Celtic Evensong and Communion

at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Day of Pentecost ☙ May 24, 2026 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. Throughout this bulletin, guidance is printed in italics. Nursery care is available (infant-4); speak with a door greeter. A "soft space" is also available in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, the side chapel nearest the parish house, where children and parents can continue to participate in the service if and when they need more room than a church pew provides. Children must be accompanied by a parent while using the soft space. 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 by the baptismal font. 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 Hymn tune prelude on *Song 13* (Orlando Gibbons) Ralph Vaughan Williams

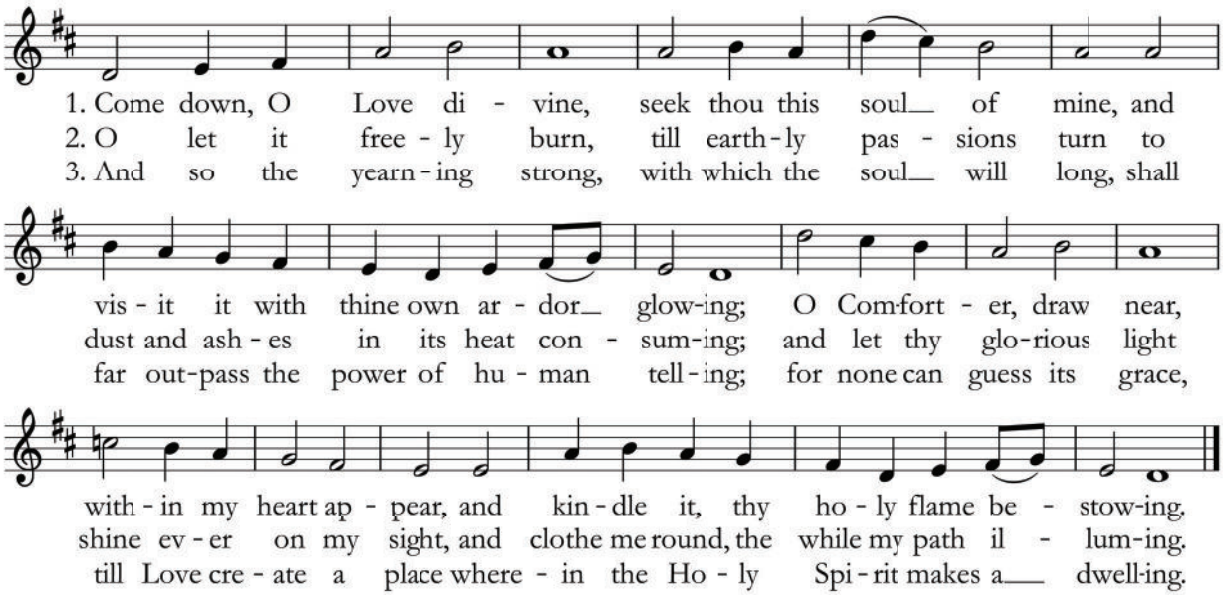
Please stand at the sound of the bell, as you are able.

Opening Storage Mary Oliver

When I moved from one house to another
there were many things I had no room
for. What does one do? I rented a storage
space. And filled it. Years passed.
Occasionally I went there and looked in,
but nothing happened, not a single
twinge of the heart.
As I grew older the things I cared
about grew fewer, but were more
important. So one day I undid the lock
and called the trash man. He took
everything.
I felt like the little donkey when
his burden is finally lifted. Things!
Burn them, burn them! Make a beautiful
fire! More room in your heart for love,
for the trees! For the birds who own
nothing – the reason they can fly.

Silence is held after the reading.

Hymn Come down, O Love divine *Sung by all, standing as able.* *Down Ampney*



A Prayer for the Evening

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and we shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. **Amen**.

The Reading John 20:19-23 *Please sit.*

Reader A Reading from the Gospel according to John.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Silence is held for one minute of reflection.

Reflection Susan Wilkes

Silence is held for two minutes of reflection.

Music for Meditation *Y deryn pur* (The dove) trad. Welsh

Prayers for Ourselves and Others *Please stand.*

Deacon Let us pray for ourselves and the world.

