

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Third Sunday of Creation Season: ACT
Sunday, Sept. 20, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

Voluntary “When morning gilds the skies” arr. Dale Wood

Hymn 400 “All creatures of our God and King” *Lasst uns erfreuen*
(Stanzas 1-4)

Welcome

The Opening Acclamation *(page 1 in the booklet)*

Gloria Hymn *(page 1 in the booklet)*

The Creation Collect for the Day

Grant us, Lord, your vision of a renewed earth in which heaven comes to rest; and even now, while we too often despair of healing and wholeness, to hold fast to your promise and commit again to active hope; 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 through the Author.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 145:1–8 *(sung by all)* *Exaltabo te, Deus* *The St. Helena Psalter*



1 I will exalt you, O holy **God**, *
and bless your Name for ever and **ever**.

2 Every day will I **bless you ***
and praise your Name for ever and **ever.**

- 3 Great are you, O God, and greatly to be **praised**; *
there is no end to your **greatness**.
- 4 One generation shall praise your works to **another** *
and shall declare your **power**.
- 5 I will ponder the glorious splendor of your **majesty** *
and all your marvelous **works**.
- 6 They shall speak of the might of your wondrous **acts**, *
and I will tell of your **greatness**.
- 7 They shall publish the remembrance of your great **goodness**; *
they shall sing of your righteous **deeds**.
- 8 You are gracious and full of **compassion**, *
slow to anger and of great **kindness**.

Second Lesson, a reading from *Hope is Here! Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community*, by Luther Smith Jr.

I hear people's anxiety about the present and future state of the world... All this has led many to feel and say, "The times have never been this bad!" Although I understand how people come to this conclusion, I also know that every generation has faced crises that threatened to rip apart their personal, social, and political foundations... We insult our ancestors by exclaiming that we are overwhelmed and incapacitated because we live in the worst of times.

This is our season! This is our time! We cannot use the increased complexity of our times and lives as an excuse to withdraw from our distinctive challenges. Every generation has dealt with confusing new realities that led to bewildering circumstances. Every generation has had the challenges and opportunities to embrace the work of hope. This is our time! This is our season! Hope is here to enliven us to life and the practices of justice and beloved community... Each one of us can be a sign of hope for this and future seasons.

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

The Gospel Matthew 20: 1-16

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

Jesus said, “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Christ

Sermon

The Rev. Canon Steven Wilco

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

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

We also pray for: Ken, Keith, Marcus, Drew, Robertine, Paul, Glen, Ted, Charley, Craig; Natasha; Sue; Mike; Don; Pat; Heather; Caleb; Angelo; Linda; Sharon; Julie; Penny; Jay; Will; a just peace for Ukraine; those affected by the violence in the Middle East and Sudan.

Confession *(page 5 in the booklet)*

Peace *(page 5 in the booklet)*
(Collection Plates are located at each Entrance)

Offertory Anthem

“Music never dies”

Alfred Fedak

In the waking, in the growing,
in the making, in the knowing,
in the living, in the giving,
music never dies.

In the sighing and the feeling,
in the crying and the healing,
in the playing, in the praying,
music never dies.

In our humming and our singing,
in our drumming and our bringing
all our learning and our yearning,
music never dies.

In our voices and our choices,
in our gladness and our sadness,
in the phrasing of our praising,
music never dies.

In our starting and our ending,
in our parting and our sending,
in peace and love unending,
music never dies.

The Great Thanksgiving *(page 5 in booklet)*

Sanctus *(Sung by all)*

Fraction Anthem *(Sung by all)*

Communion Anthem “How beautiful upon the mountains” John Stainer

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of them that bring good tidings,
that publisheth peace; that publisheth salvation;
that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!
Isaiah 52:7

Post Communion Prayer *(page 9 in the booklet)*

Blessing

Announcements

Hymn 412

“Earth and all stars”

David Johnson

Voluntary

“A Ceremonial March”

Christopher Tambling

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NOTES ON TODAY’S READINGS

First Lesson As quoted in Season of Creation, *Episcopal Liturgy Guide*, 2024, page 145. Sandra Steingraber (b. 1959), biologist, author, and environmental activist

Second Lesson: *Hope is Here!: Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community* Luther E. Smith, Jr., (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2023), 186-188

The Rev. Dr. Luther E. Smith Jr. (b. 1949) is Professor Emeritus of Church and Community, Candler School of Theology, Emory University. He is the author and editor of influential books on Howard Thurman, Christian community, and spiritual practices.

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.

NEXT WEEK- The Rev. David DeSmith will return to lead the 10 a.m. service.

SUNDAY FUNDAY RETURNS September 27. Children in Kindergarten through 4th grade gather before the 10:00 a.m. service in the Sears Room.

