



CELTIC EVENSONG AND COMMUNION

at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Second Sunday of Advent ☩ December 7, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Welcome to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. We welcome and include all people without exception and invite you to participate fully in worship and after the service to enjoy the community supper in the fellowship hall. Throughout this bulletin, helpful guidance is printed in italics. Nursery care is available (infant-4); speak with a door greeter. Visitor Guides are found at entrances. When you want to be known here, place a Welcome card (in all pews, or submit online) in the basket in the center aisle. The church is open for prayer from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Thursday. From 5:10 on Sundays, the church is ready for prayer and rest. Please observe silence inside the church and thank you for remembering to "silence" all devices.

Prelude *Winterreise: I. Gute Nacht*

Franz Schubert

Please stand at the sound of the bell, as you are able.

Opening Once or Twice or Three Times, I Saw Something

Marie Howe

Once or twice or three times, I saw something
rise from the dust in the yard, like the soul
of the dust, or from the field, the soul-body
of the field—rise and hover like a veil in the sun
billowing—as if I could see the wind itself.
I thought I did it—squinting—but I didn't.
As if the edges of things blurred—so what was in
bled out, breathed up and mingled: bush and cow
and dust and well: breathed a field I walked through
waist high, as through high grass or water, my fingers
swirling, through it—or it through me. I saw it.
It was thing and spirit both: the real
world: evident, invisible.

Silence is held after the reading.

Hymn Come now, O Prince of Peace

Sung by all, standing as able.

O-so-so



1. Come	now,	O	Prince	of	Peace;	make	us	one	bod - y.
2. Come	now,	O	God	of	love;	make	us	one	bod - y.
3. Come	now	and	set	us	free,	O	God,	our	Sa - vior.
4. Come,	hope	of	u -	ni -	ty;	make	us	one	bod - y.



Come, O Lord Je - sus; rec - on - cile all peo - ple.

A Prayer for the Evening

For the quietness that surrounds us
and your promise of peace deep within us,
for the stillness of sleep for our bodies
and the hope of healing for our souls,
thanks be to you, O God. **Amen.**

The Reading Matthew 3:1-12 *Please sit.*

Reader A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Silence is held for one minute of reflection.

Reflection Guy Frank

Silence is held for two minutes of reflection.

Music for Meditation *Gurab tú mo bheatha* (May you be my life) trad. Irish/Seán Ó Riada

Prayers for Ourselves and Others *Please stand.* from *The Book of Common Prayer of Ireland*

Deacon God has promised to hear the prayers of those who ask in faith; therefore, let us pray for the Church and the world.

In the silence following each petition the people may add their prayers either silently or aloud.

Leader Lord of your people: strengthen and renew your Church in all the world, and build us up in faith and love.

Leader Lord of creation: look with favor on the world you have made, and guide the nations in the ways of justice and of peace.

Leader Lord of relationship: comfort and sustain the communities in which we live and work; help us to love our neighbors as ourselves; enable us to serve our families and friends, and to love one another as you love us.

Leader Lord of healing: relieve and protect all who suffer in body, spirit, and mind; sustain and deliver all who know danger, violence, or suffering throughout the world, [especially ____].

- Leader** Lord of blessing: receive our thanks and gratitude for the ways you fill our lives with goodness, faith, hope, opportunity and every nourishment and comforting kindness, [especially ____].
- Leader** Lord of life: in the strong hope of resurrection in Christ, come near to all who grieve at the loss or death of beloved ones, [especially for ____].
- Leader** Lord of eternity: bind us together by your Holy Spirit in communion with your saints, that we may entrust ourselves, and one another, and our whole life to you. **Amen.**

Candle Lighting, Additional Prayers

Lighting candles is as potent a symbol of offering one's prayer to God as candlelight is of God's abiding presence. All may light a votive at any station, now and hereafter. This Church is open daily for prayer and rest, and a permanent votive station is located near the piano in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit.

Music for Meditation Come now, O Prince of Peace Korean hymn, arr. Anne Krentz Organ

Hymn O Lord, hear my prayer Jacques Berthier

The congregation will repeat the refrain several times.



The Grace O God, you will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on you; for in returning and rest we shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be our strength. **Amen.** *Isaiah 26:3; 30:15*

The Peace May Christ, the Good Shepherd, bind us with a bond of love that cannot be broken. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

All greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying "peace."

