the time of David, ⁴⁶who found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. ⁴⁷But it was Solomon who built a house for him. ⁴⁸Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands; as the prophet says, ⁴⁹‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? ⁵⁰Did not my hand make all these things?’

⁵¹“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵²Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.”

⁵⁴When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶“Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

L: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Pastor Tom

A moment of silence follows to allow the Holy Spirit to instill and deepen faith in Jesus Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

♪♪ Alleluia, Sing to JesusHymn 392

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; his the scepter, his the throne;

Alleluia! his the triumph, his the victory alone.

Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood:

"Jesus, out of ev'ry nation has redeemed us by his blood."

Alleluia! Not as orphans are we left in sorrow now;

Alleluia! he is near us; faith believes, nor questions how.

*Though the cloud from sight received him when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise: "I am with you evermore"?*

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

AM: Please take a moment to text prayer concerns to 262-287-8098

AM: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. Each portion of the prayers ends with these words: God of wisdom...**"Hear our prayer"**

AM: Stephen spoke your truth with conviction, and the people rejected him. May we find the strength that transcends our desire not to lose popularity, approval, or our own security for the sake of your gospel's justice. God of wisdom,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: The early church's neglect of their widows demonstrates how easily even we people of faith forget to care for the vulnerable among us. Keep us mindful of others' needs amid our many competing concerns. God of wisdom,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: Stones meant to strengthen, protect, and build up can also be used to destroy and kill. May we choose intelligent ways of employing your resources for the benefit of all, and not plundering them for our own selfish purposes. God of wisdom,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Protect those who are endangered by the physically, emotionally and spiritually abusive, and help them to escape unsafe environments where their well-being is threatened. Heal the sick in body and soul, especially... God of wisdom,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: For Stephen and all faithful martyrs we give you thanks, and look to their faithful examples of how to live as your followers. God of wisdom,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: (Here other petitions may be offered.) God of wisdom,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: Incline your ear to our prayers and fill us with power to begin living out our faith, by the power of your Son our savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

PEACE

AM: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C: And also with you.

AM: If you are gathered with friends or family, share a word of peace with one another.

OFFERING

AM: During this season of “together while apart” your financial gifts given to the glory of God are especially precious and needed. There are three ways to give:

1. Mail a check to Trinity, 7104 - 39th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53142
2. Text a dollar amount with dollar sign (i.e. \$20) to: 262-429-9785
3. Select the “Giving” button on our homepage,
www.trinitykenosha.org

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

AM: Let us pray:

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

C: Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

AM: As we pray together the Lord’s Prayer, please use the version that best nurtures your faith.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HAPPENINGS - Pastor Tom

BLESSING

P: Almighty God, Father +Son and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen.

C: Thanks be to God!

SENDING HYMN

♪♪ **Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia** **Hymn 364**

Christ has arisen, alleluia.

Rejoice and praise Him, alleluia.

*For our redeemer burst from the tomb,
even from death, dispelling its gloom.*

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.

Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.

Our sin forgiving, alleluia!

Jesus is living, alleluia!

Go spread the news: He's not in the grave.

He has arisen this world to save.

Jesus' redeeming labors are done.

Even the battle with sin is won.

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.

Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.

Our sin forgiving, alleluia!

Jesus is living, alleluia!

Christ has arisen to set us free.

Alleluia, to him praises be.

Jesus is living! Let us all sing;

He reigns triumphant, heavenly king.

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.

Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.

Our sin forgiving, alleluia!
Jesus is living, alleluia!

DISMISSAL

AM: Go. Proclaim the good news. Christ is risen!

C: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!