

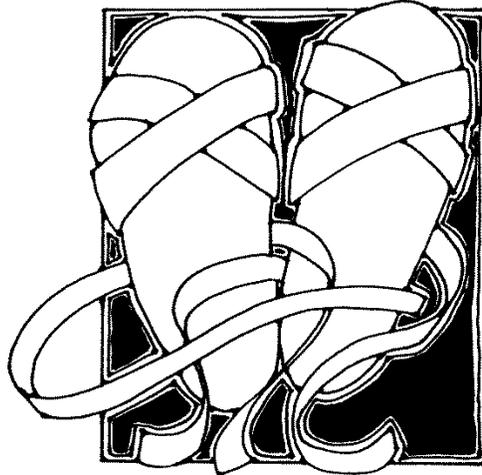
# SAINT STEPHEN'S PARISH

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

## The Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

THE ONE WHO IS  
COMING AFTER ME



I AM NOT WORTHY  
TO UNTIE THE THONG  
OF HIS SANDAL. JOHN  
.1: 27

### 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 Third Sunday of Advent**  
**December 13, 2020**

**Hymn 75**      “There’s a voice in the wilderness crying”      *Ascension*

1. There’s a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:  
Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places where the Lord our God may go!
  
2. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up to the heights and sing!  
Proclaim to a desolate people the coming of their King.  
Like the flowers of the field they perish, like grass our works decay,  
the power and pomp of nations shall pass like a dream away;
  
3. but the word of our God endureth, the arm of the Lord is strong;  
he stands in the midst of nations, and he will right the wrong.  
He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, the lambs he’ll gently hold;  
to pastures of peace he’ll lead them, and bring them safe to his fold.

Greeting, Announcements

**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.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

**First Lesson**    *Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11*

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

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

**People Thanks be to God**

**Psalm 126:**        *(please read responsively at the half verse)*

- 1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, \*  
    **then were we like those who dream.**
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, \*  
    **and our tongue with shouts of joy.**
- 3 Then they said among the nations, \*  
    **"The LORD has done great things for them."**
- 4 The LORD has done great things for us, \*  
    **and we are glad indeed.**
- 5 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, \*  
    **like the watercourses of the Negev.**
- 6 Those who sowed with tears \*  
    **will reap with songs of joy.**
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, \*  
    **will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

**Second Lesson**    *1 Thessalonians 5:16-24*

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and

blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

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

**People** Thanks be to God.

**Organ Solo** "People Look East" *Besançon/Wayne Wold*

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

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

**The Holy Gospel** *John 1: 6-8, 19-28.*

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

*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 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, grocery store workers 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 73** “The King shall come when morning dawns” *St. Stephen*

1. The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks;  
when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes.
2. Not, as of old, a little child, to bear, and fight, and die,  
But crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morning sky.
3. The King shall come when morning dawns and earth’s dark night is past;  
O haste the rising of that morn, the day that e’er shall last;
4. and let the endless bliss begin, by weary saints foretold,  
when right shall triumph over wrong, and truth shall be extolled.
5. The King shall come when morning dawns and light and beauty brings:  
Hail, Christ the Lord! Thy people pray, come quickly, King of kings.

*Priest*  
***People***

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

**Voluntary**

“He Came Down”

*Traditional Cameroon/David Lasky*

## Ministers of the Celebration

### CELEBRANT & PREACHER

The Rev. David DeSmith

### LECTOR

Debbie Stillman

### PRAYERS

William Frazier

### ALTAR GUILD

Marie Sutton, William Frazier

### PASTORAL CARE

Angie Moon

### VOCALISTS

Wavelyn and Jeffrey Hine

### VIDEO PRODUCTION

MusiChris DJ and Lighting Service

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## THIS WEEK AT ST. STEPHEN'S

### SUNDAY, December 13

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

### FRIDAY, December 18

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

### MONDAY, December 14

### SATURDAY, December 19

### TUESDAY, December 15

5:00 pm Zoom Vespers

### WEDNESDAY, December 16

### SUNDAY, December 20

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

### THURSDAY, December 17

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.

Saint Mark's, Worcester  
Ministry Development Grant Committee  
Episcopal Service Corps (ESC)  
Episcopal City Mission, Boston

The Falkland Islands

### MONDAY

Dioceses of Sodor & Man (England) and El Camino Real (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, 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., Teddy C.

Those with mental health issues

Dioceses of Sokoto (Nigeria) and El Salvador

### WEDNESDAY

Dioceses of South Ankole (Uganda) and Eldoret (Kenya)

### THURSDAY

The Elizabeth Freeman Center  
Pittsfield Area Council of Congregations  
Members of Congress

Dioceses of South Dakota (USA) and El-Obeid (Sudan)

### FRIDAY

St. Stephen's Teaching and Learning Team  
St. Stephen's Parish Life Team

Dioceses of Aouth Kerala (India), Ely (England), and Embu (Kenya)

### SATURDAY

Dioceses of South Rwenzori (Uganda), Enugu and Enugu-North (both in Nigeria)

## 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 in Loving Memory of The Rt. Rev. John Tarrant and by Diane Forsyth.*

**VIRTUAL VESPERS ADVENT SERVICE:** Tuesday's during Advent at 5:00p.m. Contact the office, [smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org), for the link or look on Realm. The next service will be on December 15.

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES WILL BE VIRTUAL THIS YEAR.** One service of Festival Holy Eucharist with familiar carols and music will be available for our participation and viewing on Christmas Eve at 5 P.M.

and 10 P.M. as well as on Christmas Day at 10 A.M. and Sunday, December 27 at 10 A.M. There will be no other worship service on Sunday, December 27. We will resume with our virtual worship on Sunday, January 3 at 10 A.M. when we will celebrate the Feast of The Epiphany. You may access the service on our [Facebook](#) page or through the [St. Stephen's website](#).

**CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS AND FLOWER DONATIONS** are being accepted at the office during business hours, by mail and [online](#). Look for the “Christmas/Christmas Eve” option under Funds when making an online gift. Deadline: December 21 for tributes to be included in the bulletin.

**2020 JESSE TREE PROJECT** is a collaboration with The Berkshire Immigrant Center. Gift cards are being collected for families deemed ineligible for COVID-19 relief funds. You may send your gift directly to the Immigrant Center or to the church. We will be delivering the cards on Tuesday, Dec. 15.

**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**

**Gift wrap is a big source of waste at the holidays.** If you don't have a stash of last year's holiday gift bags waiting to be re-used, consider recycling paper shopping bags, newspaper or leftover fabric to wrap your gifts.

Cardboard-Home: Virginia Donovan

Paper Toter: Craig Reynolds

#### **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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Joy Mullen, Director of Music

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Sarah Morrison, Parish Administrator

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Dan Moon, Coordinator of St. Stephen's Table

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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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