Welcome and Announcements

The Holy Communion

All comes from God, so from all God has given into our care, we offer gifts from our gratitude. Please place offerings into the basket near the baptismal font or food pantry items into the baskets by the main entrance, or make a gift online by scanning the QR code or texting STSTEPHENSRYA to 73256.



At the Offertory Will you come and follow me trad. Scottish, arr. Charles Callahan

The Great Thanksgiving Please stand. *In This Season of Waiting*, Iona Community

Celebrant O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People **God comes among us.**

Celebrant Let us give our hearts to God.

People **This is right and good.**

Celebrant The story of Emmanuel is the story of God—waiting to inhabit time, who took on flesh and form, and lived among us, so that we might re-imagine life.

It is the story of Jesus – waiting to be betrayed, who shared supper with his friends who took bread, offered the blessing, and said,

All “**This is my own body given for you. Do this, and know that I am with you.**”

Celebrant Then pouring, blessing, and sharing wine so that we might re-imagine love, he said,

All “**This is my life-blood poured out for you. Do this, and know that I am with you.**”

Celebrant It is the story of Christ – waiting in the tomb for God’s moment, who threw down the gates of hell and drew the sting of death so that we might re-imagine the world. It is the story of one who knows what it is to wait, and who shows us what it is to wait well.

And so, taking this bread and wine, we remember and celebrate the waiting which began to change the world; and we join our voices with all who still wait and work for that change to come to completion as we sing:

Sanctus

Sung by all.

William Trafka

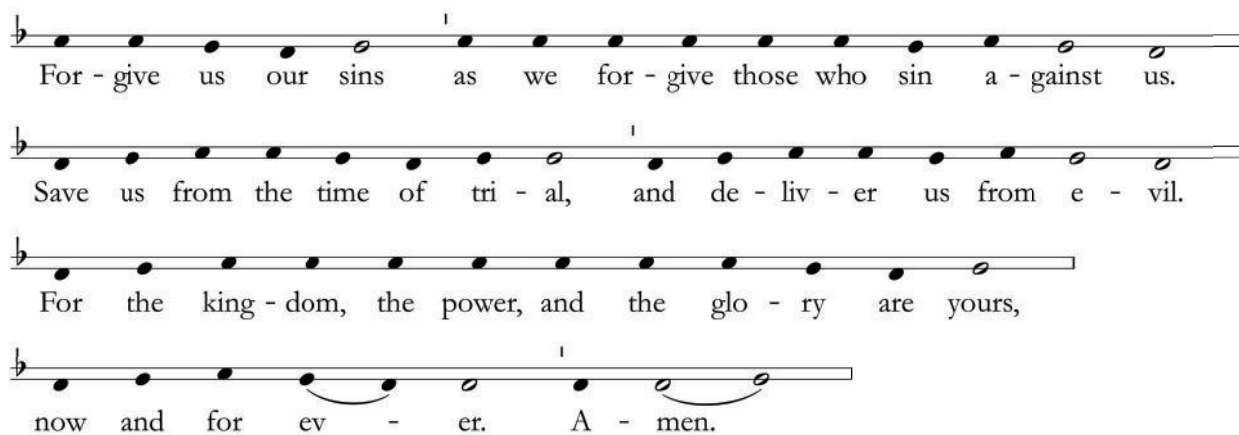
Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho -
san-na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Celebrant And as we follow the example of Jesus, send down your Holy Spirit on us, and on these gifts of bread and wine, that we may find the imagination, the courage and the strength to use our waiting times to build God’s Kingdom of joy, justice and peace.

People **Blessed be God, blessed be Son, blessed be Holy Spirit, now and ever. AMEN.**

The Lord’s Prayer

Cantor
As our Sa - vior Christ has taught us, we now pray,
All
Our Fa - ther in hea - ven, hal - lowed be your Name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in hea - ven.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread.



The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the bread. A period of silence is held.

Sung by all.

William Trafka



Translation: Give us your peace.

The Invitation

Celebrant

This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is the Lord who invites you. It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

At the Communion of the People

All who seek God's presence through Communion or God's blessing are welcome to come forward. Extend your hands, one upon another, to receive a bread wafer (request gluten-free) or, to receive God's blessing instead, cross your arms over your chest in an "X". Wine for sipping is offered next to the bread or dip the edge of your wafer in the small cup by the pillars. **Healing prayer and anointing** are offered to all at the side chapels from the beginning of Communion through the end of the service. More information is found at the end of this bulletin.

