



Palmer Hall Chapel

Sunday, September 13, 2026 at 9 a.m. ☩ The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Eucharist: Rite Two
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church ☩ Richmond, Virginia

Welcome to the Palmer Hall service

We are delighted you are here. Wherever you might be on your faith journey, we hope your experience here will strengthen and affirm you. We are sure that your presence among us today strengthens others, and we welcome you to join in everything that St. Stephen's offers. Every Sunday, we offer several different services of worship (at 8, 9 and 11:15 a.m., and 5:30 and 8 p.m.), each with its own character. At 9 a.m., two services are happening simultaneously—one in the main church, and this one which takes place in Palmer Hall Chapel.

The Palmer Hall service for some feels especially welcoming to families, particularly those with babies and children. Both of the 9 a.m. services—this one, and the one in the main church—include important roles for children, and people of all ages are welcome at any service. In Palmer Hall, our worship space includes a “soft space.” This is an area with a rug, floor cushions, and children's books where children can move a bit more freely and comfortably than they can in rows of seating. Please accompany your child to the soft space if and when they want to visit it; this helps us ensure the safety and comfort of our whole community.

Both of the 9 a.m. services include Holy Eucharist. All are welcome at the altar in this place. To receive Communion, place your hands together, palms up. You may consume the bread and then drink from the wine in the larger chalice. If you prefer to intinct, touching the edge of the bread to the wine, please use one of the smaller cups. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. If you prefer to receive a blessing, cross your arms on the front of your chest. Children who have been baptized are welcome to receive communion. The important thing is that you know God welcomes you and that this church welcomes you. Please come back often.

Prelude

Welcome

The Word of God

Opening Hymn

Be still and know

Sung by all, standing, several times.

Be still and know



Opening Prayer

Leader This is the day that the Lord has made.

People **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

The Collect of the Day

Prayer Book, page 233

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray. *Silence is kept.*

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Reading Exodus 14:19-31

Reader A reading from the Book of Exodus.

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel Song Celtic Alleluia

Sing with Joy

Sung twice by all, standing, before and after the Gospel.



The Gospel Matthew 18:21-35

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

People **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.”

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Wondering The Rev. Cate Anthony
The children are invited to gather on the center rug.

The Creed *Said by all, standing.*

I believe in God above,

I believe in Jesus’ love.

I believe God’s Spirit too,

comes to tell me what to do.

I believe that I can be

kind and good,

dear Lord, like thee.

The Prayers of the People *Please remain standing.*

Leader Today we will each use a hand to guide us through our prayers. Hold your hands together and take a deep breath, becoming aware of God’s presence here.

Leader The thumb is closest to our heart. As we hold our thumbs, we remember what we hold closest to our hearts. We pray for our family, friends, and neighbors. We also rejoice in the good things that have happened this week, [especially _____].

Leader We sometimes call our index finger our “pointer.” As we hold our index fingers, we direct our prayers toward situations of great need. We pray for those who suffer in all places of conflict at home and abroad, including those people and places we name now, silently or aloud: _____.

Leader Our tallest finger is also our strongest. As we hold our tallest fingers, we remember those who hold power in this world. We pray they will have the strength to seek justice and truth.

Leader Our ring finger is our most fragile finger. As we hold our ring fingers, we think of those who find themselves in the most fragile moments of life. We pray especially for those who are sick and lonely. We remember also those who have died, [especially _____], and all those who grieve.

Leader Our pinky is our smallest finger. As we hold our pinkies, we remember ourselves before God. We pray that God will grant us what we need, give us hearts to love and serve, and shield our joy.

Leader Finally, we join our hands together, offering our prayers to God. Lord God, you promise to hear us when we pray. Draw close to us as we lift up our hearts to you, in the name of your son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Peace

