

Fifth Sunday in Lent
Sunday March 17, 2024, 10 a.m.

Prelude Handbells

“Precious Lord, take my hand”

Thomas Dorsey/Joel Raney

Hymn 637

“How firm a foundation”

Lyons

Opening Acclamation

(page 1 in booklet)

The Collect

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Jeremiah 31: 31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 51: 1-13

(Please read responsively)

Miserere mei, Deus

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *

in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness *

and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, *

and my sin is ever before me.

- 4 Against you only have I sinned *
and done what is evil in your sight.
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgment.
- 6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb.
- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

The Gospel John 12: 20-33

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

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered,

“This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Christ

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

Affirmation of Faith

(page 3 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; Martie; Patrick; Sue & Tom; Kate; Natasha; Kimberly; Jeff; Keith; Kathryn; Marcus; Patience; Mackenzie; Evan; Sandy; Kristie; Sopheha; Judy; Cathy; Eric; Leigh; Robert; Mike; Will; the family of Kristie Sulock; We pray for just peace for Ukraine, and for those affected by violence in Israel and Palestine. Please include your intercessions.

Those who have Died *Kristie Sulock*

Offertory Anthem

“A Song of the Covenant”

Malcolm Archer

"The days are coming," declares the Lord,
"when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.

This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel," declares the
Lord.

"I will put my law in their minds and will write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

They will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

For I will forgive them their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more." Amen.

Jeremiah 31: 31-34

The Great Thanksgiving

(page 4, booklet)

Communion Handbells

Saranam

Indian Folk Hymn/Sondra Tucker

Announcements

Hymn 441

“In the cross of Christ I glory”

Rathbun

Voluntary

“Largo”

G.F. Handel

† † †

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 “Give,” and “St. Stephen’s Table” from the Fund drop-down menu. *This week’s Gifts to the Table are given by Irmhild and Philip Webster in loving memory of their grandson Sean Coaley and Nancy Lamoureux in loving memory of her husband Gary Lamoureux.*

SUNDAY FUNDAY FOR PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY CHILDREN- March 24th, 9:45a.m. gather in the Sears Room.

EASTER FLOWER DEDICATIONS will be accepted until Monday, March 25. Envelopes are available at the church. You may also give on line or contact the office.

EASTERTIDE ADULT EDUCATION OFFERING - Biblical Women of the Hebrew Scriptures. Throughout the rich tradition of our biblical past, there have been women who were destined to change the course of events to bring about God's plan of salvation. During Eastertide we will be studying the lives and motivations of some of them.

April 7: The wives of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar

April 21: The wives of Jacob, Leah and Rachel

May 5: Queen Esther who saved her people during the Babylonian Captivity: She is celebrated during the Jewish celebration of Purim.

May 19: Ruth, the grandmother of King David

Please join us for lively discussion using Scripture, Commentary, Essays, and Midrash to probe into their desires, foibles, and intentions...

We are meeting in the Sears Room at 9:00 before Eucharist. ALL ARE WELCOME! Louise Penney, facilitator.

BLOOMIN’ 4 GOOD IS BACK FOR APRIL \$1 from each \$10.99 bouquet purchased at the Dan Fox Dr. Stop & Shop will be donated to St. Stephen’s Table.

LIVING GREEN TIP

Never Throw Away Newspapers: Make sure to recycle your old newspapers- 69% (or 44 million newspapers) of the newspapers printed in the USA are thrown away every day. Even if you recycle only once per week, half a million trees could be saved. Or even better, why not avoid newspapers altogether and read the online versions!

Paper Toter Brendan Dillon

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

Diane Forsyth, Wendy Coakley

LAY MINISTERS

Suzanne White, David Nevin

ALTAR GUILD

Susan Smith (Chair) Claudia A. Curry, Cathy Darling

GREETERS

Claudia A. Curry, Sandy Soule

VESTRY GREETER

Bill O'Neill

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THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

Worship: Wednesday, March 20, 6:30 p.m. Compline;

Palm Sunday March 24, 10:00 a.m.

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

Meetings: AA –Tuesday-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; Martie E; David; Sue & Tom S; Kate; Natasha; Kimberly; Jeff K; Keith C; Kathryn D; Marcus B; Patience B., Mackenzie P; Evan C; Sandy S; Kristie H; Sokpha I; Cathy D; Eric H.; Leigh N; Robert L; Mike E.; Will C.; The family of Kristie Sulock; Presiding Bishop Michael Curry; We pray for a just peace for Ukraine, and for those affected by the violence in Israel and Palestine.

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:

Local Food Programs

Pittsfield City Government

The Governor of Massachusetts

In our Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for:

Grace Church, Great Barrington

Chancellor of our Diocese, Donald Allison

CREDO;

Covenant Relationship With the RC

Dioceses of Springfield & Worcester

In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday: The Church of Wales

Monday: Diocese of Costa Rica (Iglesia Anglicana de la Region Central de America)

Tuesday: Diocese of Coventry (England)

Wednesday: Diocese of Cuba (The Episcopal Church)

Thursday: Diocese of Cueibet (South Sudan)

Friday: Diocese of Cuernavaca (La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico)

Saturday: Diocese of Cuttack (North India)

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VESTRY

Josie Ellis, Co. Warden
Suzanne White, Treasurer
Christopher Perry, Clerk
David Nevin
James Alden
Caleb Harmon

John Garinther Co. Warden
William O'Neill, Asst. Treasurer
Wendy W. Coakley
Chris Plankey
Beth-Anne Hamling

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
800-322-8513 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 child-friendly books in a bookshelf near a coloring station in the back, on the right side of the sanctuary. There's a second coloring station on the front left, where there is also our **Kids' Own Space activity area**. 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.