Music for Communion

O come, O come, Emmanuel
 Willaford
 Jesus, Jesus, rest your head

arr. Joseph Martin
 trad. Shetland, arr. Sunita Staneslow
 Appalachian folk song, arr. George Winston

After Communion*Please stand.*from *In this Season of Waiting*, Wild Goose Publications**Celebrant**

The earth still waits for its healing...

All

**May we who are part of that waiting
take and use the dreaming times
to re-imagine the world;
inhabit and use the liminal times
to discover the patterns of God;
embrace and use the quickening times
to learn how to live and love;
thus may our watching and waiting
join with that of Emmanuel
to realize God's Kingdom
here on earth. Amen.**

The Blessingfrom *Wild Goose Big Book***Celebrant**

May God, in whose house there are many rooms, shelter us.
May Jesus, who had no place to lay his head, challenge us.
May the Spirit, who is everywhere,
draw us into a sacred bond of mutual care.
And may God's Blessing be with you,
Christ's peace be with you,
the Spirit's outpouring be with you,
now and always. **Amen.**

Hymn

There's a voice in the wilderness crying

*Sung by all, standing as able.**Ascension*

1. There's a voice in the wil - der-ness cry - ing, a call from the ways un -
 2. O Zi - on, that bring-est good tid - ings, get thee up to the heights and
 3. but the word of our God en - dur - eth, the arm of the Lord is

trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a high - way, a high-way for our
 sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late peo - ple the com - ing of their
 strong; he stands in the midst of na - tions, and he will right the

God! The val - ley's shall be ex - alt - ed, the
 King. Like the flow'rs of the field they per - ish, like
 wrong. He shall feed his flock like a shep - herd, the

lof - ty hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed
 grass our works de - cay, the pow'r and pomp of
 lambs he'll gent - ly hold; to pas - tures of peace he'll

pla - ces where the Lord our God may go!
 na - tions shall pass like a dream a - way;
 lead them, and bring them safe to his fold.

Dismissal

Deacon Go out into the world in peace, have courage, hold on to what is good, return no one evil for evil, strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the suffering, honor everyone, love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Music for Meditation *Scenes from Dinétah*: Sunrise

Connor Chee

Postlude Happiness does not wait

Ólafur Arnalds, arr. Diana Chou

Please feel free to depart during or after the Postlude, holding silence.

Participants

Celebrant: The Rev. John Jenkins; **Deacon:** The Rev. Will Stanley; **Reflector:** Guy Frank; **Subdeacon:** Synthia Waymack; **Reader:** Mary Martin; **Intercessor:** Anne Townsend; **Chalice Bearers:** Tony Anthony, Nancy Atkins, Sarah Shutt, Kim Spensieri; **Musicians:** Abby Outlaw, *cantor*; Ellie Swanson, *flute*; Diana Chou, *piano*

The Ministry of Healing Prayer at St. Stephen's Church

TO PRESENT YOURSELF FOR HEALING PRAYER OR ANOINTING: Healing ministers are located in both side chapels from the time people receive communion until after the service concludes. Go to either side chapel either after receiving communion or a blessing, or at any time following irrespective of what else is happening in the service. Because these ministries will continue through the end of the service, please respect those in prayer by exiting in silence from any of the rear doors. Whether or not you participate in these ministries tonight, you may contribute to the work of healing prayer by offering your personal prayers for yourself and that all who worship here may experience the healing love of God in their lives and bear that love into the world for its healing.

HEALING PRAYER: If you wish to sit for a moment with a healing prayer minister, it is helpful if you share your name and the concern for which you ask God's healing. The minister will lay hands on your shoulders, join with you in silently opening ourselves to God, and offering your prayer concern to the healing One who is with us always. This is not a ministry of magical incantations. It is simply about fellow pilgrims opening ourselves more completely to God's presence and healing love.

ANOINTING: If you wish to receive anointing with healing oil, approach the anointer with you palms open and extended. She or he will mark your hand with the sign of the cross and offer a simple prayer for your healing.

Healing ministries of prayer and anointing have been practiced by Christians from the very beginning. God's grace is freely given to all people for the healing of spirit, mind, and body, and these practices provide ways for us to present ourselves just as we are with open hands and open hearts. We do not believe in magical incantations. Instead, these sacramental acts are simply about fellow pilgrims opening ourselves more completely to the healing love of God.