Prayer Book, page 360

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Announcements

The Holy Communion



Offertory Sentence

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:2

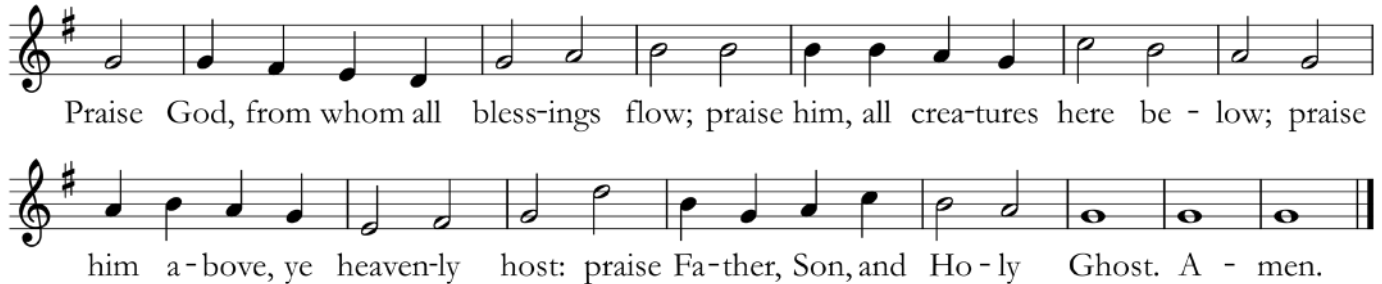
All comes from God, so from what God has given, we offer gifts as we participate in God's work in the world. You may offer your gift online (use the QR code, or text STSTEPHENS RVA to 73256), or in the offering plates as they come by.

Offertory Music

At the Presentation

Sung by all, standing.

Old 100th



The children are invited to follow the ushers forward to sit on the rug in front of the altar for the Great Thanksgiving.

The Great Thanksgiving

Common Worship, 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 Lord of all life, you created the universe, where all living things reflect your glory. You give us happy times and things to celebrate. In these we taste your kingdom, a feast for all your children. You made us all, each wonderfully different, to join with the angels and sing your praise:
And so we join the angels to celebrate and sing:

Sanctus

Sung by all.

Land of Rest



Celebrant

We thank you, loving Father, because, when we turned away, you sent Jesus, your Son. He gave his life for us on the cross and shows us the way to live. Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

On the night before he died, when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his disciples, saying: 'This is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying: 'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life. As you feed us with these gifts, send your Holy Spirit, and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Savior.

Help us, Father, to love one another, as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended, and all creation is gathered in your loving arms. And now with blessed Stephen, Mary, Mother of God, and all your saints we give you glory, through Jesus Christ, in the strength of the Spirit, today and for ever. **AMEN.**

Celebrant And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Celebrant and People

Prayer Book, page 364

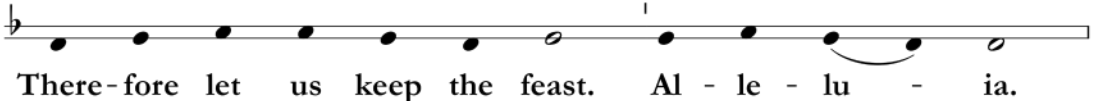
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is kept.

Mason Martens, S-152

Cantor 
Al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;

All 
There - fore let us keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia.

The Invitation

Celebrant

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

At the Communion of the People

Communion will be served at two stations, standing. All are welcome to come forward. To receive Communion, place your hands together, palms up. If you would like a gluten-free wafer, please tell the minister. If you prefer a blessing, please cross your arms on the front of your chest.

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray. *Please stand.*

All **Loving God, we give you thanks**
for restoring us in your image
and nourishing us with spiritual food
in the sacrament of Christ's body and blood.
Now send us forth
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

The Blessing Song Go now in peace *Sung by all, standing.*
Go now in peace, go now in peace.
May the love of God surround you,
everywhere, everywhere you may go.

Natalie Sleeth

Hymn 376 Joyful, joyful, we adore thee *Sung by all.*

Hymn to Joy

1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
2. All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heaven re - flect thy rays,
3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,
hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.
stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean-depth of hap - py rest!
Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way;
Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, bloom-ing mea-dow, flash-ing sea,
Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our Bro - ther: all who live in love are thine;
giv - er of im - mor - tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
chant - ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re - joice in thee.
teach us how to love each o - ther, lift us to the joy di-vine.

Dismissal

Prayer Book, page 366

Leader Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude



Participants

CELEBRANT: The Rev. Cate Anthony

ASSISTING PRIEST: The Rev. Judy Davis

MUSICIAN: Karen Harris, *piano*



Reflection Questions

In today's service, we heard the story of the Exodus, which tells us about the liberation of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. We learned that liberation means the freedom to live and be yourself without harm or obstacle. Just as God led the Israelites to their freedom out of Egypt, God liberates us so that we can live freely as the people God made us to be.

