

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Fifth Sunday of Creation Season: BLESS
St. Francis Day
Sunday, October 4, 2026

Voluntary “Allegro” from Symphony No. 3, Op. 90 J. Brahms

Hymn 398 “I sing the almighty power of God” *Forest Green*

Welcome

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

Gloria Hymn (*page 1 in the booklet*)

Collect for St. Francis *St. Helena's Breviary*

Most high, omnipotent, good God: Grant your people the grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may, for love of you, delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Job 12:7-10

But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.

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

Thanks be to God.

The Prayer of St. Francis, (*said responsively*)

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, union;

where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

Second Lesson: A Reading from *The Brothers Karamazov*, Fyodor Dostoevsky
Love all God's creation, the whole of it and every grain of sand. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light! Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. And once you have perceived it, you will begin to comprehend it ceaselessly, more and more every day. And you will at last come to love the whole world with an abiding, universal love. Love the animals: God has given them the rudiments of thought and untroubled joy. Do not, therefore trouble [them], do not deprive them of their joy, do not go against God's intent.

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

The Gospel Luke 12: 13-21 for St. Francis Day
The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
Glorify to you, Lord Christ

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Christ

Sermon

The Rev. Libby Wade

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, 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 Solo: “Sarabande” from Suite in A Minor J.S. Bach

The Great Thanksgiving *(page 5 in booklet)*

Sanctus *(Sung by all)*

Fraction Anthem *(Sung by all)”*

Communion Solo: “The Gift of Love” traditional arr. by Hal Hopson

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

Blessing

Announcements

Hymn 376 “Joyful, joyful we adore Thee” *Hymn to Joy*

Postlude: Deep River African American spiritual

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NOTES ON TODAY’S READINGS

This morning, instead of a Psalm, we are reading The Prayer of St. Francis. The prayer was first published in France in 1912. The author is unknown, but it has been attributed to Father Esther Bouquerel.

Second Lesson: *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821-1881) was a Russian novelist, short story writer, essayist and journalist. His literary works explore the human condition in the troubled political, social, and spiritual atmospheres of 19th-century Russia, and engage with a variety of philosophical and religious themes.

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.

HEALING PRAYERS TODAY during communion.

VIRTUAL BLESSING OF THE PETS TODAY. Please bring your pets' photo for a blessing when called by Rev. Wade.

LABYRINTH WALK THIS MORNING after worship in the Auditorium.

NEXT WEEK- The Rev Thomas H. Damrosch will lead the 10 a.m. service.

SUNDAY FUNDAY – October 11. Children in Kindergarten through 4th grade gather before the 10:00 a.m. service in the Sears Room.

OCTOBER 11 AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) TRAINING - An AED device is 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. Parishioner J.D. Hebert, an Advanced EMT with 35 years of experience; will conduct this 30 minute training.

THE NO BOOK BOOK GROUP — Sunday, October 18, following the 10:00 AM service (about 11:15 AM) in the Guild Room. No assigned reading — bring whatever you're reading, watching, or listening to and tell us about it for a few minutes. You're welcome to come just to listen. It will last about an hour. Light refreshments. All are welcome. Conveners: Jim Brennan and Craig Reynolds.

SABBATICAL PROJECT - One of our sabbatical projects is the installation of a Little Free Library on the front lawn of the church. We will be purchasing an eco-friendly and low maintenance kit for a two-story little library. The total cost is \$700. If you would like to donate to this project, please note "Little Free Library" with your donation check or select "Special donations" from the online *Give* drop-down menu and use the memo to note "Little Free Library."

THANKSGIVING ANGELS – Once again we're collecting funds for our neighbors in need so they may have a healthy home cooked Thanksgiving meal. You may donate directly, Thanksgiving Angels has a website with donation information, or through St. Stephen's. Be sure to include a note with your donation so the office knows to direct it to Thanksgiving Angels.



GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN'S IS EASY – Scan the QR code to find our giving form or text “giviststephens\$youramount” to 73256 (example:giviststephens\$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.

Bottles/Cans Toter – Chris Plankey

Cardboard-Breakdown- Bill Morey

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

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

Worship: Compline: Wed. October 7, 6:30 p.m. Zoom,
Saturday October 10, 5p.m. and Sunday October 11, 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 Libby Wade

LECTORS.

Wendy Coakley, Angie Moon

LAY MINISTERS

Jim Brennan, Paula Morey

ALTAR GUILD

Claudia Austin Curry, Jim Brennan

GREETERS

Jennifer Townsend, Paula Morey

VESTRY GREETER

David Nevin

CRUCIFER

Anne Williams

HEALING PRAYERS

Angie Moon, Louise Penney

PIANO

Deborah Duff

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THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, we pray for: Ken, Keith, Marcus, Robertine, Paul, Glen, Ted, Charley, Craig; Bill; Sue; Natasha; Mike; Don; Pat; Mary; Heather; Caleb; Angelo; Linda; Jay Sharon; Julie; Penny; 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:

Habitat for Humanity in Pittsfield

Department of Mental Health

Government of the United States

In Our Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for.

Church of the Reconciliation, Webster;

For the spiritual life of our people

Episcopal Church Building Fund (ECBF);

Covenant Relationship with Diocese of Kumasi Ghana

In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday: Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil

Monday: Diocese of Bukuru (Nigeria)

Tuesday Diocese of Bunbury (Australia)

Wednesday: Diocese of Bungoma (Kenya)

Thursday: Diocese of Bunyoro-Kitara (Uganda)

Friday: Diocese of Busan (Korea)

Saturday: Diocese of Busoga (Uganda)

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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

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Joy Mullen, Director of Music
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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.