The Parish Prayer List

Cassell V. Adamson, Leilani Allwine, Richelle Anderson, Patricia Atkins-Smith, Sue Atkinson, Robert Baker, Elizabeth Bannerman, Lash Barksdale, Nancy Beale, Ken Blaisdell, Christine Boeteger, Genie Borum, Julia Bouck, Gene Bowles, Sturges Brian, Leslie Brockman, Alex H. Brown, Pat Brown, Sarah Jo Bryce, Turner Bruneau, Matt Boyd, Patti Bullen, Tammy Carleton, Scott Carnohan, Paula Chambers, Nancy Cole, Sarah Cole, Susan Collier, Mary Cooke, Prior Cooper, Kathy Conrad, John Corey, Don Cowles, Michelle Crim, the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, Barbara Dagger, Chris Davis, Patricia Delany, Jackie Dering, Ham DeRosa, Terry Dickinson, Davis Dunn Dillard, Susan Dull, Guy Frank, April Greenwood, Janis Hall, Rodger Hardy, Katie Hellebush, Dan Hill, Anna Hurdle, Alan Jamesieson, Lena Jones, Justin Jones-Nickerson, Jane Kelly, Dana King, Linda Lewis, Genie Lucyk, Joy Luke, Margaret Lyle, Pam Lynch, Ross Mackenzie, Barbara Mathison, Satin Matthews, Adrienne Maxwell, Michael McCabe, Schnucki McCabe, Morgan McCall, Stratton and Robin McCrady, Gertrude McLean, Nancy Meath, Jack Miller, Mary Miller, B. Millner, Susan Minyard, Sallie Moncol, Ashley Nickerson, Mary Beth Noel, Sallie Nolte, Jan Orgain, Tricia Payne, Beth Pearce, Ernest Perry, Courtney Phillips, Scott Pittman, Wilde Poole and family, Bob Pope, Lyn Presson, Luke Robertson, Ramona Ransone, Jason R., Ray, Jennifer Reed, Aleta Richards, *Ryan Rohadfox*, Kaley Rosenthal, Robert Sass, James Saunders and Harriet Covey, Melissa Schick, T. Logan Scott, *Todd Shelton*, Bette Shiflett, Maj. David Shuford, Jr., Chrys Sills, Aiden Thomas Smith, Mary Stagg, Regena Stith, Margaret Thompson, Kenneth Valke, Timothy W., Ozzie Wade, Carol and Don Wakeley, Suzanne Wallace, Tom White, Terri Wilcox, Donna Williams, Steve Williams, Martha Wilson, Claire Wood, Emily H. Wood, Rosalyn Wootten, Sue Wootton, Young, Margaret P. Young. **For those who have died**, especially *Bill Armstrong, Marsha Gillis, and Elizabeth Greene*. **For those expecting a child**, especially Maddie and Matthew Clites, Ian Hayes and Corinne Torres, *Preston and Cate Kendig*, and Michelle and Dane Olsson. **For our missionaries**, Heidi Schmidt and Monica Vega, and the people they serve in Argentina. **In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer**, we pray for *the Church of Bangladesh*. **For ReWork Richmond**. **For an end to gun violence**. **For peace and reconciliation** in Haiti, Iraq, Iran, Israel/Palestine, Nigeria, North Korea, South Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine, and at our borders. **For those serving overseas in the military or diplomatic service**: CPT Anna Broadbent-Evelyn, Lt. Jonathan Dean Hudson, and Lt. Alex Whitmire. *Names in italics were added to the prayer list this week.*

In order to keep our prayer list current and facilitate the intentionality and mindfulness with which we pray, we print names on the list for three months or less. If you would like for someone to remain on the list for more (or less) time, please call the office or email Kitty Ball at kball@ststephensRVA.org.

Prayers and blessings adapted from the following sources: The Northumbria Community, Celtic Daily Prayer: Prayers and Readings from the Northumbria Community, Harper Collins, © 2002; Intercessions for the Christian People, The Liturgical Press, ©1990; A New Zealand Prayer Book, Harper Collins, © 1997; Philip Newell, Celtic Benediction: Morning and Night Prayer, William B. Eardmans Publishing Company, © 2000; Iona Community, Iona Community Worship Book. Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, © 2017; Wild Goose Worship Group, Big Book of Liturgies, Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, © 2023. Rite Planning, © 2021, by Church Publishing Incorporated, all rights reserved, used by permission. All copyrighted music by permission, under OneLicense #A710911. Opening: "Once or Twice or Three Times, I Saw Something" from *The Kingdom of Ordinary Time* by Marie Howe. W.W. Norton & Company ©2008. Used by permission.