Leader Loving God, enliven the Church for its mission,
People **That we may be salt of the earth and light to the world.**

Leader Breathe fresh life into your people.
People **Give us power to reveal Christ in our daily lives.**

Leader Creator of all, lead us and every people into the ways of justice and peace,
People **That we may respect one another in freedom and truth.**

Leader Awaken in us a sense of wonder for the earth and all that is in it.
People **Teach us to care creatively for this fragile world.**

Leader God of truth, inspire with your wisdom those whose decisions affect the lives of others.
People **That all may live with integrity and courage.**

Leader Give grace to all those whose lives are linked with ours.

People **May we serve Christ in one another, and love as Christ loves us.**

Leader Receive the gratitude of our hearts, [especially ___].

You may offer prayers, silently or aloud.

Leader Open our hearts with compassion to suffering throughout the world, for the earth's plants, animals, and ecosystems, and all who bear the wounds of human violence, indifference, and aggression, including those people and places we name now.

You may offer prayers, silently or aloud.

Leader We pray for our losses... *You may offer prayers, silently or aloud.*
for those who mourn...
and for those who have died, [especially ___].

You may offer prayers, silently or aloud.

Leader Lord, you have called us to serve you.

People **Grant that we may walk in your presence:**
your love in our hearts,
your truth in our minds,
your strength in our wills,
until, at the end of our journey,
we know the joy of our homecoming
and the welcome of your embrace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

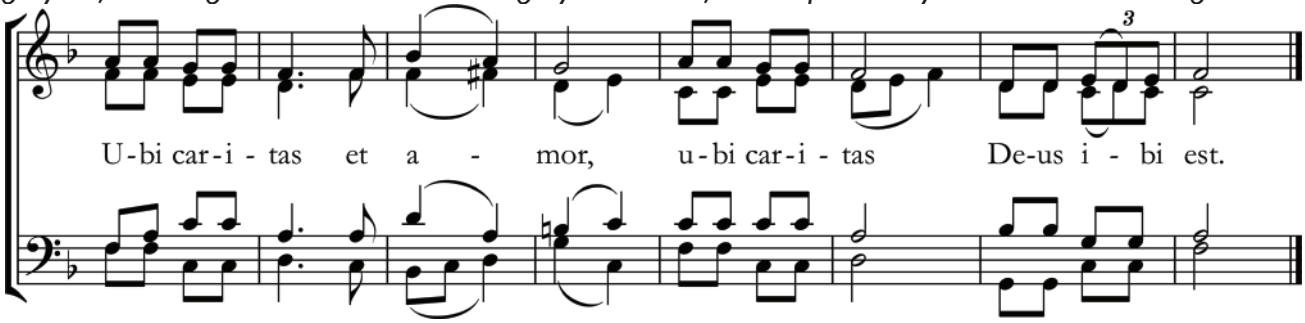
Candle Lighting, Additional Prayers

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 Flow gently, sweet Afton trad. Scottish, arr. Sunita Staneslow

Hymn *Ubi caritas* Jacques Berthier

Sung by all, standing. The refrain will be sung by the cantor, then repeated by all as the cantor sings the verses.



Translation: Where true charity and love dwell, God is there.

Verses: Your love, O Jesus Christ, has gathered us together. May your love, O Jesus Christ, be foremost in our lives. Let us love one another as God has loved us. Let us be one in love together in the one bread of Christ. The love of God in Jesus Christ will never have an end.

The Grace In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. **Amen.** *Galatians 3:26-28*

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 STSTEPHENSRVA to 73256.

At the Offertory *O Waly Waly* arr. Jennifer Grady

The Great Thanksgiving *Please stand.* *Enriching Our Worship*, Eucharistic Prayer 2

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

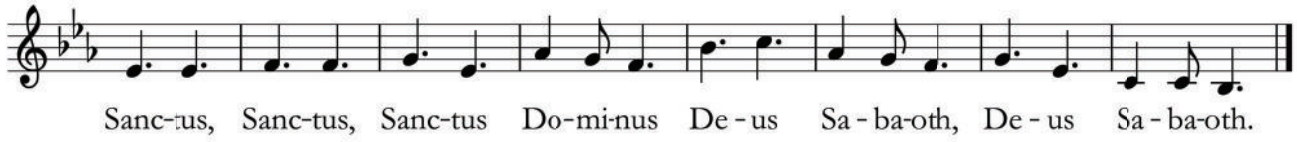
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Celebrant We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far way; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

Sanctus *This refrain is repeated as the cantor sings the verses.* Jacques Berthier



Translation: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts.

