

**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Third Sunday of Creation Season: Act**  
**Sunday September 17, 2023, 10 AM**

Voluntary                                    “On the lake”                                    Heinrich Hofmann

Hymn 405                                    “All things bright and beautiful”                                    *Royal Oak*

**Opening Acclamation & Collect** (*page 1 in booklet*)

**The First Lesson:** St. Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897)

With enraptured gaze we beheld the white moon rising quietly behind the tall trees, the silvery rays it was casting upon sleeping nature, the bright stars twinkling in the deep skies, the light breath of the evening breeze making the snowy clouds float easily along; all this raised our souls to heaven.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalms 104:25-35, 37** (St. Helena's Psalter)

25       O Holy One, how manifold are your works! \*

**in wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.**

26       Yonder is the great and wide sea  
with its living things too many to number, \*  
**creatures both small and great.**

27       There move the ships,  
and there is that Leviathan, \*  
**which you have made for the sport of it.**

28       All of them look to you \*  
**to give them their food in due season.**

29       You give it to them; they gather it; \*  
**you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.**

30       You hide your face, and they are terrified; \*  
**you take away their breath,  
and they die and return to their dust.**

31       You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; \*  
**and so you renew the face of the earth.**

32       May the glory of God endure for ever; \*  
**may the Holy One rejoice in all creation.**

- 33 God looks at the earth and it trembles; \*  
**God touches the mountains and they smoke.**
- 34 I will sing to God as long as I live; \*  
**I will praise my God while I have my being.**
- 35 May these words of mine find favor; \*  
**I will rejoice in the Holy One.**
- 37 Bless the Holy One, O my soul. \*  
**Allelujah!**

**The Second Lesson:** Swan, Mary Oliver

*Published in 2020 by Penguin Books in Devotions:  
The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver, p 62*

Did you too see it, drifting, all night, on the black river?  
Did you see it in the morning, rising into the silvery air –  
An armful of white blossoms,  
A perfect commotion of silk and linen as it leaned  
into the bondage of its wings; a snowbank, a bank of lilies,  
Biting the air with its black beak?  
Did you hear it, fluting and whistling  
A shrill dark music – like the rain pelting the trees – like a waterfall  
Knifing down the black ledges?  
And did you see it, finally, just under the clouds –  
A white cross Streaming across the sky, its feet  
Like black leaves, its wings Like the stretching light of the river?  
And did you feel it, in your heart, how it pertained to everything?  
And have you too finally figured out what beauty is for?  
And have you changed your life?  
Hear what the Spirit is saying through the Poet.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**The Gospel** Matthew 18: 21-35

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew  
**Glory to you, Lord Christ**

Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could

not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.

The Gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to you, Lord Christ**

**The Sermon**

The Rev. Dr. Nina Pooley

**Choral Anthem** "The eyes of all wait upon Thee" Jean Berger

The eyes of all wait upon thee;  
and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.  
Psalm 145: 15, 16

**Affirmation of Faith** (page 2 in booklet)

**The Prayers of the People**

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Especially: *Those on our prayer list: Ken & Diana; David; Tommie; Judy; Kathy; Patrick; Sue & Tom; Kate; Natasha; Kimberly; Ellen; Jeff; Keith; Kathryn; Marcus; Rory; the family of David Winchester; Presiding Bishop Michael Curry; We pray for a just peace for Ukraine, those suffering from the earthquake in Morocco and the flooding in Lybia and for the well-being of all those in harm's way. (The People may add their own petitions.)*

Those who have Died David Winchester, Jodi Poole

**The Great Thanksgiving** (page 6 in booklet)

**Communion Anthem** “God fashioned love” Carol Muehlig

God fashioned love and gave it as a gift  
For each to share and give again,  
That through all generations love might sift  
As wheat from chaff to make an increase of the best,  
That time and wind might have the rest.

God fashioned love and gave from heaven's store  
For each to share and give again,  
That through all generations love might pour  
As wine from water by a miracle can pass,  
That every hand might take the glass.

God fashioned love and gave it mankind's cast  
For each to share and give again,  
That through all generations love might last  
As Christ is born in every child God gives,  
So love, though yet all die, shall live.

Linda Muehlig

**Announcements**

**Hymn 400** “All Creatures of our God and King” *Lasst uns erfreuen*  
(stanzas 1,2,3,4,7)

**Voluntary** “Joyful, joyful we adore Thee” arr. May Schwarz

† † †

**PARISH NOTICES**

**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 Gary Lamoureux by Nancy Lamoureux.*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL RETURNS SEPTEMBER 24, 9:45 A.M.** – gather in the Sears Room.

**THE THANKSGIVING ANGELS NEED YOUR SUPPORT** – The leadership of Thanksgiving Angels is anticipating serving 2000 families this year. You can help buy turkeys by making a donation directly to Thanksgiving Angels or to St. Stephen’s with a note in the memo area of your check or online gift.

**NEXT COFFEE HOUR** September 24.

**NEXT PEACEFUL PLANNING** October 1, 9:00 AM in the Guild Room. The topic for this session is Powers of Attorney. Bill O’Neill, will allow plenty of time for questions.

