

SAINT STEPHEN'S PARISH

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

A Jubilee Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

**The Sunday of the Passion:
Palm Sunday
March 29, 2026**



Our Mission
is to be the heart and hands of Christ:
nourishing people, transforming lives.

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday
Saturday March 28, 5:00 p.m. and Sunday March 29, 2026 10:00 a.m.

The Liturgy of the Palms

Voluntary

“Fantasia in C Minor”

J.S. Bach

Welcome

Hymn 154

“All glory, laud and honor”
(verses 1-3)

Valet will ich dir geben

Opening Acclamation

Prisider: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: **Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.**

Prisider: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Gospel of the Palms: Matthew 21: 1-11

The Holy Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ, according to Matthew

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others

cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ

Blessing of the Palms

Presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Sovereign God, for the acts of love by which you have set us free. On this day Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly to suffer and to die and was greeted with branches of palm. Let these branches be for us symbols of his majesty and his sacrifice. May we who carry them follow Christ in the way of the cross which leads to life; through Christ who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Presider: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: Hosanna in the highest!

Hymn 154

“All glory, laud and honor”

Valet will ich dir geben

Distribution of the Palms

(verses 4-5)

Presider: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: Hosanna in the highest!

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley



The Liturgy of the Passion

The Affirmation of Faith (*An ancient hymn, this text is quoted in Philippians 2:5-11, assigned as the Second Lesson*)

Presider: Let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus.

**We believe in Jesus Christ who,
though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

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

*Especially: Ken, Keith, Marcus, Drew, Robertine, Paul, Glen, Thom, Ted, Scott, Charley, Henry, Shirley, Bill; Natasha; Sue; Mike; Don; Pat; Jason; Evan; Penny; Linda; just peace for Ukraine; those affected by the violence in the Middle East and Sudan.
(The People may add their own petitions)*

Presider: O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Peace

Presider: The Peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Choral Anthem “O Saviour of the World” John Goss

O Saviour of the world, O Saviour of the world,
Who by Thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us.
Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

The Great Thanksgiving

Prisider: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Prisider: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Prisider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Prisider: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every where to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. For our sins he was lifted high upon the cross, that he might draw the whole world to himself; and, by his suffering and death, he became the source of eternal salvation. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus (sung by all at 10 am) S-124

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, heav - en and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blest is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Sanctus (spoken by all at 5 pm)

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy and gracious God: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and maker of all. Jesus stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Savior Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and

gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, Almighty God, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in Christ. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Savior. By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

The Fraction Anthem “Insult has broken my heart” George Nesbit

Insult has broken my heart and I am weak.
I looked for sympathy, but there was none.
I looked for comforters, and never found one.
 Rather they put gall in my food,
And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink!

The Fraction (*spoken 5pm*)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

The Invitation

Presider: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The Communion

All are welcome to receive at God’s table.

Gluten free wafers are available, simply let the celebrant know.

Specific information about how to receive communion is found at the end of this bulletin.

(Feel free to ask questions of anyone wearing a name tag!)

Communion Anthem “Lamb of God, grant us peace”

Z. Randall Stroope

Refrain: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
 have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
 have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
 grant us peace.

Dona nobis, nobis pacem.

We pray for unity.

Pray for purity,

pray for your strength and your blessing. *Refrain*

For Thine is the kingdom,

Thine is the power,

Thine is the glory forever and ever.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world. Amen.

Communion Hymn 458

“My song is love unknown” *Love Unknown*

Post Communion Prayer

*(adapted from Common Worship,
New Prayers for Worship, Resource Section.)*

Presider: Let us pray.