Here are some questions for further discussion with your family:

- What do you think it felt like to be a slave in Egypt? What do you think it felt like when God's people finally got to leave?
- What does "freedom" mean to you? Can you think of a time you felt really free—like you could be exactly yourself?
- How do you think God helps people today, even when we can't see God like the Israelites saw the cloud of fire?

The Parish Prayer List

Charles Adams, Richelle Anderson, Abigail Palmer Anthony, Rubylane Armstrong, Patricia Atkins-Smith, Robert Baker, Elizabeth Bannerman, Lash Barksdale, Nancy Beale, *Ken Blaisdell*, Christine Boeteger, Denise Bondy, Genie Borum, Julia Bouck, Liz Brengel, Sturges Brian, Leslie Brockman, Alex H. Brown, Pat Brown, Sarah Jo Bryce, Turner Bruneau, Matt Boyd, Patti Bullen, the Robert Burns family, Ann Campbell, Tammy Carleton, Scott Carnohan, Paula Chambers, Helen Clendenin, Percy Cochran, Sarah Cole, Susan Collier, Caswell Cooke, Mary Cooke, Prior Cooper, Kathy Conrad, Stephanie Copeland, John Corey, Randy Correll, Tom Coulbourn, Michelle Crim, the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, Steven Dalle Mura, Daniel and family, Chris Davis, Patricia Delany, Alan Demascus, Jackie Dering, Ham DeRosa, Terry Dickinson, Davis Dunn Dillard, Barbara Hall Dunn, Charlotte and Wade Elliott, Proctor Ford, Guy Frank, Julia G., Yvette Gerardin, Frank Ginty, Rick Greenwood, Janis Hall, Rodger Hardy, Marianne Harmuth, Katie Hellebush, Dan Hill, Deborah Hodgson-Lyons, Anna Hurdle, Esther Hutchison, Julie Imeson, the Rt. Rev. Shannon Johnston, Lena Jones, Gouthum Karadi, Jane Kelly, Dana King, Margee Krebs, Diedra Kriewald, Hanns Kuttner, Caleb Lambert, Laura Lewandowski, George Lancaster, Linda Lewis, Eva Lindsay, Sharon Livsie, Brenda Lorenz, Genie Lucyk, *Joy Luke*, Margaret Lyle, Pam Lynch, Ross Mackenzie, Peggy Maguire, Michael J. Malone, Barbara Mathison, Adrienne Maxwell, Richard Maxwell, Virginia Maxwell, Michael McCabe, Schnucki McCabe, Morgan McCall, Stratton and Robin McCrady, Gertrude McLean, Nancy Meath, Melanie, Jack Miller, Mary Miller, Susan Minyard, Sallie Moncol, Lou Anne Nabhan, Ashley Nickerson, Mary Beth Noel, Jan Orgain, Tricia Payne, Beth Pearce, Ernest Perry, Courtney Phillips, Scott Pittman, Wilde Poole and family, Bob Pope, Lee Powell, Lyn Presson, Tom Rader, Bryson Raquet, Wick Raquet, Nancy B. Reed, Brenda Rohadfox, Stephanie Roberts, Linda Robinson, Alison Roussy, Brenda Quinn, Jason R., Jennifer Reed, Kaley Rosenthal, Richard Sanger, Robert Sass, James Saunders and Harriet Covey, T. Logan Scott, Margie Sesler, Jane Settle, Jim and Mary Beth Shannon, Todd Shelton, Torrey Shuford, Chrys Sills, Aiden Thomas Smith, Ross Southward, Josh Spain, Ben Sparks, Jayne Speck, Reilly Starr, *Regena Stith*, Dorothy Suskind, Margaret Teachey, Jens Tholand, Margaret Thompson, Nelson Toebbe, Langdon Tollett, Kenneth Valke, Cordelia Vogel, Timothy W., Mac Wade, Ozzie Wade, Carol and Don Wakeley, Suzanne Wallace, Tom White, Terri Wilcox, Donna Williams, Trevor Wingate, Claire Wood, Emily H. Wood, Sue Wootton, Paul Leddingdon Wright, Wesley Wright, Karen Young, Margaret P. Young. **For the blessings of this life**, especially the marriage of *Rachel Sutton Young and William Pierce Ormond*. **For those who have died**, especially *Gabriel Ransone Lacy*. **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 *Anglican Church of Southern Africa*. **For ReWork Richmond**. **For an end to gun violence**. **For peace and reconciliation** in Haiti, Iraq, Iran, Israel/Palestine, 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, Abraham Schlossberg, 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.

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