



September 27, 2026
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St Stephen's is called, with God's help, to follow Jesus, and to be a source of transformation and Christian hope and inspiration to those within our community and those in our respective neighborhoods.



THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR HOLY EUCHARIST

WELCOME

Preceding the service, a singing bowl will be rung as we prepare ourselves interiorly for worship.

GATHERING HYMN

#450 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

OPENING BLESSING

Celebrant: Blessed be the One who creates all things.

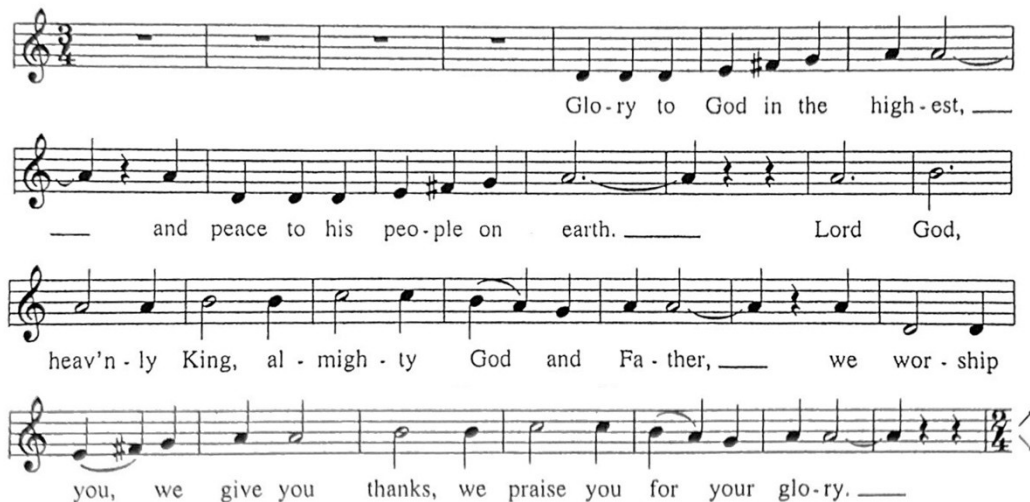
People: The Holy One's love is new every morning.

COLLECT FOR PURITY

The Kenyan Anglican Church

Almighty God, You bring to light things hidden in darkness, and know the shadows of our hearts; Cleanse and renew us by your Spirit, that we may walk in the light and glorify your name, through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.

GLORIA



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, —
— and peace to his peo-ple on earth. — Lord God,
heav'n - ly King, al - migh - ty God and Fa - ther, — we wor - ship
you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry. —

Fa - ther, —

Lord Je - sus Christ, — on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,
Fa - ther, —

Fa - ther, —

Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

world: — have mer - cy on us; — you are seat - ed at the right

hand of the Fa - ther: — re - ceive our prayer. — For

Fa - ther: re - ceive

Fa - ther: re - ceive

you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, — you a - lone are the

Lord, — you a - lone are the Most High,

Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, —

in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men. —

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Lord, — you a - lone are the Most High,

Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, —

in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men. —

COLLECT FOR THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, you show your glory throughout your Creation, calling it very good: Grant us the fullness of your blessing, that we, stewarding your garden, may become partakers in your joy; through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.
Amen.

THE FIRST READING

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the Lord came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die. Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE RESPONSORY

Psalm 25:4-5,8-9,10,14

The musical score is written for a two-part setting in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the accompaniment is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "To you, O Lord, _____ I lift _____ my soul." The melody features a series of eighth and quarter notes, with a long melisma (indicated by a line) after "O Lord" and another after "lift". The accompaniment consists of a steady bass line with some chords and a final sustained note.

To you, O Lord, _____ I lift _____ my soul.

Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths,
guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior.
And for you I wait all the day. **R.**

Good and upright is the Lord; thus he shows sinners the way.
He guides the humble to justice, and teaches the humble his way. **R.**

All the paths of the Lord are kindness and constancy toward those
who keep his covenant and his decrees.

