

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday August 31, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

Voluntary “We walk by faith and not by sight” James Biery

Hymn 408 “Sing praise to God who reigns above” *Mit Freuden zart*

Welcome

Opening Acclamation *(page 1 in the booklet)*

The Collect

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lesson Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” So we can say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper;

I will not be afraid.

What can anyone do to me?”

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 81: 1, 10-16 *(Please read responsively)*

Exultate Deo

1 Sing with joy to God our strength *
and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.

10 I am the Lord your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt and said, *
“Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.”

11 And yet my people did not hear my voice, *
and Israel would not obey me.

12 So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their hearts, *
to follow their own devices.

13 Oh, that my people would listen to me! *
that Israel would walk in my ways!

14 I should soon subdue their enemies *
and turn my hand against their foes.

15 Those who hate the Lord would cringe before him, *
and their punishment would last for ever.

16 But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat *
and satisfy him with honey from the rock.

The Gospel Luke 14: 1, 7-14

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

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be

repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ.

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

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

The Prayers of the People *(page 3 in the booklet)*

We pray for: Ken; Keith; Marcus; Sokpha; Dren; James; A.J; Judy; Robertine; Steph; Paul; Craig; Glen; Thom; Mike; Jay; Linda; Evan; Haley; Eve; Barbara; Ted; Sophia; Sue; Marjorie; Natasha, Philip, a just peace for Ukraine, those affected by the violence in the Middle East; and Sudan.

Those who have died: those who were killed and all affected by gun violence in Minneapolis

Confession *(page 5 in the booklet)*

Peace *(page 5 in booklet)*

LEVAS Hymn 194 “Lead me, guide me” Doris Akers
(the red hymnal)

The Great Thanksgiving *(page 6 in booklet)*

Fraction Anthem *Form I, (page 10 in booklet)*

Communion Solo “I love to tell the story” Emma Lou Diemer

Post Communion Prayer *(page 11/12 in the booklet)*

WLP Hymn 812 “I, the Lord of sea and sky” *Here I Am*
(the green hymnal)

Voluntary “Fanfare for a new day” J. Wayne Kerr

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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 Dorothy Lambert in loving memory of her son, Stephen and by Gary and Claudia Austin Curry in thanksgiving for family and birthdays.*

BISHOP FISHER WILL HOLD HIS VISITATION AT ST. STEPHEN'S ON SEPTEMBER 21ST.

SUNDAY FUNDAY RETURNS ON SEPTEMBER 28! Stay tuned for more information.

JOIN OUR CHORUS OF GENEROSITY! - We are orchestrating something special because our spectacular Steinway is in desperate need of TLC...to the "tune" of a \$15,000 overhaul. Imagine our piano, each key representing a vital contribution to our goal.

Can you sponsor one of our piano's keys? If 88 of us chip in \$170 (or whatever you are able to give), we will be able to avoid paying for this very necessary maintenance out of our endowment.

As a token of appreciation, those who are able to contribute will receive a handcrafted bookmark "noting" your donation.

Let's create a harmony of giving to reach this \$15,000 crescendo!

- **To give online:** Look for Piano TLC in the Funds dropdown.
- **To give by check:** Please make a notation for "Piano TLC".

FALL BOOK CLUB – The fall reading selection, The Serviceberry by Robin Wall Kimmerer, will be discussed on Sunday October 5th after church and facilitated by Jim Cawse and Marietta Rapetti Cawse.

THE TEXT OF THE SUNDAY SERMONS can be found on the church website: look under the Worship heading for Sermons.



GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN'S IS EASY – Scan the QR code to find our giving form, or text “giveststephens\$youramount” 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.

Paper Toter –Brendan D. Harmon

Cardboard Home- Joan Evans

MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION

CELEBRANT

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

LECTORS

Paula Morey, Louise Penney

LAY MINISTERS.

Brandan Dillon Harmon, Jim Cawse

ALTAR GUILD

Joan Evans

GREETERS

Sandy Soule, Jennifer Townsend

VESTRY GREETER

Bill Morey

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THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

Worship: Wednesday, September 3, Compline at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom
Sunday, September 7, 10 a.m.

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

Meetings: AA: Friday at 6:30 p.m.; Saturday at 10:00 a.m. NA: Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Dining Room

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, we pray for: *Ken E.; Keith C.; Marcus; Sokpba; Drew; James; AJ R.; Steph M.; Robertine M.; Judy; Paul A.; Craig S.; Glen M.; Mike E.; Thom S.; Jay G.; Linda H.; Evan C.; Haley; Eve; Barbara; Ted K.; Sophia; Sue C.; Marjorie C.; Natasha L.; Philip R.; a just peace for Ukraine, those affected by the violence in the Middle East; and Sudan, those who were killed and all those affected by gun violence in Minneapolis.*

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:

Christ Church Cathedral, Springfield;
Admin. Assistant to the Canon to the Ordinary ,Ken Warren
Seminaries of the Episcopal Church;
Multicultural Bridge, Berkshires

In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday the Church of South India
Monday: Diocese of Oji River (Nigeria)
Tuesday Diocese of Okene (Nigeria)
Wednesday Diocese of Oke-Ogun (Nigeria)
Thursday: Diocese of Oke-Osun (Nigeria)
Friday: Diocese of Okigwe Nigeria)
Saturday: Diocese of Okigwe South (Nigeria)

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VESTRY

John Garinther, Co-Warden
J. Christopher Perry, Treasurer
James Alden
James Brennan
Leah Luczynski

David Nevin, Co-Warden
Christopher Plankey, Clerk
Caleb Dillon Harmon
William Morey
Christine Furcinite-Reynolds

Our Staff

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley, Rector
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Joy Mullen, Director of Music
jmullen@ststephenspittsfield.org

Dan Moon,
Director of St Stephen's Table
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Weekday Sextons – Ecuadorian Women's Co-op
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.

Collection Plates are located at each entrance. All gifts gratefully accepted.

Restrooms are located in our Parish House: Exit the sanctuary via the doors on either side of the altar, follow the signs.