



St. Stephen Lutheran Church

OCTOBER 2026

News & Notes

3510 72nd Street | Urbandale, IA 50322 | 515-276-4628 | office@ststephenlutheran.org



Tour de Ghana The Countdown is On!

It's hard to believe but my **Tour de Ghana with Self-Help International** is almost here! I leave **October 15 and return October 25**, and after months of preparing, fundraising and even getting my motorcycle license, I'm getting very excited (and maybe a little nervous!) for this adventure.

While in Ghana, our group will travel across the country on **three-wheeled motorcycles**, or **trikes**, visiting communities and learning firsthand about the work Self-Help International is doing alongside families. We'll see programs focused on food security, education, health, opportunities for women and girls, and small businesses. One of the parts I'm especially looking forward to is spending a few nights staying with host families, giving us an opportunity to experience daily life, listen, learn, and build relationships.

And yes--I really will be **riding a trike across Ghana**.

There is still time to be a part of this journey. I am hoping to raise an **additional \$2,500--the cost of one trike**. After the tour, these trikes can continue working in Ghana providing transportation and

economic opportunities for individuals and families. If you have been considering making a donation to Self-Help International in support of my trip, I would be incredibly grateful. Here is a link to my fundraising page: [Tracy's Fundraising Page](#)

Most importantly, I **would appreciate your prayers**. Please pray for safe travels for our group, for the host families and communities who will welcome us, and for open hearts and minds as we listen to and learn from the people we meet.

I have felt called towards this experience for a long time, and now it is almost here. I can't wait to see where God shows up along the way--and I look forward to sharing the stories and photos of my trip during worship on November 22!

--Tracy



Ayor said the trike she received "has brought peace to my home because we now have an additional source of income and fewer daily worries."

Photo courtesy of Self-Help International

Around the Church

Thank You!

St. Stephen members continue to enjoy special music during worship. Keith Jaben provided guitar and vocals at the August 9 worship and Kris Shay and Sharon Stilwell provided recorder, flute and violin for the August 30 worship service.



September 12 Blood Drive

This year, we had two first-time donors and one donor that reached the one-gallon donor designation! Up to 27 local lives are impacted from this year's drive.

The friendly ISU/Iowa competition had Iowa State on top with the most donations.



Around the Church (continued)

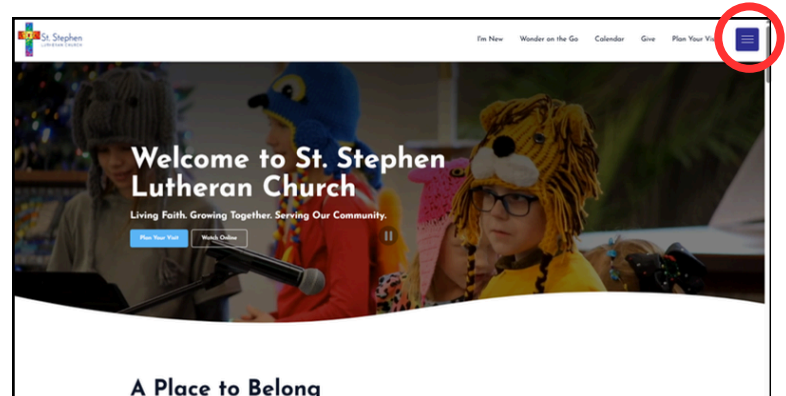
Check Out Our New Website!

After many weeks of hard work, St. Stephen has launched a new website. We hope that members and visitors find the website easy to navigate, informative and engaging.

Some of the updates include:

- Resources for new/prospective members
- Wonder On the Go highlights
- Current Calendar of Events
- Updated giving page
- And so much more!

Look in the Friday email where we will showcase a different page each week.



Items such as the online directory, faith formation, ministries and music can be found by clicking on the menu button in the upper right corner (circled in red in the image above).

The online directory is under “Resources”.

New Virtual Tour!

In conjunction with the new website, St. Stephen also invested in a virtual tour of the church to enhance our online presence at Google Search and Google Maps. To see the virtual tour, click [here](#). Below are just a few of the photos we also received.