The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear him, and his covenant for instruction. **R.**

THE SECOND LESSON

A Reading from “A Slower Urgency”, by Báýò Akómoláfé

Everywhere I was invited to speak, I offered an invitation to ‘slow down’, which seems like the wrong thing to do when there’s &re on the mountain. But here’s the point: in ‘hurrying up’ all the time, we often lose sight of the abundance of resources that might help us meet today’s most challenging crises. We rush through into the same patterns we are used to. Of course, there isn’t a single way to respond to crisis; there is no universally correct way. However the call to slow down works to bring us face to face with the invisible, the hidden, the unremarked, the yet-to-be-resolved. Sometimes, what is the appropriate thing to do is not the effective thing to do. Slowing down is thus about lingering in the places we are not used to. Seeking out new questions. Becoming accountable to more than what rests on the surface. Seeking roots. Slowing down is taking care of ghosts, hugging monsters, sharing silence, embracing the weird.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

People: Thanks be to God.

Dr. Báýò Akómoláfé (born 1983) was born into a Christian home and to Yoruba parents in western Nigeria. As founder and Elder of The Emergence Network and host of the course/festival series, We Will Dance with Mountains, Báýò curates an earth-wide project for the re-calibration of our ability to respond to civilizational crisis inspired by Yoruba indigenous cosmologies.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

1. As the deer pant - eth for the wa - ter, so my
soul long - eth af - ter Thee.
You a - lone are my heart's de - sire, — and I
long to wor - ship Thee.
You a - lone are my strength, my shield; To
You a - lone may my spir - it yield. You a - lone are my
heart's de - sire, — and I long to wor - ship Thee.

Clergy: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go,

sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

Clergy: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE HOMILY

Rev. Mary Ayers

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**We believe in God, who creates all things,
who embraces all things, who celebrates all things,
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.**

**We believe in God as the source of all life,
who baptizes this planet with living water.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ, the suffering one, the poor one,
the malnourished one, the climate refugee,
who loves and cares for this world and who suffers with it.**

**And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world and everything in it.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God,
who moves with God and who moves among and with us today.**

We believe in everlasting life in God.

And we believe in the hope that one day

God will put an end to death and all destructive forces.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In the beginning, **God was.**

Here and now, **God is.**

In the future, **God will be.**

V. God, Giver of life, R. **Hear our prayer.**

Those in need of healing and support:

Fred, John, Diane, Jaki, Josh, Noah, Kris, Randy, Peyton, London, John, Kathie, Tabitha, Nancy, Esther, Samson, Ann, Tom, Garry, Jacki, Linda, Kay, Shannon, Tiffany, Colin, Karin, Libby, Terry, Russell, Jessica, Kim, Andrew, Jessica, Casey, Vera, Michael, Kadie, Vance, Steve, Tonya, Stephanie, Nathan, Judy, Greg, Mary, Thea, Jill, Bishop Gretchen

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Merciful and sustaining God, we have sinned against you.

We confess our lack of gratitude for the beauty and bounty of your creation:
teach us to see that your earth sustains us and all that lives.

We confess that we have misused your earth:
grant us amendment of life.

We confess that we have been intemperate in our appetites:
strengthen us in self-control.

We confess that we have taken the abundance of your world for granted:
make us urgent now for its protection.

Forgive and renew us now through our Savior Jesus Christ,
by the power of the Holy Spirit, with whom you live
and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

THE PEACE

WELCOME SONG

All Are Welcome



Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly
Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and vi - sions
live. A place where saints and chil - dren and tell how
heard And loved and treas - ured, taught and claimed as
hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and vi - sions, rock of
words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and laugh - ter, prayers of
faith and vault of grace, Here the love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
faith and songs of grace. Let this house pro - claim from floor to raft - er:
All are wel - come, all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

OFFERTORY

To give online, please see the QR code in the back of the bulletin

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Sing to the Lord of the Harvest

DOXOLOGY

Unison

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow. Praise God, all crea-tures high and low. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise God, in Je - sus ful - ly known: Cre - a - tor, Word, and Spir - it one. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE PREFACE

God is with us. **God is present here.**

Rejoice! Lift up your hearts. **We lift our hearts to the Most High.**

Let us give thanks to the Holy One. **It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