Verses: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Celebrant Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said:

All **"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you.**
Do this for the remembrance of me."

Celebrant As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said:

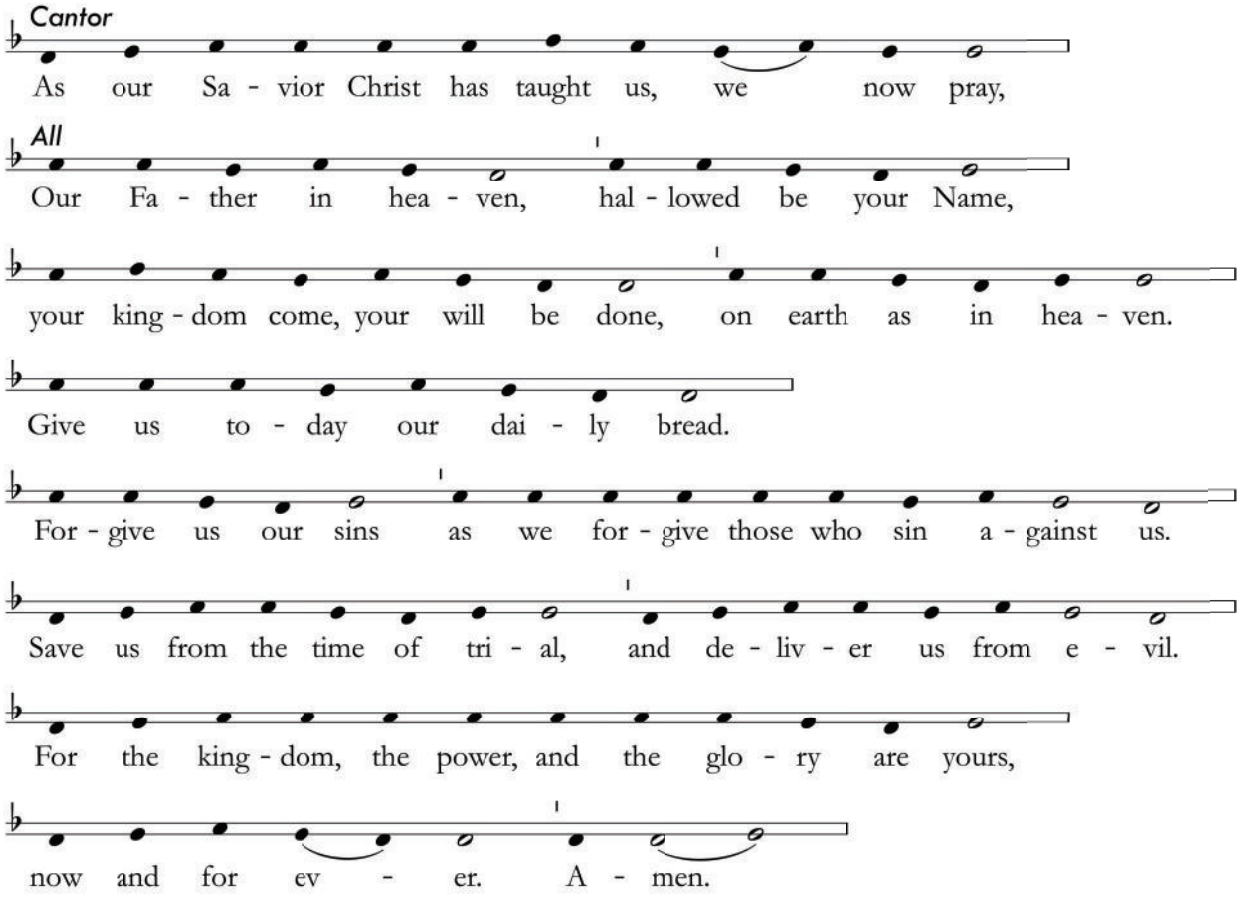
All **"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."**