Fall Kick-off Fun



News & Events

Nominations Announcement

The Nominating Committee has begun its work to invite St. Stephen members to serve as spiritual leaders beginning January 2027. We will again utilize a process called “Ecclesiastical” or “Churchly” balloting. The process allows for all members of the congregation to lift up a name of someone whom they think has the gifts of discernment, holy wisdom, or the gifts of the Spirit (love, patience, peace and self-control) and a passion for the mission of St. Stephen Lutheran Church. For 2027, we are seeking leaders for the Congregational Council, Nominating Committee and Synod Representative.

The Committee invites you to begin praying for this process and to consider which members of this community might have these attributes. (That person might be YOU!) The churchly balloting process will take place:

- **Sunday, October 11** during worship
- **Wednesday, October 14** during worship
- **Sunday, October 18** during worship
- **Wednesday, October 21** during worship

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any Nominating Committee member:

Dave Arens (davea@privatewealth.com)
 Ardie Strawman (aestrawman@yahoo.com)
 Jane Dieseth (jdd156@hotmail.com)
 Marcia Klindt
 (klindt.marcia@alumni.iastate.edu)



Would you like to get to know other people from the church in a relaxed and social environment? Try the monthly supper club. It is open to all adults and the only requirement is to bring an appetizer to share and your beverage of choice.

Each month supper club is hosted by a member at their home. You do not have to volunteer to host if you attend. Just come and enjoy!

This month, the club will meet at **6:30 p.m. on Friday, October 16**. Please let our hosts John and Jane Dieseth know that you will be attending. (jdieseth@BPGGrp.com) We hope to see you there!

BACKPACK



BUDDIES

Our next backpack buddies event is **Sunday, October 18** following worship.

News and Events (continued)

September Council Meeting Highlights

- August revenue exceeded August expenses by \$9,114.58.
- Measurements for acoustic panels in the Gathering Area have been completed along with an estimate and we are awaiting additional proposals.
- Capital Campaign Update: Bell Brothers is now doing the HVAC maintenance. Signage is yet to be done.
- The new website is up and running!
- Nominating Committee has started the nomination process to fill vacancies including two for Council.
- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for January 31, 2027.
- Proposed personnel policy is under review by the Council.
- Wonder on the Go: Discussion regarding a possible art piece for the Wonder on the Go logo.

Property Day

**Saturday,
October 17
8:00 a.m.**



We need your help to maintain and beautify our church. We typically work for 2-3 hours as needed.

Please check the Friday email on October 16 for any special instructions. If Saturday morning doesn't work, contact Jerry Strawman for an alternative time.

Prayers for Healing October 25

Once each month, Sunday worship includes an opportunity for individual prayer for healing and anointing (the sign of the cross placed on your forehead in oil). If you wish to receive this ministry, simply proceed to one of the healing ministers once you've received communion.



October Schedule

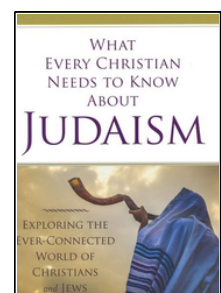
- Tuesday, Oct. 6 - Rehearsal - 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Oct. 11 - Worship performance - 9:30 a.m. warm-up
- Tuesday, Oct. 13 - NO REHEARSAL
- Tuesday, Oct. 20 - Rehearsal - 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Oct. 27 - Rehearsal - 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 1 - Worship performance - 9:30 a.m. warm-up



**October 10 (Sat.)
10:00 a.m.
Rm 103/105**

Brown Bag Book Club

**Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.
Office Conference Rm**



Outreach

Social Ministry Report



Food Pantry - August Collection

Hamburger Helper:	24
Rice:	3
Mac and Cheese:	24
Mashed Potatoes:	83
Snack Crackers:	24
Peanut Butter:	2
Beans:	2
Brushes/Toothpaste:	3
Mouth Wash:	2
Diapers:	3
Miscellaneous Items:	6

Total Items Donated: 180 Items weighing 66 pounds

October Food Pantry Collection Items:

- Canned Soup
- Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Men's and Women's Razors

Please place items for the Urbandale Food Pantry on the new shelves (Gathering Area). Financial gifts marked "food pantry" are always welcome and can be shared in worship or sent to the church office.

Free Little Pantry

Donate "dry goods" groceries by placing them in the Free Little Pantry itself. If there's not enough room in the Little Pantry, overflow can be placed in the designated tote in the Office Entry door. Please be sure to close and latch the pantry door to keep weather and critters out.



Free Little Library

Donate books for all age groups by placing them in the designated tote inside the Office Entry door. Contact the church office for assistance with after-hours donations.