We do praise you, our intimate God, the one who is with us, and with all of creation, the source of this magical, mystical, sensual, beautiful, earth. From microbes to whales you have created all of us. We are privileged to be a strand in all of your creation, including this strange and wonderful home, our earth, the open sky above, the dazzling array of stars and planets, and the unfathomable galaxies beyond us. You have blessed us with a world of infinite variety and beauty, a land of mountains and meadows, canyons and valleys, deserts and jungles. Over and through this land you have provided oceans teeming with life, streams and rivers, crystal clear lakes, and cascading waterfalls. We share this land with all of your creatures, from mosquito to mountain lion, from seal to scorpion. You have formed all of this, this land of such intense wildness and beauty. Therefore, we praise you, O Sacred One, joining our voices with the cry of your animals, the rocks, the stars, the Moon, the Sun, and all the universe as we shout with joy:

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,

God of pow - er and might, _____ hea - ven and earth are

full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na _____ in the high - est.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the

Lord. _____ Ho - san - na _____ in the high - est.

We bless you and thank you Gracious God for all of these gifts, and for weaving us, the web of humanity, into this world. But instead of caring deeply for this most perfect of creations, the universe beyond our comprehension and this earth in which we live, we have rebelled against it, against ourselves, against You. We disregarded the interconnected web of life in which we live. Instead of loving it as a mother loves her child, we put ourselves above it, as if it was something we could own. It became something to control rather than a part of us and a part of you. Each time you have called us back, called us to understand that we are not masters of the earth, but instead a part of the earth. You continually remind us that caring for you means caring for your earth and for each other.

The People and Presider say together

Then, All-Holy God, you sent Jesus Christ to be among us.

Through His incarnation, You taught us that You are always with us and all of the world.

He showed us the way to grace and freedom,

and how to show compassion to each other and the world.

He gathered a people as your own

and filled us with longing for justice and peace for all of creation.

Keep us ever vigilant to follow his example

so that we may bring about Your reign that He opened for us,

through his life, his death, and his resurrection.

It is a reign where all your creation will be one.

On the night before he died, Jesus came to table with those he loved. Recalling his own actions of feeding the poor and eating with the outcast, he took bread, gave thanks to You, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me."

When supper was ended, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to You, and passed the cup among his friends and said: "Take this all of you and drink from it, this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant, do this in memory of me."

Therefore, let us pray:

All join in prayer

Gracious God among us, help us to feel your presence, and give us the strength to serve your creation and your people this day and every day.

Now gathered at your table, God of Creation, and remembering what Jesus Christ taught us, we offer to you this bread and this wine, a gift of your creation and work of human hands. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts, O Sacred One. May they become for us the Body and Blood of Christ, just as we, your people, are that same Body.

Breathe your Spirit upon us also and upon the entire earth. Make us one with your earth, so that all of Creation may become one with your Body.

The People and Presider say together

Bring all of us, from every clan, tribe, and nation together,

to feast upon your abundant banquet, prepared from the fruits of your earth

and made possible by the redemption of your Christ.

Through Jesus Christ, in the unity of the entire Universe, all glory and honor to God and Creator, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

As the Wisdom before Creation teaches us, we pray.

**Holy One, our only Home,
hallowed be your name.**

**May your day dawn,
your will be done,
here as in heaven.**

**Feed us today,
and forgive us as we forgive each other.**

**Do not forsake us at the test,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the glory, the power,
and the mercy are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

THE FRACTION

This is Living Bread, given for all Creation.

All who eat this bread share in Christ's Body.