Celebrant Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

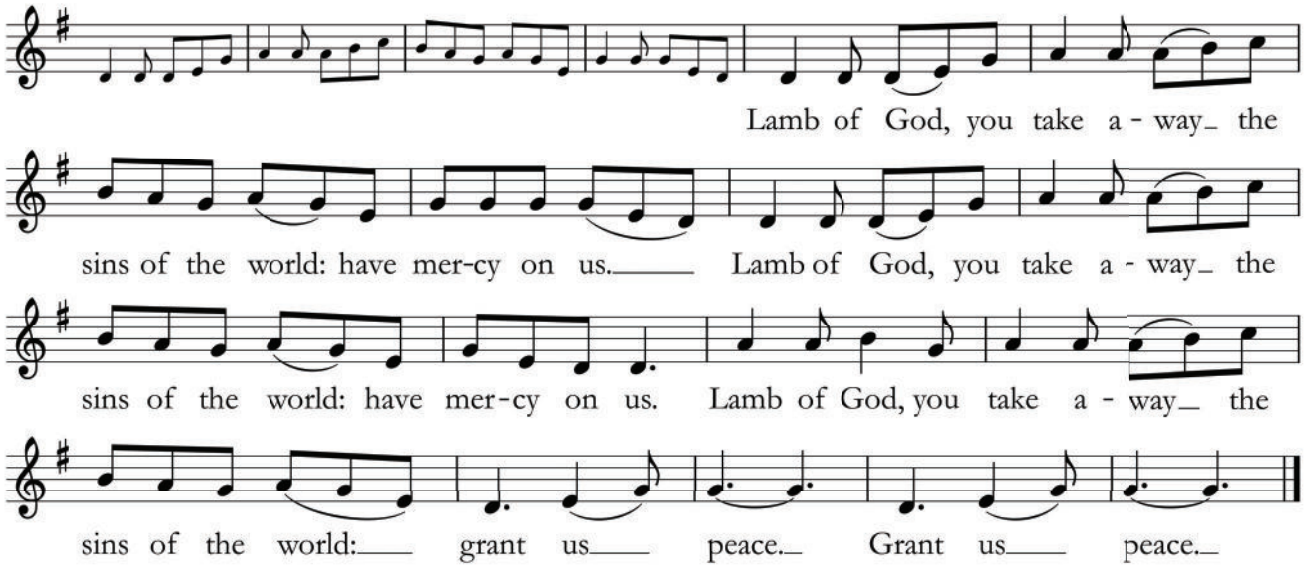
In the fullness of time bring us with all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer



The Breaking of the Bread *Silence is held.* *Blarney Pilgrim*, arr. Larkin Bryant



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

Litany to the Holy Spirit	Peter Hurford
Nocturne, Op. 53, No. 2	Georg Goltermann
Navajo Prelude No. 1	Connor Chee

