

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Second Sunday of Creation Season: Learn
Saturday, Sept. 12, 5:00 p.m. & Sunday, Sept. 13, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

Voluntary “Morning has broken” Andrew Clarke

Hymn 432 “O praise ye the Lord!” *Laudate Dominum*

Welcome

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

Gloria *(page 1 in the booklet)*

Creation Collect of the Day

O God, because in our ignorance and selfishness we so often fail to care rightly for your Creation, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may soften and unite our hearts with all living beings who suffer; through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: an excerpt from “Walking the Coast” Kenneth White
the pebble of rough
and unprepossessing stone
the harsh dull case
splits open
to reveal
the lovely agate crystal
the boulder
cut asunder
shows a blue-gleaming layer of amethyst –
there is a principle
of beauty and order
at the heart of chaos
within life there is life

Hear what the Spirit is saying through the Poet

Thanks be to God

Psalm 148 *(to be read responsively)* *Laudate Dominum* *The St. Helena Psalter*

1 Alleluia! Praise God from the heavens; *

praise him in the heights.

New to St. Stephen's? You will find useful information on the back of this leaflet.

- 2 Praise God, all you angels; *
praise God, all the heavenly host.
- 3 Praise God, sun and moon; *
sing praise, all you shining stars.
- 4 Praise God, heaven of heavens, *
and you waters above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the Name of God; *
by whose command, they were created.
- 6 God made them stand fast for ever and ever; *
he gave them a law which shall not pass away.
- 7 Praise God from the earth, *
you sea-monsters and all deeps;
- 8 Fire and hail, snow and fog, *
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;
- 9 Mountains and all hills, *
fruit trees and all cedars;
- 10 Wild beasts and all cattle, *
creeping things and winged birds;
- 11 Sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, *
leaders and all rulers of the world;
- 12 Young men and maidens, *
old and young together.
- 13 Let them praise your Name, O God, *
**for your Name only is exalted,
his splendor is over earth and heaven.**
- 14 You have raised up strength for your people
and praise for all your loyal servants, *
the children of Israel, a people who are near you. Alleluia!

Second Lesson: "Do not doubt what you see," from Ladder to the Light,
by Steven Charleston

Last night they came again, the spirits of earth and sky, of wind and rain, of deep seas and tall mountains. In all shapes and sizes they came, from every tribe and nation: the deer and the elk, the bear and the wolf, broad-winged eagles and crows as black as night. They all came and stood in a solemn

circle beneath the one-eyed moon and spoke with a single voice this message from the sacred:

“Do not doubt what you see: the world is warming, the waters are rising, and the winds are coming stronger than before. Do not turn away, do not pretend not to see, but speak the truth and set the spirits free to heal the world, before the ice has gone, before the last tiger falls, before only the desert remembers the ones who once walked this land.

Hear what the Spirit is saying through the Author

Thanks be to God

The Gospel Matthew 18: 21-35

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, Lord Christ

Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Christ

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Jane Tillman

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; 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 “Come, thou fount” *American Folk Hymn*/Jack Burnam

Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. *Refrain*

Refrain I am bound for the kingdom, will you go to glory with me?
Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God.
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood. *Refrain*

O to grace how great a debtor daily I’m constrained to be;
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee. *Refrain*

The Great Thanksgiving (page 5 in booklet)

Sanctus (*Sung by all*)

Fraction Anthem (*Sung by all*)

Communion Anthem “Sing to the Lord a new song” Robert Lau

People and tongues of every nation sing to the Lord a new song.
Bring him a song of jubilation, sing to the Lord a new song.
All God’s creatures, old men and children, voices raised in hymns of love.
He crowns the humble with salvation. Sing to the Lord a new song.

Mountains and hills and all creation sing to the Lord a new song.
Join in adoration, sing to the Lord a new song.
Praise His name, sing “Alleluia!” Praise him for his mighty deeds.
This is our song, our supplication: “Sing to the Lord a new song.”

Praise him, shining stars, and praise him highest heavens.
Oh, all kings and princes praise his holy name.
Angels above make melody to him.
Now lift your voice, lift up your heart, and sing, and sing!

Come, Christians all, now raise your voices, sing to the Lord a new song.
Praise and thanksgiving be your choices, sing to the Lord a new song.
Sound the trumpet, play on the lute and harp; dance your dance, and sing for joy.
Make music now as heaven rejoices, sing to the Lord a new song.
Sing! Sing a new song.

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

Blessing

Announcements

Hymn 580 “God who stretched the spangled heavens” *Holy Manna*

Voluntary “Tuba Tune in D Major” Craig Lang

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NOTES ON TODAY’S READINGS

First Lesson “Walking the Coast” a collection of poems by Kenneth White
Kenneth White (1936-2023) Scottish born poet and activist.

Second Lesson: Steven Charleston, *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder’s Meditations on Hope and Courage* (Minneapolis: Broadleaf Books, 2021), 131.

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

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. Canon Steven Wilco will lead the 10 a.m. service. Ordained in the Lutheran church, Rev. Wilco was called to serve as interim canon to the ordinary by The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher in 2024 after serving a similar role for the New England Synod ELCA.

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 Num* 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.



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.

Paper Toter – Roy Sutton	Cardboard-Home -Paula Morey
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THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

Worship: Compline: Wed. September 16, 6:30 p.m. Zoom,
Sunday September 20 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

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

David Nevin, Co-Warden
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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.