

**Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**The Third Sunday of Creation Season: Act**  
**Confirmation, Reaffirmation and Reception**  
**September 21, 2025, 10:00 a.m.**

**Voluntary**                      “The Rose Garden”                      Edward MacDowell

**Welcome**

**Hymn 705**                      “As those of old their first fruits brought”                      *Forest Green*

**Opening Acclamation**

*Celebrant:*                      Blessed be the one, holy and living God.

*People:*                      **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

*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 Creation Collect of the Day**

Grant us, Creator God, to put wealth to use in relieving the suffering of others; so that we might hold fast to the love that endures; 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 by Sandra Steingraber

We are all musicians in a great human orchestra, and it is now time to play the Save the World Symphony. You are not required to play a solo, but you are required to know what instrument you hold, and play it as well as you can. You are required to find your place in the score. What we love we must protect. That is what love means. From the right to know and the duty to inquire flows the obligation to act.

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

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalms 79: 1-9**      *(Please read responsively)*

*Deus, venerunt*

1 O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;  
they have profaned your holy temple; \*  
**they have made Jerusalem a heap of rubble.**

2 They have given the bodies of your servants as food for the birds of the air, \*  
**and the flesh of your faithful ones to the beasts of the field.**

3 They have shed their blood like water on every side of Jerusalem, \*  
**and there was no one to bury them.**

4 We have become a reproach to our neighbors, \*  
**an object of scorn and derision to those around us.**

5 How long will you be angry, O GOD? \*  
**will your fury blaze like fire for ever?**

6 Pour out your wrath upon the nations who have not known you \*  
**and upon the realms that have not called upon your Name.**

7 For they have devoured Jacob \*  
**and made his dwelling a ruin.**

8 Remember not our past sins;  
let your compassion be swift to meet us; \*  
**for we have been brought very low.**

9 Help us, O God our Savior, for the glory of your Name; \*  
**deliver us and forgive us our sins, for your Name's sake.**

**Second Lesson:** "Hope in the Dark"      a reading by Rebecca Solnit

Hope is not like a lottery ticket you can sit on the sofa and clutch, feeling lucky. Hope is an axe you break down doors with in an emergency. Hope should shove you out the door, because it will take everything you have to steer the future away from endless war, from the annihilation of the earth's treasures and the grinding down of the poor and marginal. Hope just means another world might be possible, not promised, not guaranteed. Hope calls for action; action is impossible without hope. To hope is to give yourself to the future, and that commitment to the future makes the present inhabitable.

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

**Thanks be to God.**

**The Gospel** Luke 16: 1-13

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

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

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

**Sermon**

The Rt Rev. Douglas Fisher

**Confirmation**

*Bishop:* The Candidates for confirmation, reception or reaffirmation will now be presented.

*Presenters:* I present these persons for Confirmation.

Or I present these persons to be received into this Communion.

Or I present these persons who desire to reaffirm their baptismal vows.

*Bishop:* Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil.  
*Candidate* I do.  
*Bishop* Do you renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?  
*Candidate* I do, and with God's grace I will follow him as my Savior and Lord.

*After all have been presented, the Celebrant addresses the congregation:*

*Celebrant* Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?  
*People* **We will.**

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 these persons who have renewed their commitment to Christ.

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.**

*Then the Bishop says*

Almighty God, we thank you that by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you have overcome sin and brought us to yourself, and that by the sealing of your Holy Spirit you have bound us to your service. Renew in these your servants the covenant you made with them at their Baptism. Send them forth in the power of the Spirit to perform the service you set before them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*For Confirmation*

Strengthen, O Lord, your servant N. with your Holy Spirit; empower him for your service; and sustain him all the days of his life. **Amen.**

*For Reception*

N., we recognize you as a member of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, and we receive you into the fellowship of this Communion. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you. **Amen.**

*For Reaffirmation*

N., may the Holy Spirit, who has begun a good work in you, direct and uphold you in the service of Christ and his kingdom. **Amen.**

*Then the Bishop says*

Almighty and everliving God, let your fatherly hand ever be over these your servants; let your Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word, that they may serve you in this life, and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Peace

*(page 5 in booklet)*

### Offertory Anthem

“Grow in grace”

Malcolm Archer

Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word,  
that you shall grow thereby.

Grow in peace and may the blessing of the Lord be upon you,  
The Lord shall with his holy oil anoint you,  
and you shall know his grace.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you,  
I will give you a new heart,  
I will put my spirit within you  
and you shall live by my statutes.

Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word,  
that you shall grow thereby. Amen.

*Biblical Texts*

### The Great Thanksgiving *(page 5 in booklet)*

### Fraction Anthem

*(page 8 in booklet)*

### Communion Anthem “Christ has no body now but yours” David Ogden

Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Teresa of Avila

**WLP Hymn 764**

“Taste and see”  
(*The green hymnal*)  
*Refrains - All*  
*Verses - Soloists*

James Moore

**Post Communion Prayer**

(page 9 in the booklet)

**Hymn 432**

“O praise ye the Lord!”

*Laudate Dominum*

**Voluntary**

“A Thornbury Fanfare”

Malcolm Archer

† † †

### **Notes on Today’s Readings**

**First Lesson:** Sandra Steingraber (b. 1959), biologist, author, and environmental activist. Today’s reading is from her book: *Living Downstream: An Ecologist’s Personal Investigation of Cancer and the Environment Paperback – March 23, 2010*

**The Psalm:** During Creation Season, texts are taken from the St. Helena Psalter

**Second Lesson:** Lightly condensed from Rebecca Solnit (b. 1961), *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*, 3rd ed. with new foreword and afterword (Chicago, IL: 2016), 4.

### **This morning, we congratulate those being Confirmed, Received and Reaffirmed**

Douglas James Demary

Reaffirmed

Brendan Dillon-Harmon

Received

Caleb Dillon-Harmon

Confirmed

Stephen Lussier

Confirmed

Craig Morrow Reynolds

Reaffirmed

This morning’s altar flowers are given by Dennis Carney in loving memory  
of his mother Elizabeth and son Alex.



## 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 can be made by sending a donation to the church or through our website. On the website, select "Give," to find the link to the online giving page. Select "St. Stephen's Table" from the Fund menu.

**WELCOME BISHOP FISHER!** This morning's loose offering is dedicated to Bishop Fisher for Episcopal Charities serving the diocese. Please enjoy a special coffee hour with the Bishop after the service.

**SUNDAY FUNDAY RETURNS ON SEPTEMBER 28!** Pre-k and elementary children should gather in the Sears Room at 9:45 a.m.

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



**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.

Bottles/Cans Toter – Chris Plankey	Cardboard Breakdown- Mark Miller
------------------------------------	----------------------------------

## MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION

BISHOP	The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher
RECTOR	The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley
LECTORS	Susan LeBourdais, James Cawse
LAY MINISTERS.	Craig Reynolds, Joan Evans
ALTAR GUILD	William Frazier, Diane Forsyth, Angela Moon
GREETERS	Laura Kelly, Paula Morey
VESTRY GREETER	Jim Alden
CRUCIFER	Chris Plankey

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained through ONE LICENSE, License #A-711743. All rights reserved

## THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

*Worship:* Wednesday, September 24, Compline at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom  
Saturday, September 27, 5 p.m., Sunday, September 28, 10 a.m.

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

*ESL Classes:* Monday & Wednesday, 9:30 a.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; Sokpha; Dren; 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.; Brady W.; Amy; the family of Harriet Cnyler; a just peace for Ukraine, those affected by the violence in the Middle East; and Sudan all those affected by gun violence.*

***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 Christian Center  
Congregation of Knesset Israel  
Temple Anshe Amunim  
The Supreme Court

### ***In Our Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for.***

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

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

Sunday the Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan  
Monday: Diocese of Oru (Nigeria)  
Tuesday Diocese of Osaka (The Nippon Sei Ko Kai)  
Wednesday Diocese of Osun (Nigeria)  
Thursday: Diocese of Osun North(Nigeria)  
Friday: Diocese of Osun North East (Nigeria)  
Saturday: Diocese of Ottawa (Canada)

## **St. Stephen's Episcopal Church**

67 East Street + Park Square

Pittsfield, MA 01201

413-448-8276

mail@ststephenspittsfield.org (e-mail)

ststephenspittsfieldnews@gmail.com (news items)

www.ststephenspittsfield.org



### **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  
ninapooley@revnina.org

Sarah Morrison, Parish Administrator  
smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org

Bert Boos, Office Assistant  
bboos@ststephensfield.org

Joy Mullen, Director of Music  
jmullen@ststephenspittsfield.org

Dan Moon,  
Director of St Stephen's Table  
dmoon@pittsfield.net

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.