After Communion *Please stand.*

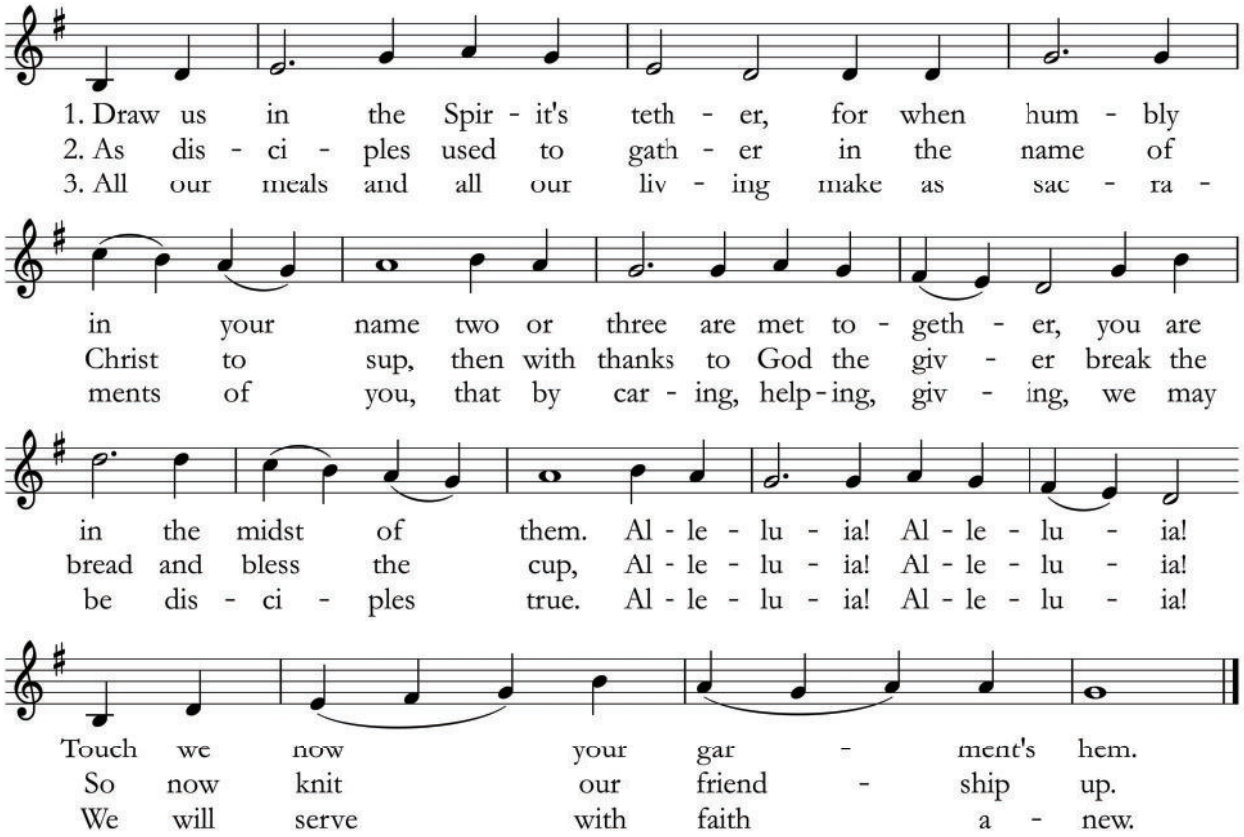
Celebrant Let us pray.

God of glory,
you nourish us with bread from heaven.
Fill us with your Holy Spirit
that through us the light of your glory
may shine in all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Celebrant Now, may the Lord Christ go before you to prepare your way;
Christ beside you, be companion to you everywhere you go;
Christ beneath you, strengthen and uphold you when you fall or fail;
Christ behind you, finish and complete what you must leave undone;
Christ within you, give you faith and courage, love and hope;
And Christ above you, bless and keep you, now and evermore. **Amen.**

Hymn Draw us in the Spirit's tether *Sung by all.* *Union Seminary*



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.** *Please sit for the Music for Meditation.*

Music for Meditation Like the murmur of the dove's song Peter Cutts, arr. Mark Sedio

Postlude Dove of Peace American folk hymn, arr. Nancy Raabe

During the postlude, you are welcome to remain to rest or pray, or to depart in silence.

Flowers and Vigil Candle

The flowers are given to the glory of God and in memory of Jeffrey Forbes Meadows by his parents, his brother and his brother's family; in memory of R. Lowndes Burke by his family; and in honor of Mary Holly and Rick Bigelow in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary. The vigil candle in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit is given in memory of Ray Smith, Jr.

Participants

Celebrant: The Rev. Cate Anthony; **Deacon:** The Rev. Judy Davis; **Reflector:** Susan Wilkes; **Subdeacon:** Sam Davis; **Reader**: Gayle Royals; **Intercessor**: Tyler Curtis; **Chalice Bearers**: Howard Anderson, Nancy Atkins, Mary Martin, Kim Spensieri; **Musicians:** Abby Outlaw, *cantor*; Peter Greydanus, *cello*; Robert McCormick, *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

Copies of the parish prayer list are available at Information Central (the large table outside the parish office) and in the narthex (the vestibule inside the Three Chopt Road entrance to the church). To add someone to the prayer list, please contact Kitty Ball in the parish office, **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: "Storage" from *Felicity* by Mary Oliver, Penguin Press. Reprinted by permission of the author.