SUMMER READING – *Big Queer Nun* by Shane Phelan. Friends of the author, David DeSmith and Jim Alden, will host a Zoom conversation with Shane on September 24 at 7 p.m. Purchase books at Indie Readery and Records, 314 North St., Pittsfield. Zoom link in the weekly email.

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) TRAINING

We have an AED device mounted on the wall of the stairwell as you walk up the stairs from the Allen St door. This device is used when someone is in sudden cardiac arrest and is intended to be used by laypeople who have received minimal training. AED training is scheduled for Sunday, Oct 11 at 11:15 AM in the Sears Room. The training will be conducted by parishioner J.D. Hebert, who is an Advanced EMT with 35 years of experience; it will take about 30 minutes.



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.) Google Pay accepted. Message and data rates apply. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

Worship: Compline: Wed. September 23, 6:30 p.m. Zoom,
Saturday September 26, 5p.m. & Sunday September 27. 10a.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: Saturday, 6:30 DR

MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION

CELEBRANT

The Rev. Canon Steven Wilco

LECTORS

Jim Alden, Renee Kaley

LAY MINISTERS .

Mary Teti, Angie Moon

ALTAR GUILD

Joan Evans

GREETERS

Craig & Christine Reynolds

VESTRY GREETER

Christine Furcinite-Reynolds

CRUCIFER

Melissa Patnode

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THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, we pray for:

Ken, Keith, Marcus, Drew,
Robertine, Paul, Glen, Ted, Charley,
Craig; Bill; Natasha; Sue; Mike; Don;
Pat; Heather; Mary; Caleb; Angelo;
Linda; Sharon; Julie; Penny; Jay;
Will; a just peace for Ukraine; those
affected by the violence in the
Middle East and Sudan.

***We pray for 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
Mass. Council of Churches;
Construct Inc., Berkshires

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

Sunday: The Anglican Church of
Australia
Monday: Diocese of Botswana
(Central Africa)
Tuesday: Diocese of Brandon
(Canada)
Wednesday: Diocese of Brechin
(Scotland)
Thursday: Diocese of Brisbane
(Australia)
Friday: Diocese of Bristol (England))
Saturday: Diocese of British
Columbia (Canada)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

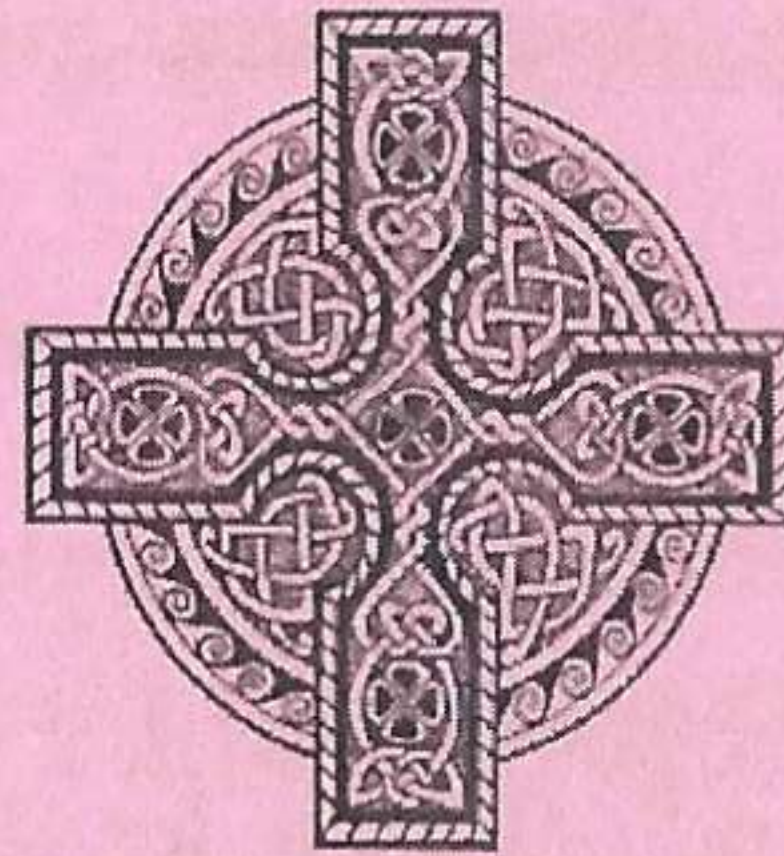
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VESTRY

John Garinther, Co-Warden
J. Christopher Perry, Treasurer
James Brennan
Caleb Dillon-Harmon
Leah Luczynski
Anne Williams

David Nevin, Co-Warden
Christopher Plankey, Clerk
Al Symonds, Asst. Treasurer
Christine Furcinite-Reynolds
William Morey

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. Miguelina Howell

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.