

**St. Stephen's Lutheran Church**  
**"People of Christ Making a Difference"**  
**119 N Church Street**  
**Lexington, SC**

**Wednesday Eucharist**  
**December 23, 2020**

**WELCOME TO OUR VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE!**

During this time of social distancing here are a few things to remember:

We are back to regular office hours Monday through Friday. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can help! The pastors are available by calling the church (359-6562), calling the Crisis Care Line after hours (808-6471), or emailing them ([pat@sslc.org](mailto:pat@sslc.org) and/or [jasonantley@earthlink.net](mailto:jasonantley@earthlink.net))

If you visit our website ([www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)) you will see additions to the main page. On your phone, please make sure you are on the full website (just scroll down and click the icon that says full website). As you scroll down the homepage you will see SIX BOXES. Here are the details:

Box 1) **"Weekly Bulletins"** – which will correspond to the services on YouTube.

Box 2) **"Virtual Communion"** – explanation and instructions for communing at home during virtual worship.

Box 3) **"Click Here For Our YouTube"** – where you can click to participate in our virtual worship services, or you can copy and paste [tinyurl.com/SSLCWorship](http://tinyurl.com/SSLCWorship) into your browser to take you there directly. Services will be livestreamed at 12:30 PM on Wednesdays and 8:30 AM on Sundays.

Box 4) **"Latest Church Update"** – where we will post the latest COVID-19 church update.

Box 5) **"Online Giving"** – Don't forget to support our ministry during this time apart by either mailing your donations to the church (119 N Church Street, Lexington, SC 29072), giving online, or giving through the Givelify app. This may also be a time to consider direct deposit giving. For more details please call the church office to contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds.

Box 6) **"Green Sheet Announcements"** – this is the green bulletin insert you would normally get on Sunday.

If you need any sort of assistance (ie needing food, getting groceries or prescriptions, going to medical appointments, anything at all), please call the church office or one of the pastors. We have folks who are willing to help in any way they can! Please take time to call folks who may not have a strong network and may be in need. Neighbors helping neighbors is one way we can be "People of Christ Making a Difference!"

We will continue sending out emails but you can also check out our website and our Facebook page for updates. God bless you! We love you! Stay safe out there!

## **GATHERING MUSIC**

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **CONFESSION**

Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart, and confess our sins to God our Father, imploring him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**Amen.**

Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**who made heaven and earth.**

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.

**And you forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Almighty God, merciful Father:

**I, a troubled and penitent sinner, confess to you all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended you and for which I justly deserve your punishment. But I am sorry for them, and repent of them, and pray for your boundless mercy. For the sake of the suffering and death of your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being; forgive my sins, give me your Holy Spirit for the amendment of my sinful life, and bring me to life everlasting. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the rest and strength of the night just past and we ask you to renew us for a life of faithful service lived in you. Give us grace in Christ not to become weary in service for your name's sake. Keep us from weariness and apathy that would dull our labor. Help us take the yoke of Christ cheerfully, because He makes the burden lighter. Remember today we pray: the sick, those who live in fear, those who are touched by grief, violence, or abuse, the aged, the infirm, the shut-ins, the mentally ill, the unemployed, the under employed and our brothers and sisters who suffer persecution or martyrdom for the faith. Help us to remember that to help them is a privilege and trust from You. Give us compassion to share with the least of our Lord's sisters and brothers as we support them with our prayers and gifts. Empower us to share with those whose lives we touch, your peace which passes all understanding keeping our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

### **SCRIPTURE**

Romans 16:25-27

### **HOMILY**

"We Have All Become Nicodemus"

## THE APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## OFFERING

It is during times like these that we notice an even greater purpose for our ministry and life together in Christ as we love and support each other and the world around us. Don't forget to support our ministry during this time apart by mailing your offering to the church, giving online ([www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)) or through the Givelify app. This may also be a time to consider direct deposit giving. For more details please call the church office at (803) 359-6562 to contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds.

## ANTHEM

*"How Long?"*

Isaac Wardell

CCLI Song # 7062617, License # 2440064

How long will You turn Your face away? How long? Do You hear us when we pray?  
On and on still we walk this pilgrim way. How long?

How long 'til Your children find their rest? How long 'til You draw them to Your breast?  
We go on holding to Your promises - How long?

Refrain: 'Til You wipe away the tears from ev'ry eye? 'Til we see our home descending from the sky? Do we wait in vain? Jesus give us hope again.

How long 'til Your word will still the storm? How long 'til You bare Your mighty arm?  
How we groan 'til You snatch us from the thorns. How long? Refrain

How long? Sweet the dawn that ends the race. How long? Weak our hearts but strong our legs.  
Looking on - great that cloud of witnesses. How long? Refrain

## OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

**Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## **THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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. Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

### **RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Christ welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! This Holy Sacrament is a fundamental part of how we participate in worship and receive Christ's body and blood, given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins. It is customary to use bread and wine for this meal, however with the given circumstances we invite you to find whatever is most appropriate in your context for your family to share. As you gather together to receive the real presence of Christ found in, with, and under the elements, be assured that the gifts we are given by God in the Holy Sacrament transcend space and time. May we be fed and nourished by God through this meal so that we may persevere and continue in discipleship this and every day.

*(As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:*

*The body of Christ, given for you.*

*The blood of Christ shed for you.*

*The communicant may say: "Amen.")*

### **BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen.**

### **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord  
**Amen.**

### **THE BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.  
**Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. The Spirit sends us forth to serve.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **POSTLUDE**

**The Church Staff****Crisis Care Line: 808-6471****Website: [www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)**

The Rev. Dr. Patrick W. Riddle

Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life

Mr. Stephen Abbott, Seminarian

Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator

The Rev. Dr. Dennis Bolton, Pastor for Welcome and Visitation

Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus

The Rev. Jason T. Antley

Mrs. Bailey Slice Parker, Music Director

Mrs. Beth Haggard, Preschool Director

Mr. Eric Abramson, Sexton

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