

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Fifth Sunday of Creation Season: Advocate
Saturday September 28, 5p.m.

Opening Acclamation *(page 1 in booklet)*

The Creation Collect for the Day

O God, you show your glory throughout your Creation, calling it very good: Grant us the fullness of your blessing, that we, stewarding your garden, may become partakers in your joy; through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: A Reading attributed to Meister Eckhart (1260-1328)**

Apprehend God in all things,
for God is in all things.

Every single creature is full of God,
and is a book about God.

Every creature is a word of God.

If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature— even a caterpillar—
I would never have to prepare a sermon,
so full of God
is every creature.

Hear what the Spirit is saying through the Poet.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 104: 25-34

(St. Helena's Breviary)

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.

If you are new to St. Stephen's, you will find helpful information on the back of this leaflet.

- 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.

Second Lesson: A Reading of "Seeds of life and hope" from *Ladder to the Light*, by Steven Charleston**

I have a small vision to share, one that came to me through the night walks we call dreams. In my dream, I saw a shadowy figure standing high on a darkened hill, throwing seeds into the wind. Once the seeds left the figure's hand, they turned to tiny points of light and were carried away into the sky. That's all I remember, but it is enough. You and I stand on a windswept moment in history. All around us is a gathering darkness. But we are not afraid because we have seeds of life and hope in our pockets. Our task is to cast them as far and wide as we can. The breath of the Spirit will do the rest.

Hear what the Spirit is saying through the Author
Thanks be to God.

The Gospel: Mark 9: 38 - 50

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

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

“For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Christ

Sermon

The Rev. David DeSmith

Affirmation of Faith

(page 2 booklet)

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others, Especially:

Those on our prayer list: *We pray for: Ken; Tommie; Keith; Marcus; Sokpha; Mike; Will; Jennifer; Judy; Marty; Ann; Marc; Sam; Pat; Becky; Susan; James; Drew; We pray for a just peace for Ukraine, and for those affected by the violence in Israel and Palestine. Please include your intercessions.*

The Great Thanksgiving

(page 5, booklet)

Announcements

The Dismissal

(page 10, booklet)

**** NOTES ON TODAY'S READINGS**

First Lesson: Meister Eckhart, *Selected Treatises and Sermons*, Faber, London, ed. 1958.

Johannes Eckhart (c.1260 – c.1328) was a German Catholic theologian, philosopher and mystic well known for his work with pious lay groups such as the Friends of God. He has acquired a status as a great mystic within contemporary popular spirituality, as well as considerable interest from scholars situating him within the medieval scholastic and philosophical tradition.

Second Lesson: Steven Charleston, *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage* (Minneapolis: Broadleaf Books, 2021), 161.

The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston (b. 1949) is a Native American elder, a citizen of the Choctaw Nation, an author, and a retired bishop in the Episcopal Church. He is widely recognized as a leading proponent for justice issues and for spiritual renewal in the church in both the United States and Canada. Among other roles, he has served as the national staff officer for Native American ministries, the Bishop of Alaska, and the Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School.

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 menu.

FALL ADULT EDUCATION BEGINS OCTOBER 6 AT 9 AM

Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again, by Rachel Held Evans will be explored over 4 sessions: Oct 6, Oct 20, Nov 3 and Nov 17. A few complimentary copies of the book were still available at coffee hour last Sunday. Please contact Craig Reynolds (cmreyn@gmail.com, 413-822-0248). Additional information may be found in the on the church website and weekly email

RECYCLING SCHEDULE

Paper Toter Brendan Dillon

Cardboard-Home Jeff Pringle



GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN'S IS EASY- Scan the QR code to find our giving form. Or, text "giviststephens\$*your amount*" to 73256. (example: giviststephens\$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.

THE THANKSGIVING ANGELS 2024 St. Stephen's and Zion are splitting responsibility for the cornbread again this year. Our share of the 2,500 boxes is \$775. Any donations in excess of this amount will go toward the purchase of turkeys. Checks should be made out to Thanksgiving Angels. You may also donate through St. Stephen's website – pick Special Donations. Questions: contact Joan Evans, 413-822-0889

MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION

CELEBRANT 5 p.m.	The Rev David DeSmith
LECTOR 5 p.m.	Jim Alden
LAYMINISTER 5 p.m.	Jim Alden
ALTAR GUILD	William Frazier (Chair) Diane Forsyth, Angie Moon

A Reflection on Walk in Love: Crossing Boundaries by The Rev. Peter Nunnally
brought to you by the Stewardship Committee

The Chosen is a show that depicts Jesus and the disciples during his ministry. It is a unique and intimate exploration of what it might have been like to be with Jesus during the tumultuous three years of his official ministry.

What struck me most while watching is how much time they spend walking. They are always going from one place to another, and always on foot. There is a liberating quality to the idea that Jesus did not lock himself up in a building, but rather freely spread himself out to the world, in the open air.

During COVID my sister told me her family took walks in the woods on Sunday mornings and got much more out of those walks in than she did sitting in a pew at church. Being on the move, exploring

whatever mystery lay around the bend on the trail, made these walks special for them – made them holy, holier than traditional church.

This inspired me to form a wilderness church service, where we gather and walk together, stopping to pray, sing, share in a homily, and have communion. So much happens as we walk together, and each service becomes a small pilgrimage. Imagine if each church service were a pilgrimage!

Walking together ensures that each service is intensely relational; there is something that opens up between two people when they walk together.

Boundaries fade and guards come down as we marvel over nature together, and in turn, encounter God and one another.

What boundaries have you crossed on your walk of love? How have you discerned which direction to follow?

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Worship: Wednesday, October 2, 6:30 p.m. Compline;
Sunday October 6, 2024 10 a.m.

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

Meetings: AA – Tuesday – Thursday 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

WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, *We pray for* : Ken; Tommie C; Keith C; Marcus B; Sokpha I; Mike E.; Will C.; Judy J.; Marty P; Ann M; Marc B; Sam; Pat M; Becky; Susan C; Drew; Presiding Bishop Michael Curry; Presiding Bishop – elect Sean Rowe; 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., CPT 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:

Trinity Church, Ware;
Global Missions Team;
Greater Springfield Council of Churches;
For the mission of the Church

In Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday: Church of Pakistan
Monday: Diocese of Rio de Janeiro (Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil)
Tuesday: Diocese of Jebba (Nigeria)
Wednesday: Diocese of Jerusalem (Jerusalem and the Middle East)
Thursday: Diocese of San Joaquin (The Episcopal Church)
Friday: Diocese of Johannesburg (Southern Africa)
Saturday; Diocese of Jos (Nigeria)

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VESTRY

Josie Ellis, Co-Warden
Suzanne White, Treasurer
Christopher Perry, Clerk
David Nevin
James Alden

John Garinther Co-Warden
William O'Neill, Asst. Treasurer
Wendy W. Coakley
Chris Plankey
Caleb Harmon

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.

Restrooms are located in our Parish House

Exit the sanctuary via the doors on either side of the altar and follow the signs.