

First Sunday of Advent and Celebration of Baptism
Sunday, November 28, 2021

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

Welcome

Hymn 59 “Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding” *Merton*

Opening Acclamation and Lighting of Advent Candle (*booklet*)

Song of Praise: *Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!*

Verses 1&4 (*booklet*)

The Celebrant then continues:

Celebrant There is one Body and one Spirit;
People **There is one hope in God's call to us;**
Celebrant One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
People **One God and Father of all.**

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

The Collect of the Day

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.**

The First Lesson: Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

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

Thanks be to God.

- 1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
**let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**
- 2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.
- 3 Show me your ways, O LORD, *
and teach me your paths.
- 4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
**for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.**
- 5 Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, *
for they are from everlasting.
- 6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
**remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.**
- 7 Gracious and upright is the LORD; *
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.
- 8 He guides the humble in doing right *
and teaches his way to the lowly.
- 9 All the paths of the LORD are love and faithfulness *
to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.
Thanks be to God.

The Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glorify to you, Lord Christ

Jesus said, "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Christ

The Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

Solo "Come, thou dear Redeemer" Charles Wesley/César Franck

Presentation and Examination of the Candidate

Candidates who are unable to answer for themselves are presented by their Parents and Godparents, as follows

Celebrant: The Candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

Sponsors: We present Emmelynn Elizabeth Pettit to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

Celebrant: Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?

Sponsors: I will, with God's help.

Celebrant: Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

Sponsors: I will, with God's help.

Question: Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Answer: I renounce them.

Question: Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer: I renounce them.

Question: Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Answer: I renounce them.

Question: Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

Answer: I do.

Question: Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Answer: I do.

Question: Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

Answer: I do.

The Celebrant addresses the congregation, saying

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?

People: **We will.**

Celebrant Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.

The Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Celebrant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: **I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?
People **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.**

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall
into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News
of God in Christ?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons,
loving your neighbor as yourself?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant: Will you cherish the wonderful works of God
and protect the beauty and integrity of all creation?

People: **I will, with God's help.**

Prayers for the Candidates

The Celebrant then says to the congregation

Let us now pray for this child who is to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

A Person appointed leads the following petitions

Leader Deliver them, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Open their hearts to your grace and truth.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Fill them with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Keep them in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Teach them to love others in the power of the Spirit.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Send them into the world in witness to your love.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Bring them to the fullness of your peace and glory.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The Celebrant says

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and forever. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving over the Water

The Celebrant blesses the water, first saying

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

At the following words, the Celebrant touches the water

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior.

To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Baptism

The candidate is presented by name to the Celebrant, who then pours water upon the candidate, saying

Emmelynn, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Then the Priest places a hand on the person's head, marking on the forehead the sign of the cross using Chrism and saying:

Emmelynn, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. **Amen.**

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.

After the Baptism, a candle lighted from the Paschal Candle may be given to a sponsor of the newly baptized.

Celebrant: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

All: We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

The Eucharistic Prayer - (*Booklet*)

Communion Solo “Let all mortal flesh keep silence” *French Carol*

Hymn 73 “The King shall come when morning dawns” *St. Stephen*

Announcements

Voluntary “The hills lay bare at Bethlehem” Emma Lou Diemer

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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 Maryann Harubin Nordell and Louise Harubin Penney in honor of Billy Tobin and by Louise Penney in honor of Ari Weiner.*

THANKSGIVING ANGELS is grateful for the generosity of St. Stephen’s Parish. Once again, you surpassed the goals we needed to meet.

ADVENT COMPLINE PRAYER SERVICE, Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom December 1st. Contact the office, smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org, for the Zoom link

PLEDGE IN-GATHERING IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 -

Belonging To God And One Another; Commitment 2022 is underway. Pledge cards have been mailed to those who were unable to pick them up. Additional pledge cards available outside the chapel. Envelopes will be mailed in mid-December.

HOLIDAY GIFT CARD PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BERKSHIRE IMMIGRANT CENTER continues this year. Gift cards from local supermarkets and online retailers for people who may have limited access to transportation (Big Y, Target, Price Chopper/Market 32, TjMaxx/Marshalls) are greatly appreciated. Deadline for donations is Sunday, December 12, 2021.