For assistance with the Free Little Pantry or Free Little Library, please contact our team: Sarah Tomjack, Krista Dial, and Janet Davis.

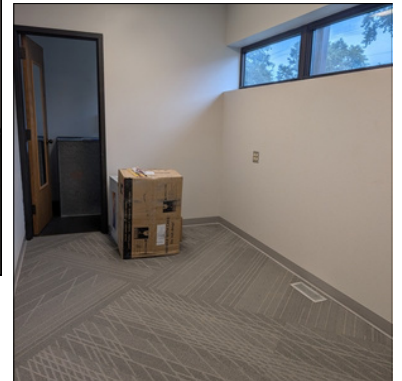
Featured Spotlight

Growing Together in Faith: Our Partnership with RFC

In August 2023, St. Stephen Lutheran Church welcomed Reformed Fellowship Center (RFC) as a partner in sharing our church facility. Since then, what began as sharing space has grown into a relationship that has brought our two congregations closer together.

RFC has transformed the gathering area in the basement into a warm and inviting worship space. They have done a wonderful job making the area their own, and it has been gratifying to see this part of our building being used regularly for worship and fellowship.

Our relationship has also grown through opportunities to spend time together. Members of RFC have joined us for our Fall Kick-off celebration and potluck for each of the past three years. Sharing a meal, visiting with one another, and enjoying fellowship together have given members of both congregations a chance to become better acquainted.

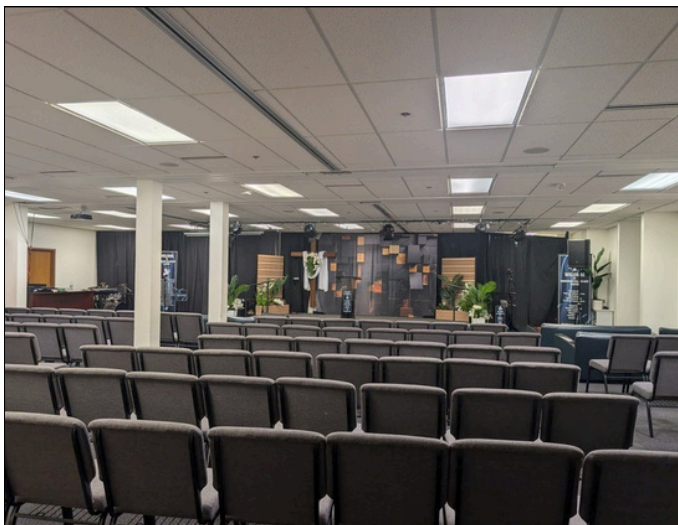


Over the past year, St. Stephen has made additional improvements to help meet RFC's needs. The basement kitchenette was remodeled to provide a better space for serving food and beverages, and a room upstairs was converted into an office for RFC. Their members have been very appreciative of these improvements, and we are pleased that our facility can serve their ministry in these ways.

Last month, St. Stephen and RFC renewed our Partnership Agreement, continuing a relationship that now enters its fourth year. While our partnership involves sharing a building, it represents something much greater. Together, we share a mission of bringing God's message of hope, love and redemption through Christ Jesus to our congregations and our community.

We are very happy to have RFC as our partner, and we look forward to seeing where God leads our two congregations in the years ahead.

– Larry Ewing



Life of Faith

Serve and Strive

Serve All People - Strive for Justice and Peace

This year, as a congregation, we will explore what it means to **serve all people** following the example of Jesus and to **strive for justice and peace** in all the world.

These words from our baptismal promises remind us that faith is something we live. Jesus calls us to notice those who are overlooked, welcome those who are left out, care for our neighbors, speak up when something is not right, and work together for peace.

Throughout the year, we will discover ways-- both big and small--to put our faith into action in our homes, our congregation, our community and our world.

Together, may we live out our baptismal calling and make God's love visible wherever we go.

Family Connection



If you are a parent of a child ages 0-12, please join Family Connection.

Family Connection meets **Sundays** through November 22 at 9:00 a.m. in the Gathering area.

It is a great opportunity to meet other parents, learn about what your child is learning in Sunday School and share the joys and challenges of raising children.

God, Games & Graceful Goldens



If you are retired and would like more opportunities to connect to God and others, join us in the Gathering Area on **Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m.** through November 24.

Come for the games, stay for fellowship, and discover the joy of growing together in faith.