**Merciful God, you have called us to your table
and fed us with the bread of life;
strengthen our faith that we may grow in love
for you and for each other;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Blessing

May God keep you steadfast
as you walk with Christ the way of the cross.
And the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all, now and always. **Amen.**

Announcements

The Reading of the Passion Matthew 27: 11-54

Congregation may be seated until third portion

Matthew 27: 11-23

first reader, Kathryn Jensen

Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You say so.” But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?” But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.” Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, “Which of the two

do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!” Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

Matthew 27: 24-31

2nd reader, Nancy Travis

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Matthew 27: 32-44 (*congregation stands*)

3rd reader, Christine Furcinite-Reynolds

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he

said, 'I am God's Son.'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

Matthew 27: 45-54

4th reader, The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

*Following the Passion, you are invited to leave the sanctuary in silence.
Our observance of Holy Week has begun.*

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 may 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.

SUNDAY FUNDAY - today, gather in the Sears Room. 9:45 a.m.

EASTER FLOWER DEDICATIONS will be accepted until Wednesday April 1. Envelopes are available at the church. You may also give online or contact the office.

Bottle and Can Toter- Roy Sutton

Cardboard- Home Paula Morey



GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN'S IS EASY – Scan the QR code to find our giving form, or text “giveststephens\$youramount” to 7325(example: giveststephens\$25 will donate \$25.) Google Pay accepted. 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	5 p.m.	The Rev. David DeSmith
LECTOR	5p.m.	James Alden
LAY MINISTER	5 p.m.	James Alden
CELEBRANT	10 a.m.	The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley
LECTORS	10 a.m.	Kathryn Jensen, Nancy Travis
LAY MINISTERS	10 a.m.	Brendan Dillon Harmon, Nichole Plankey
ALTAR GUILD		Claudia A. Curry, Jim Brennan
GREETERS		Anne Williams, Sandra Soule
VESTRY GREETER		Christine Furcinite-Reynolds
CRUCIFER		Christopher 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 9:00a.m.-4p.m.,

Worship: Holy Week services below, Wednesday , April 1, 6:30p.m.
Compline,

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

ESL Classes: Monday and Wednesday: 10:00 a.m.

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

HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday

April 2

6:00 p.m., Service in the Sanctuary

Good Friday

April 3

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Sanctuary open for Stations of the Cross

12:00 Noon- Procession of the cross, walking the “stations” in downtown
Pittsfield with the Campus of Downtown Churches

Gather at First United Methodist

Easter Vigil

April 4

7:00 p.m. with the Campus of Downtown Churches

Hosted by St. Stephen's Parish

Easter Sunday

April 5

10:00 a.m. Festival Eucharist

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, we pray for: Ken, Keith, Marcus, Drew, Robertine, Paul, Glen, Thom, Ted, Scott, Charley, Henry, Shirley, Bill; Natasha; Sue; Mike; Don; Pat; Jason; Evan; Penny; Linda; just peace for Ukraine; those affected by the violence in the Middle East and Sudan.

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:

St. Francis', Holden
Lay employees of our diocese
Clergy spouses and families
Episcopal Church Missionary Community
Society of Saint John the Evangelist (SSJE)

In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday: Anglican Church of Melanesia
Monday: Diocese of Venezuela (The Episcopal Church)
Tuesday: Diocese of Vermont (The Episcopal Church)
Wednesday: Diocese of Victoria Nyanza (Tanzania)
Thursday: Diocese of the Virgin Islands (The Episcopal Church)
Friday: Diocese of Virginia (The Episcopal Church)
Saturday; Diocese of Southern Virginia (The Episcopal Church)

Saint 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
Christopher Perry, Treasurer
Chris Plankey, Clerk
Caleb Dillon Harmon
William Morey
Christine Fucinite-Reynolds

David Nevin, Co-Warden
Alfred Symonds, Asst. Treasurer
Anne Williams
James Brennan
Leah Luczynski

Our Staff

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley, Rector
ninapooley@revnina.org

Joy Mullen, Director of Music
jmullen@ststephenspittsfield.org

Sarah Morrison, Parish Administrator
smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org

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

Bert Boos, Office Assistant
bboos@ststephensfield.org

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.