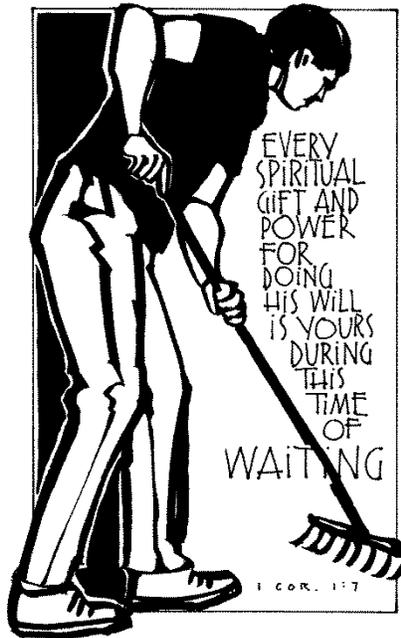


SAINT STEPHEN'S PARISH

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

The First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2020



Our Mission

is to be the heart and hands of Christ: nourishing people, transforming lives

Our Core Values

May be found on our Web Page

THE HOLY EUCHARIST
The First Sunday of Advent
November 29, 2020

Greeting, Announcements

Hymn 59

“Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding”

Merton

The Word of God

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be his kingdom now and forever. Amen.**

The Celebrant prays:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Celebrant Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,

People **Have mercy upon us.**

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence--as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil--to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 *(please read responsively at the half verse)*

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O LORD God of hosts, *
**how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?**
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Second Lesson 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

Organ Solo "The hills are bare at Bethlehem" Emma Lou Diemer

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark,

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Holy Gospel

Mark 13:24-37

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon

The Rev. David DeSmith

The Nicene Creed *said by all, standing*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

The Prayers of the People

The Leader and the People pray responsively.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy".

For the holy Church of God, that it may be filled with truth and love, and be found without fault at the day of your coming, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, for Doug our own Bishop, for all bishops and other ministers, and for all the holy people of God, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For St. Stephen's Search Committee; fill them with wisdom and awareness of your vision for this congregation as we seek a new rector and spiritual leader. Grant continued grace and commitment to them; that they may be faithful companions to each other, to the Vestry and to our beloved Parish. Pray for St. Stephen's Church.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who fear God and believe in you, Lord Christ, that our divisions may cease, and that all may be one as you and the Father are one, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among nations and peoples, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those in positions of public trust especially the President, Vice-President, President-elect and Vice president-elect, that they may serve justice, and promote the dignity and freedom of every person, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our enemies and those who wish us harm, and for all whom we have injured or offended, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have commended themselves to our prayers; for our families, friends, and neighbors; that being freed from anxiety, they may live in joy, peace, and health, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For a vaccine and the complete eradication of the COVID-19 pandemic and for those who bravely put their lives on the line to serve and save others: members of the armed services, health care workers, first responders, law enforcement personnel, educators, and all others, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the communion of your Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray to you, O Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, blessed Stephen and all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life to Christ our God.

To you, O Lord our God.

Hasten, O Father, the coming of your kingdom; and grant that we your servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Confession of Sin

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor

Silence

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen**

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give our thanks and praise

The Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People say **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

The people stand or kneel. Then the Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life. On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: this is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

Celebrant and People say

We remember his death,

We proclaim his resurrection,

We await his coming in glory;

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with Blessed Stephen and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People **Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Spiritual Communion Prayer

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now celebrated, I desire to offer to you praise and thanksgiving. I remember your death, Lord Christ; I proclaim your resurrection; I await your coming in glory. Since I cannot receive you today in Sacrament of your Body and Blood, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen

Blessing And the blessing of the God of Abraham and Sarah, and of Jesus Christ born of our sister, Mary and of the Holy Spirit, who broods over the world as a mother over her children, be upon and remain with you always **Amen**

Hymn 66 “Come, thou long expected Jesus” Stuttgart

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find out rest in thee.
2. Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
3. Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
4. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

Priest Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Voluntary “Sleepers awake!” “A voice astounds us” J. S. Bach

Ministers of the Celebration

CELEBRANT & PREACHER

The Rev. David DeSmith

LECTOR

Diane Forsyth

PRAYERS

William Frazier

ALTAR GUILD

Marie Sutton

PASTORAL CARE

William Frazier

VOCALISTS

Wavelyn and Jeffrey Hine

VIDEO PRODUCTION

MusiChris DJ and Lighting Service

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THIS WEEK AT ST. STEPHEN'S

SUNDAY, November 29

10:00 a.m. Facebook Service
1:00 p.m. Grab and Go Lunch.
Cathedral of the Beloved

FRIDAY, December 5

Parish Office Closed
4:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Table Grab and Go

MONDAY, December 1

SATURDAY, December

TUESDAY, December 2

5:00 pm Zoom Vespers

WEDNESDAY, December 3

SUNDAY, December 7

10:00 a.m. Facebook Services
1:00 p.m. Grab and Go Lunch
Cathedral of the Beloved

THURSDAY, December 4

4:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Table

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

SUNDAY

All persons serving in the armed forces and their families: MAJ Andrew B., CPT Nicholas P., ILT Curran J. D., Lance CPL Chad L., SPC Amanda D., Pvt. Corey F. D., Army Ranger Sean J., MAJ Michael C., Micah H.