**CONFIRMATION CLASS WILL BE OFFERED THIS FALL** – Youth and adults welcome. Please contact Rev. Nina if you or a family member are interested.

**LIVING GREEN TIP**

**Use Appliances Thoughtfully:** Only run your washer, dryer, and dishwasher after the sun goes down. Run your washer on cold water-Open dishwasher door to dry your dishes- Hang clothes to dry when possible.

Paper Toter Craig Reynolds

Cardboard Home Joan Evans



**GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN’S IS EASY-** Scan the QR code to find our giving form. Or, text “giveststephens\$*your amount*” to 73256. (example: giveststephens\$25 will donate \$25.) Message and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.

**MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION**

CELEBRANT.

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

LECTORS

William Frazier, Tom Drury

LAY MINISTERS

Claudia A. Curry

ALTAR GUILD

William Frazier, Diane Forsyth, Angie Moon

GREETERS

Claudia A. Curry, Sandy Soule

VESTRY GREETER

James Alden

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## THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

**Worship:** Wednesday, September 20, 6:30 p.m. Compline; Saturday September 23, 5:00 p.m. & Sunday September 24, 10:00 a.m

**St. Stephen's Table:** Thursday and Friday, Grab and Go 4:30 p.m.

**Meetings:** AA - Tuesday thru Friday at noon; Friday at 6:30 p.m.; Saturday at 10:00 a.m. NA - Tuesday & Wednesday 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 6:30 p.m. Dining Room

## THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

**In our Parish prayers,** *We pray for:* Ken & Diana E; Tommie C; Judy; Kathy; Patrick W; David; Sue & Tom S; Kate; Natasha; Kimberly; Ellen M; Jeff K; Keith C; Kathryn D; Marcus B; Rory O; The Family of David Winchester; our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry; We pray for a just peace for Ukraine; those suffering from the earthquake in Morocco; and the flooding in Lybia and for the well-being of all those in harm's way.

*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:***

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

### ***In our Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for:***

Holy Spirit, Sutton;  
Canon for Communications, The Rev. Vicki Ix  
Mass. Council of Churches;  
Construct Inc., Berkshires

### ***In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:***

Sunday: Diocese of Ezo (South Sudan)  
Monday: Diocese of Faisalabad (Pakistan)  
Tuesday: Province of Uganda  
Wednesday: Diocese of Falkland Islands  
Thursday: Diocese of False Bay (Southern Africa)  
Friday: Diocese of Fianarantsoa (Indian Ocean)  
Saturday; Diocese of Florida (The Episcopal Church)

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### **VESTRY**

Craig Reynolds, Co. Warden  
Suzanne White, Treasurer  
Christopher Perry, Clerk  
John Culver  
David Nevin  
James Alden

Josie Ellis, Co. Warden  
William O'Neill, Asst. Treasurer  
Wendy W. Coakley  
John Garinther  
Chris Plankey

### **Our Staff**

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley, Rector  
[ninapooley@revnina.org](mailto:ninapooley@revnina.org)

Joy Mullen, Director of Music  
[jmullen@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:jmullen@ststephenspittsfield.org)

Sarah Morrison, Parish Administrator  
[smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org)

Dan Moon,  
Director of St Stephen's Table  
[dmoon@pittsfield.net](mailto:dmoon@pittsfield.net)

Bert Boos, Office Assistant  
[bboos@ststephensfield.org](mailto:bboos@ststephensfield.org)

Weekday Sextons - Berkshire County ARC  
Sunday Sexton Roy Stillman

### **The Diocese of Western Massachusetts**

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher  
800-322-8513 [www.diocesewma.org](http://www.diocesewma.org)

## **Welcome to Worship at St. Stephen's**

We are delighted to have you with us today as we worship together. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is an inclusive parish welcoming all people - regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or creed. God loves you, and so do we!

### **All Are Welcome to Receive from God's Table.**

Each week we share the bread and the wine: the gifts of God, given for the people of God. We invite you to receive communion, but, if you'd rather receive a blessing, please come forward and indicate that by crossing your arms across your chest.

#### ***Receiving Communion:***

The bread - When you come forward hold your hands out together, palm up. The clergy person will place a wafer in your hands, and say, "The body of Christ." Your response: "Amen." (Please let the clergy know if you'd prefer a gluten free wafer.)

The wine - is offered by chalice bearers on either side of the aisle in front of the altar area. Those sitting on the right should choose the right side chalice, those sitting on the left, choose the left side chalice. The chalice bearer will offer the wine, saying, "The Blood of Christ." Your response: "Amen." You may receive the wine by taking a small sip from the chalice, or by dipping your wafer in the wine, taking care not to touch the wine with your fingers. You may also choose to hear the words and respond without choosing to partake of the wine.

### **Children are always welcome at worship!!**

Families are welcome to sit wherever they wish; there are tables toward the back of the sanctuary for those who would like to color. There are child-friendly books in a bookshelf near the coloring station on the right side. There's a Nursery Nook in the Guild Room for caregivers of infants and toddlers who need to take a break during worship.

Caregivers, please come and go as your child needs to - for their safety, we ask that children be accompanied at all times.

Sunday school is offered on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, September through May and will resume September 24, 2023.