



**ST. STEPHEN'S**  
united methodist church



# THE STORIES THAT MADE JESUS

**“Too Much Salt?”  
Matthew 5:13-20**

**February 5, 2023**

# Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany

## 10:30 am

WELCOME

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

*This Little Light of Mine  
(Traditional Gospel Song)*

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Ministry Matters)

Leader: Place your trust in the Lord and God will heal your suffering and pain.

**All: We shall be made whole in the Lord of all compassion.**

Leader: Place your faith in God's abiding presence and God will strengthen you.

**All: We shall be made whole in the Lord of all compassion.**

Leader: Place your lives always in God's care.

**All: We shall be made whole in the Lord of all compassion. AMEN.**

\*OPENING HYMN

*I Come with Joy*

UMH 617

*1 I come with joy to meet my Lord, forgiven, loved and free,  
in awe and wonder to recall his life laid down for me,  
his life laid down for me.*

*2 I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed,  
the new community of love in Christ's communion bread,  
in Christ's communion bread.*

*3 As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each proud division ends.  
The love that made us makes us one, and strangers now are friends,  
and strangers now are friends.*

*4 And thus with joy we meet our Lord. His presence, always near,  
is in such friendship better known; we see and praise him here,  
we see and praise him here.*

*5 Together met, together bound, we'll go our different ways,  
and as his people in the world, we'll live and speak his praise,  
we'll live and speak his praise.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader: Together, let us pray:

**All:** For every person, without exception, to know that each of us is a beloved child of God.

For reminders each day that the church is yours, God, and not ours.

For the knowledge that you, God, are in our neighborhoods, workplaces, and homes as well in our church.

For the privilege of worshiping you God, and how it connects us all.

For the stories from scripture that transform our own stories bringing hope, peace, joy, love, and light.

Leader: Hear our prayers as we pray in silence...

And now we pray together the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, each the way we have first learned it, saying:

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. Amen**

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It’s good for nothing except to be thrown away and trampled under people’s feet. 14 You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can’t be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

17 “Don’t even begin to think that I have come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I haven’t come to do away with them but to fulfill them. 18 I say to you very seriously that as long as heaven and earth exist, neither the smallest letter nor even the smallest stroke of a pen will be erased from the Law until everything there becomes a reality. 19 Therefore, whoever ignores one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called the lowest in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps these commands and teaches people to keep them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 I say to you that unless your righteousness is greater than the righteousness of the legal experts and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

\*SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

One: Inspired words for beloved people.

All: **Lord, transform us through its hearing.**

SERMON

**“Too Much Salt?”**

OFFERING PRAYER AND INVITATION

*You can give using your smartphone! Text a dollar amount to 84321 and select St. Stephen’s.*

*Those wishing to commit their lives to Christ are invited to contact Pastor Nathan at 512-771-2741.*

*Our Communion offering for the month of February will go to disaster relief for the victims of Houston’s January tornado.*

OFFERTORY

*Here I Am, Lord  
(by Daniel L. Schutte)*

Spirit Singers

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

THANKSGIVING

Invitation

Confession and Pardon

*“Communion Setting” (Preface)  
(by Mark Miller)*

TFWS #2257a

*\*Sung:*

*Leader: The Lord be with you.*

***People: And also with you.***

*Leader: Lift up your hearts.*

***People: We lift them up to the Lord.***

*Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

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

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,

brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey, and set before us the way of life.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*Sanctus*

TFWS #2257b

***\*Sung by All:***

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blest is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.  
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection  
you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,  
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.  
By your great mercy, we have been born anew

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,  
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."  
When the supper was over he took the cup,  
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving  
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

*Memorial Acclamation*

TFWS #2257c

***\*Sung by All:***

***Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,  
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,  
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,  
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.  
Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,  
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

*The Great Amen*

TFWS #2257d

***\*Sung by All:***

***Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*CLOSING HYMN

*Forth in Thy Name, O Lord*

UMH 438

- 1. Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go, my daily labor to pursue;  
thee, only thee, resolved to know in all I think or speak or do.***
- 2. The task thy wisdom hath assigned, O let me cheerfully fulfill;  
in all my works thy presence find, and prove thy good and perfect will.***
- 3. Thee may I set at my right hand, whose eyes mine inmost substance see,  
and labor on at thy command, and offer all my works to thee.***
- 4. For thee delightfully employ what e'er thy bounteous grace hath given;  
and run my course with even joy, and closely walk with thee to heaven.***

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Spring Song*  
(by Robert Schumann)

UMH=United Methodist Hymnal   TFWS=The Faith We Sing

\*Stand as you are able.

Senior Pastor: Rev. Nathan Lonsdale Bledsoe  
Pastor of Music and Worship: Rev. Heather Velez  
Family Ministries Director: Steven Fisher  
Song Leader: Emily Leffler  
Lay Leader and Liturgist: Dan Barcus  
Accompanist: Dr. Andreea Mut  
Acolytes: Cecilia and Levi Sullivan

PRAYER REQUEST



Scan this code to request  
prayer using your smart phone.

**TORNADO  
RELIEF**

Communion Offering for February:  
Disaster Relief for Victims  
of the Tornado in January



To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world



**Messy Church**  
The Greatest of  
These is Love  
Feb 7  
5:30-7



Oak Forest Homeowners Association  
Announces

## TOWN HALL 2023



**Join Us!**

**Wednesday**  
**February 15**  
**6:30 pm**



**Food and Childcare Provided\***

St. Stephen's United Methodist Church  
2003 W. 43rd St.  
[www.ofha.org](http://www.ofha.org)

\*Registration required for childcare - sign up at [ofha.org](http://ofha.org)

## REGISTRATION MANIA



LAKEVIEW SUMMER CAMP  
6/19-23



UM ARMY  
6/25-7/1



VBS  
7/24-28

**2023**

**FEB 11 AT 9 AM**  
**[STSHTX.ORG/EVENTS](http://STSHTX.ORG/EVENTS)**

Tuesdays at 6pm - Room 101

## GRIEF SHARE

Weekly Grief Support Group



### You can give using your smart phone!

Text a dollar amount to 84321 and select St. Stephen's, or go to [stshtx.org/give](http://stshtx.org/give).

### Join Us!

St. Stephen's is a church with an exciting vision for loving God and our neighbors. If you want to learn more about our church, more about who Jesus is and why that matters, or just about anything else, Nathan would love to meet with you! Call or text him at 512.771.2741 to make an appointment.

### How to reach St. Stephen's

2003 W.43rd Street, Houston, TX, 77018  
(713) 686-8241 | [stshtx.org](http://stshtx.org) | [info@stshtx.org](mailto:info@stshtx.org)