All Saints, Worcester
Human to Human
Pittsfield Council of Congregations

The Lusitanian Church (Portugal)

MONDAY

Dioceses of Sekondi (Ghana) and Eastern Michigan (USA)

TUESDAY

We remember all who need our prayers especially: Timothy A., Madge B., Clarence D., Ken & Diana E., Cyndi K., Henry L., Christina O., Kevin S., Clara V., Maureen W., Abby, Becca, Betty, Donna, Faye, Fiona, Heather, Jay, Jim, Joan, John, Josh, Judy H., Karen, Keith, Linda, Lisa, Maia, Marilyn, Mary, Melissa & Family, Nancy & Rick, Noreen, Pam, Patrick, Paula, Susan, Barbara, Zeke, Marion, Joe, Roy, Marie, Bob, Robert J., Walter H., Jill, Barbara A., Jeff S., Shirley, Maryann J. and family, Marion, Charles W. H., Sydney A., Jeffrey B., Ray, Thomas S., Peter, Barbara D., Ray, William, Doris, Barbara, Sokpha, Erika, Johnathan W., Nancy G., Louis C., all who are impacted by the Coronavirus, Pat, Jack, Francis, Susan, Frank L., Deane, Tom, David P. Joan K.

Those with mental health issues

Dioceses of Seoul (Korea) and Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador (Canada)

WEDNESDAY

Dioceses of Seychelles and Eastern Oregon (USA)

THURSDAY

Dioceses of Sheffield (England), Eastern Zambia and Easton (USA)

FRIDAY

St. Stephen's Stewardship Team

Dioceses of Shinyanga (Tanzania) and Eau Claire (USA)

SATURDAY

Dioceses of Gasabo (Rwanda) and Edinburgh (Scotland)

PARISH NOTICES

WHO ARE WE? St. Stephen's Parish is a community of people who together seek to serve our community, drawing strength and joy from worshipping together. We don't all believe the same, act the same, vote the same, or dress the same – but we strive to love the same, as Christ loved and served all people.

ST. STEPHEN'S TABLE - Gifts in thanksgiving or in memory can be made by sending a donation to the church with the name of the person to be honored or remembered. You can also make a donation online! Just go to our website, select "Support Our Ministries," and follow the prompts to the list of gift opportunities. Select "St. Stephen's Table" and follow the directions. *This week's Gifts to the Table are given by Rosaland Patricca, Kathryn Jensen and Jane Hurt and by Nancy Ambrosi in Loving Memory of her parents and brother.*

VIRTUAL VESPERS ADVENT SERVICE: Tuesday's during Advent at 5:00p.m. Contact the office, smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org, for the link or look on Realm. The first service will be on December 1.

THANK YOU to all the members of St. Stephen's from Sarah Morrison: I am sure your prayers and good wishes have helped in my recovery from knee replacement surgery. Your patience is also appreciated by everyone in the office as we return to our regular hours, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. in December .

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS AND FLOWER DONATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED AT THE OFFICE DURING BUSINESS HOURS AND BY MAIL.

2021 PLEDGES ARE STILL BEING ACCEPTED. If you did not receive a pledge card, please contact the office and we will send one out.

THE PROFILE AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE SEARCH PROCESS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE ST. STEPHEN'S WEBSITE. Click on the News and Events section and you will find Profile & Search Information including answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Profile.

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS – David Nevin, chair., Alec Gillman, vice chair., Josie Ellis, John Garinther, Cathy Carchedi, Susan LeBourdais, Chris Perry and Craig Smith. The Rev. Francie Hills serves as committee chaplain. Wendy Coakley is Vestry Liaison.

LIVING GREEN TIP

Trying to reduce plastic in your household can be daunting but many “green” sites recommend silicone over plastic. It is not biodegradable but it is longer lasting and is not derived from petroleum. So, if you need to replace a plastic item, check out silicone. :

Cardboard- Home: Joan Evans

Paper Toter Jeff Pringle

MEETINGS HELD AT SAINT STEPHEN'S

All AA and NA meetings remain suspended due to COVID-19

Saint Stephen's

A Jubilee Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

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Our Vestry

Tom Dillon, Co-Warden

Erin Sullivan, Co-Warden

Mark Miller, Clerk

Leah Luczynski, Treasurer

Valerie Andersen

Louise Penney

Angie Moon

John Culver

Chris Plankey

Wendy Coakley

Our Staff

The Rev. David DeSmith, Bridge Pastor

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Sarah Morrison, Parish Administrator

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Bert Boos, Office Assistant

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Weekday Sextons-Berkshire County ARC Jenell Pullano, Supervisor

Sunday Sexton Roy Stillman

The Diocese of Western Massachusetts

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher

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