HOLY COMMUNION

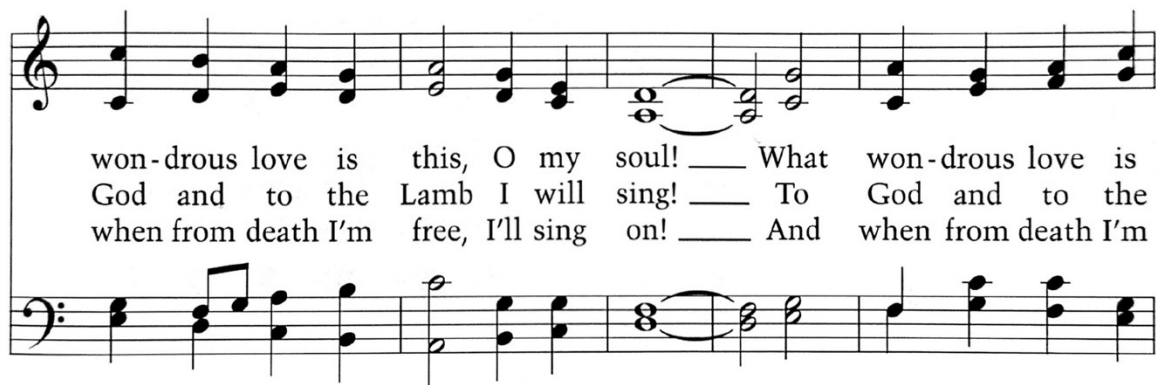
Christ is the Host of this Holy Feast: All are welcome to receive God's blessing. You may choose to receive wine from the little cups or from the common chalice. To receive from the chalice, please help guide the cup by grasping the bottom of the cup. Please do not dip your wafer (intinct) into the cup. Gluten-free hosts are available—please mention your need for a gluten-free host to the clergy distributing the Body of Christ when you approach to receive Holy Communion.

COMMUNION HYMN

What Wondrous Love Is This?



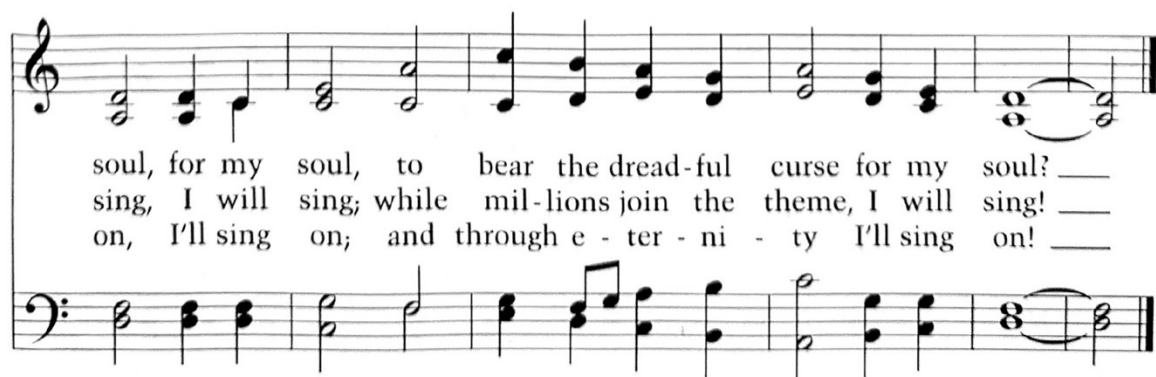
1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What
 2 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to
 3 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and



won-drous love is this, O my soul! — What won-drous love is
 God and to the Lamb I will sing! — To God and to the
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing on! — And when from death I'm



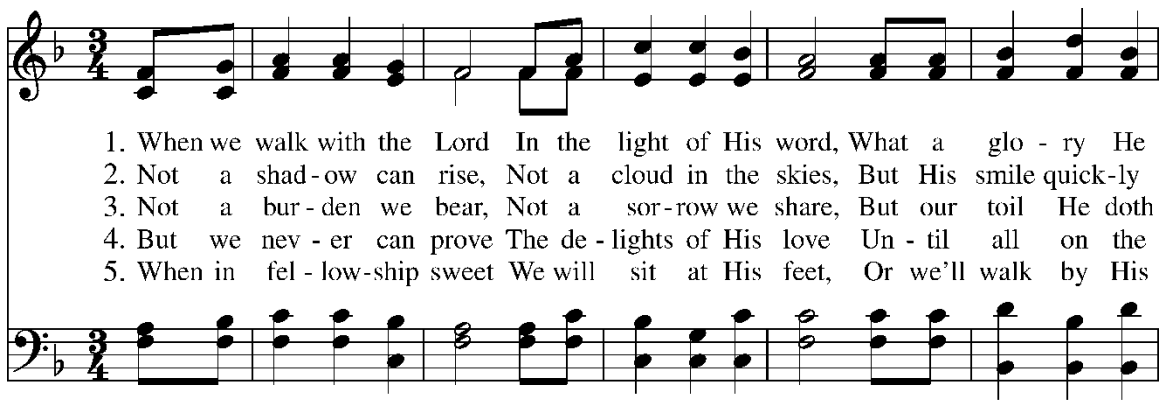
this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my
 Lamb, who is the great "I Am," while mil-lions join the theme, I will
 free, I'll sing God's love for me, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing



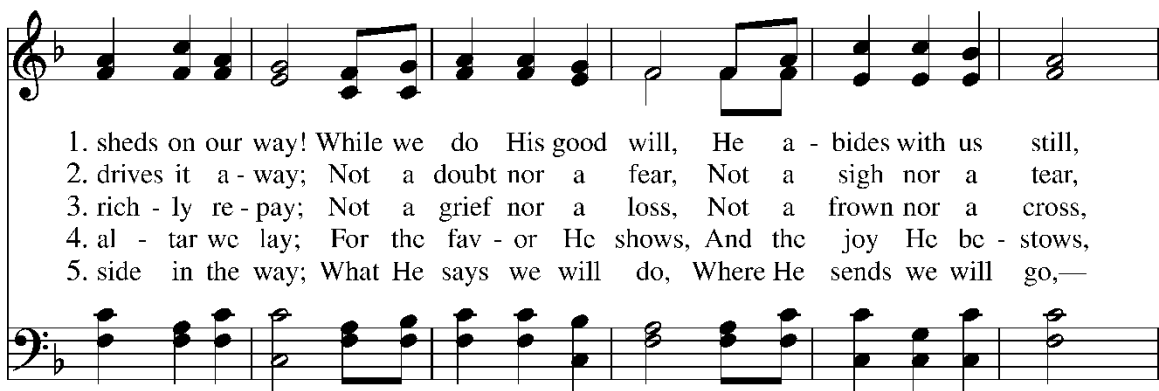
soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul? —
 sing, I will sing; while mil-lions join the theme, I will sing! —
 on, I'll sing on; and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on! —

COMMUNION HYMN

When We Walk with the Lord



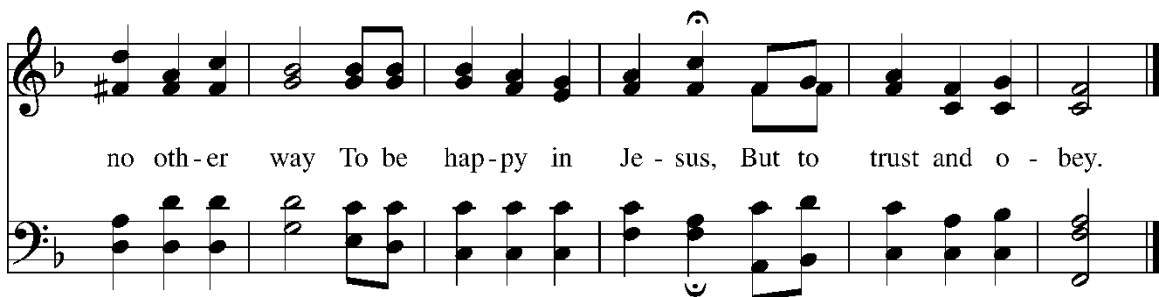
1. When we walk with the Lord In the light of His word, What a glo - ry He
 2. Not a shad - ow can rise, Not a cloud in the skies, But His smile quick - ly
 3. Not a bur - den we bear, Not a sor - row we share, But our toil He doth
 4. But we nev - er can prove The de - lights of His love Un - til all on the
 5. When in fel - low - ship sweet We will sit at His feet, Or we'll walk by His



1. sheds on our way! While we do His good will, He a - bides with us still,
 2. drives it a - way; Not a doubt nor a fear, Not a sigh nor a tear,
 3. rich - ly re - pay; Not a grief nor a loss, Not a frown nor a cross,
 4. al - tar we lay; For the fav - or He shows, And the joy He be - stows,
 5. side in the way; What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go,—



1. And with all who will trust and o - bey.
 2. Can a - bide while we trust and o - bey.
 3. But is blest if we trust and o - bey. Trust and o - bey, for there's
 4. Are for them who will trust and o - bey.
 5. Nev - er fear, on - ly trust and o - bey.



no oth - er way To be hap - py in Je - sus, But to trust and o - bey.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Create in us a new heart and a new vision, O God,
 that the gifts of your Spirit may work in us and renew the face of the earth.
 May we be one with you so that our work is yours and your work is ours.
 Lead us to transform our lives to reflect your glory in Creation;
 through Jesus Christ our Savior who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God now and for ever. Amen.