BIO'S MICAH CELEBRATION will be held virtually and “live-streamed” on Sunday, January 9, 2022. We hope you were able to tune in to the trailer last Sunday.

Reservations to view the event along with the link will be available in early January. We will not be selling tickets, rather, we will accept donations (suggested minimum of \$40 if you can afford it) up until and during the presentation. To reserve your “seat”, please see Susan Wojtasik or Paula Morey. Also...for donations of \$100 or more, you are entitled to a free BIO T-Shirt (adult sizes L, XL) while supplies last. Donations may also be made through our website at www.berkshireinterfaithorganizing.org or by check payable to BIO and sent to PO Box 1133, Pittsfield, MA 01202.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHRISTMAS 2021

Poinsettia dedications will be accepted through December 16; envelopes available at the entrances to the church.

Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24, there will be three (3) services:

3:00 p.m. Youth Led Family Service with music and video

6:00 p.m. Traditional Christmas Eve service with Handbells, musical prelude beginning at 5:40 p.m.

9:00 p.m. Traditional Christmas Eve Service with vocal quartet, musical prelude beginning at 8:40 p.m.

Christmas Day, Saturday December 25 – enjoy the National Cathedral's streaming service from your home.

Sunday, December 26, 2021 – Eucharist and Livestream at 10:00 a.m.

LIVING GREEN TIP

Reduce Your Junk Mail: The average citizen receives forty pounds of junk mail per year—forty pounds! That’s a lot of paper being wasted. You can register for services that reduce the amount of junk mail you receive, that is beneficial to the environment. Bill Morey

Paper Toter Bill Morey

Cardboard-Home Joan Evans

MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION

CELEBRANT

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

LECTORS

Kathryn Jensen, Debbie Stillman

PRAYERS

Debbie Stillman

ALTAR GUILD

Joan Evans, Kris Rogers

PASTORAL CARE VISITOR

William Frazier

GREETERS

Paula Morey, Claudia A. Curry

VESTRY GREETER

Wendy Coakley

SOLOIST

Gwen Davis, *alto*

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Today we welcome the Colletta Pettit family, Samantha and John, who present their daughter Emmelynn Elizabeth for baptism.

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Closed Friday

Worship:

Wednesday: December 1st, Compline Prayer, 6:30 p.m., Zoom

Sunday: December 5th, Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary and streaming.

St. Stephen's Table:

Thursday and Friday, Grab and Go 4:30 p.m.

AA Meetings:

Monday and Friday at 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday thru Friday at noon; Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, we pray for:

Ken & Diane E; David W; Pat W; Noreen R; Margaret W; Jill; Alex; Jennifer; Keith; Martie E; Tommie C; Steven W; The Family of Betty Ann Powell, Kimberly E. *Todd M.*

And those serving in the armed forces and their families: MAJ Andrew B., CPT Nichols P., 1LT Curran J.D., Lance CPL Chad L., SPC Amanda D., Pvt. Corey F.D., Army Ranger Sean J., Micah H.

We pray for our community:

Habitat for Humanity in Pittsfield
Department of Mental Health
Government of the United States
St. Stephen's Caring for Others Team
St. Stephen's Property Team

In our Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for

All Saints, Worcester;
Human to Human
Pittsfield Council of Churches

In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday: Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil
Monday: Diocese of Idoani (Nigeria)
Tuesday: Diocese of Ife (Nigeria)
Wednesday: Diocese of Ife East (Nigeria)
Thursday: Diocese of Ifo (Nigeria)
Friday: Diocese of Igbomina (Nigeria)
Saturday: Diocese of Igbomina-West (Nigeria)

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VESTRY

Erin Sullivan, Co. Warden
Angela Moon, Clerk
Valerie Andersen
Louise Penney
Mark Miller

Craig Reynolds, Co. Warden
Leah Luczynski, Treasurer
John Culver
Wendy Coakley
Chris Plankey

Our Staff

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Weekday Sextons - Berkshire County ARC
Sunday Sexton Roy Stillman

The Diocese of Western Massachusetts

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher
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