Office Hours

Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday - 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Thursday - 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Office: (515) 276-4628



CARINGBRIDGE™

You can read updates from Pastor Andrea and Ronald at caringbridge.org after creating a free account. Pastor Andrea treasures every comment posted there. Andrea's email address: revandreamyers@gmail.com

October Celebrations

Anniversaries

10/03 Bob and Beth Halverson (62 years)
10/03 Colin and Tori Richard (5 years)
10/09 Teresa Craig and Sara Huey (16 years)
10/12 Brent and Daphne Monson (24 years)
10/16 Bob and Nancy Kirchner (50 years)
10/28 Tom and Kathy Bailey (26 years)
10/30 Steve and Janet Davis (49 years)

Birthdays

10/01 Jim Walker	10/20 Ben Tomjack
10/02 Steve Johnson	10/21 Kathleen Hoegh
10/03 Karen Fachman	10/22 Bob Kirchner
10/03 Barbara Knapp	10/26 Jennie Beckley
10/04 Dave Kroeger	10/26 Cathy Jaben
10/06 Sharon Jorgenson	10/27 Bev Lantz
10/07 Lucy Thomas	10/29 Vickie Ceaser
10/09 Kevin Shay	10/30 Kyle Codner
10/16 Mary Middleton	10/30 Ardie Strawman
10/16 Penny Twedt	10/30 Clayton Weinberger
10/16 Betty White	10/31 Krista Brittain-Dial
10/17 Hugh Ceaser	10/31 Charlotte Stole
10/19 Gayle Johnson	

October Calendar

Thursday, October 1

- + AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, October 2

- + RFC Conference

Saturday, October 3

- + RFC Conference

Sunday, October 4

19th Sunday after Pentecost

- + RFC Conference
- + Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
- + Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.
- + Family Connection, 9:00 a.m.
- + Holy Communion and New Members Sunday, 10:00 a.m.
- + Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- + RFC Worship, Noon & 5 p.m.

Tuesday, October 6

- + God, Games & Graceful Goldens (4Gs), 1:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 7

- + Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.
- + Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.
- + Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.
- + SSLC Praise Band, 6:30 p.m.
- + Emerge, 6:30 p.m.
- + ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 8

- + AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 10

- + St. Stephen Crafters, 10:00 a.m.
- + RFC Rehearsal, 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 11

20th Sunday after Pentecost

- + Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
- + Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.
- + Family Connection, 9:00 a.m.
- + Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
- + Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- + RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 13

- + God, Games & Graceful Goldens, 1:30 p.m.
- + Executive Committee, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 14

- + Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.
- + Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.
- + Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.
- + SSLC Praise Band, 6:30 p.m.
- + Emerge, 6:30 p.m.
- + ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 15

- + Care Companions, 4:00 p.m.
- + AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, October 16

- + Supper Club, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 17

- + Property Day, 8:00 a.m.
- + SSLC/RFC Partnership Meeting, 11:00 a.m.
- + RFC Rehearsal, 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 18

21st Sunday after Pentecost

- + Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
- + Breakfast Club 9:00 a.m.
- + Family Connection, 9:00 a.m.
- + Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
- + Backpack Buddies, 11:00 a.m.
- + Coffee and Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- + RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 20

- + God, Games & Graceful Goldens, 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 20 (cont'd)

- + SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 21

- + Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.
- + Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.
- + Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.
- + SSLC Praise Band, 6:30 p.m.
- + Emerge, 6:30 p.m.
- + ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 22

- + AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 24

- + RFC Rehearsal, 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 25

Reformation Sunday

- + Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
- + Breakfast Club, 9:00 a.m.
- + Family Connection, 9:00 a.m.
- + Holy Communion (with healing prayers), 10:00 a.m.
- + Coffee/Donuts Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- + RFC Worship, 12:00 & 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 27

- + God, Games & Graceful Goldens, 1:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.
- + Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 28

- + Brown Bag, 11:30 a.m.
- + Supper at the Table, 5:15 p.m.
- + Worship at the Table, 6:00 p.m.
- + SSLC Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.
- + Emerge, 6:30 p.m.
- + ELES, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 29

- + AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- + SSLC Chapel Chimers, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 31

- + Private Event, 11:00 a.m.
- + RFC Rehearsal, 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
3510 72nd St.
Urbandale, IA 50322
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



2026 Stewardship



Save the Date!
Pie Potluck/Commitment Sunday!
November 22