PARISH PRAYER CENTER

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN

#291 We Plow the Fields and Scatter

SENDING

The People's Response: Thanks be to God!

Thanks to all those who serve in St. Stephen's liturgical ministries!

SATURDAY

Eucharistic Ministers

Julie Henry | Beth Priest

SUNDAY

Eucharistic Ministers

Libby Beck | Philip Johnston

Ushers

Rodger Lake | Jeanie Haskell

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Rev. Cn. Jonathan Myers, Rector: jonathan@ststephens-spokane.com | 509.448.1504

Rev. Elaine Pitzer, Parish Deacon: evpitzer@aol.com

Alayna Biersdorff, Lay Pastor for Formation and Administration:

alayna@ststephens-spokane.com | 509.703.2851

St. Martha's Altar Guild

Pam Bernardo | Karen Bushnell | Vanita Davis | Lyla Henderson | The Henry Family

Suzy Jefferies | Lisa Johnston, President | Meg Jones | Laura Lindsey | Paula Oty

Mary Lou Redmond | Lolita Sutton | Pam Strickland | Karen Williams

St. Stephen's Vestry

Sheryll Shepard, Sr. Warden
Tim Farley, Jr. Warden
Greg Stevens, Jr. Warden
Karen Bushnell

Mary Hedrick
Scarlett Hepworth
Charlotte Lamp
Kate Mietus

Karen Williams
Karen Winston
Kathleen Henry, Treasurer
Stuart Hales, Clerk

Give Online:



ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 3: Blessing of the Animals

October 3: A Quick History of Spokane's Ecosystem

October 14: Ladies Lunch

October 16: God Stories

October 20: A Pint with a Priest

October 21: Righteous Readers

Jonathan+ is taking time off from September 8th-28th and Oct. 11th - 31st. For administrative needs, reach out to Alayna at 509-448-2255 or office@ststephens-spokane.com. For other needs, reach out to our Senior Warden Sheryll Shepard: 509-939-5803.

Alayna is taking time off Sept. 24th – Oct. 4th.

To see all the events happening at St. Stephen's, see the church calendar on the website ststephens-spokane.com.

LADIES LUNCH

All Ladies are invited to bring a lunch and enjoy friendship and conversation on October 14th at 12:30 in the Parish Hall. Contact Linda Long for more info: (702) 655-8932

A QUICK HISTORY OF SPOKANE'S ECOSYSTEM

Saturdays 3pm | Conference Room | 4 weeks starting on Oct. 3rd

Spokane's ecosystem, what does it have to do with what's for dinner? What is and what isn't easy to raise and grow in Spokane? And what does that have to do with climate change? Come explore these questions and more with Christine Jenkins. Please sign-up and send questions to: farpointdogs@gmail.com

CREATION CARE RETREAT

Enjoy the serenity of Camp Cross the weekend of October 2nd-4th for a time of contemplation and renewal in nature. Guided activities will be offered that celebrate God's sacred gift of creation including forest bathing, soul collage, and communal worship. For more information, contact Deacon Pat Munts: (509) 998-9769.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

In celebration of the Feast of St. Francis, we will have Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 3rd at 10 a.m. Join us with your animal companion at the labyrinth at the south end of the parking lot.

ST. FRANCIS FUND

On October 4th we will celebrate the Feast of St. Francis. On that weekend we will also take an offering for our St. Francis Fund (what we call our clergy discretionary fund). This fund is one of the best ways our church can meet urgent and unexpected needs for folks both within and outside of our church. This fund has helped people in our community pay their rent, cover utilities, recover from emergencies and more.

Francis became a beggar in order to help the poor in his society, may we all be inspired by his care for the suffering and do what we can to alleviate suffering in our community. If you have any questions please reach out to Jonathan+ for clarification. Checks can be made out to "Clergy Discretionary Fund," or to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, with 'discretionary fund' in the memo line. You can also give online at ststephens-spokane.com at any time by choosing "St. Francis Fund" from the drop-down menu.

