



CELTIC EVENSONG AND COMMUNION

at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost ☩ September 27, 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 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

Clair de lune (Moonlight)

Claude Debussy

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

Opening

Postscript

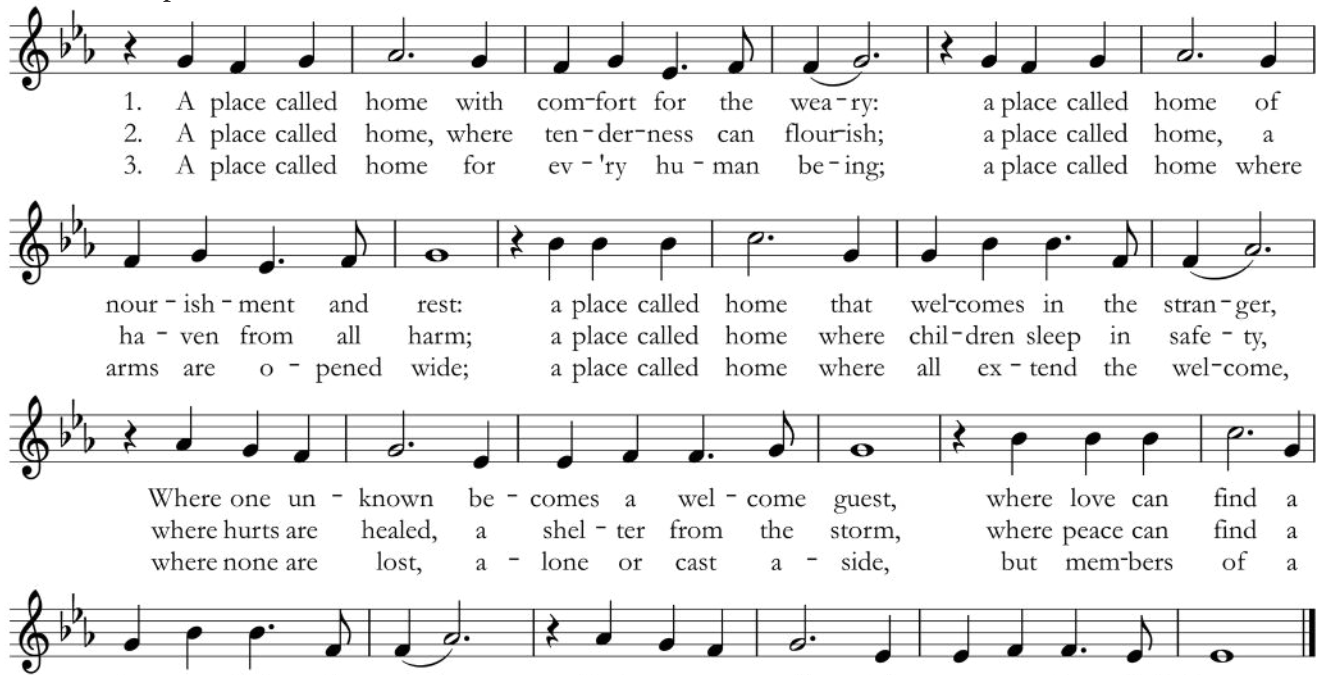
Seamus Heaney

And some time make the time to drive out west
Into County Clare, along the Flaggy Shore,
In September or October, when the wind
And the light are working off each other
So that the ocean on one side is wild
With foam and glitter, and inland among stones
The surface of a slate-grey lake is lit
By the earthed lightning of a flock of swans,
Their feathers roughed and ruffling, white on white,
Their fully grown headstrong-looking heads
Tucked or cresting or busy underwater.
Useless to think you'll park and capture it
More thoroughly. You are neither here nor there,
A hurry through which known and strange things pass
As big soft buffetings come at the car sideways
And catch the heart off guard and blow it open.

Silence is held after the reading.

Hymn

A place called home

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


1. A place called home with com-fort for the wea-ry: a place called home of
 2. A place called home, where ten-der-ness can flourish; a place called home, a
 3. A place called home for ev-'ry hu-man be-ing; a place called home where

nour-ish-ment and rest: a place called home that wel-comes in the stran-ger,
 ha-ven from all harm; a place called home where chil-dren sleep in safe-ty,
 arms are o-pened wide; a place called home where all ex-tend the wel-come,

Where one un-known be-comes a wel-come guest, where love can find a
 where hurts are healed, a shel-ter from the storm, where peace can find a
 where none are lost, a-lone or cast a-side, but mem-bers of a

hu-man hab-i-ta-tion; God grant us all this grace: a place called home.
 hu-man hab-i-ta-tion; God grant us all this grace: a place called home.
 sin-gle hu-man fam-'ly; God grant us grace to build a place called home.

A Prayer for the Evening

A New Zealand Prayer Book

Deacon Lord, it is night.*Deacon* The night is for stillness.*People* **Let us be still in the presence of God.***Deacon* It is night after a long day.*People* **What has been done has been done;
 what has not been done has not been done;
 let it be.***Deacon* The night is dark.*People* **Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives
 rest in you.***Deacon* The night is quiet.*People* **Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
 all dear to us,
 and all who have no peace.***Deacon* The night heralds the dawn.*People* **Let us look expectantly to a new day,
 new joys,
 new possibilities.***Deacon* In your name we pray. **Amen.****The Reading** Matthew 21:23-32 *Please sit.**Reader* A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus 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.”

Silence is held for one minute of reflection.

Reflection The Rev. Cate Anthony

Silence is held for two minutes of reflection.

Music for Meditation Robin Adair

trad. Irish, arr. Doreen Smith

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 neighbor as ourself; 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 Nocturne

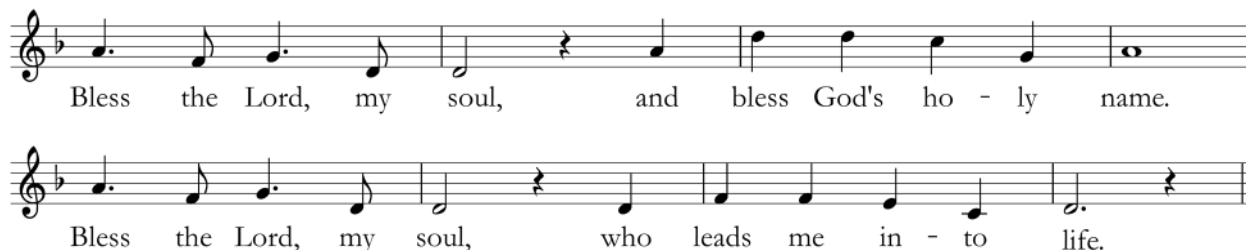
Steven Bryant

Hymn

Bless the Lord, my soul

Jacques Berthier

Sung by all, standing. The congregation will repeat the refrain as the cantor sings the verses.



Verses: It is God who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. God does not treat us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our faults.

The Grace

When he came to himself he said, “How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **Amen.** *Luke 15:17-20*

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 STSTEPHENS RVA to 73256.



At the Offertory Be still, my soul (*Finlandia*)

arr. Jennifer Haines

The Great Thanksgiving

Please stand.

A New Zealand Prayer Book, Prayer II

Celebrant The Lord is here.

People **God’s Spirit is with us.**

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 offer thanks and praise.**

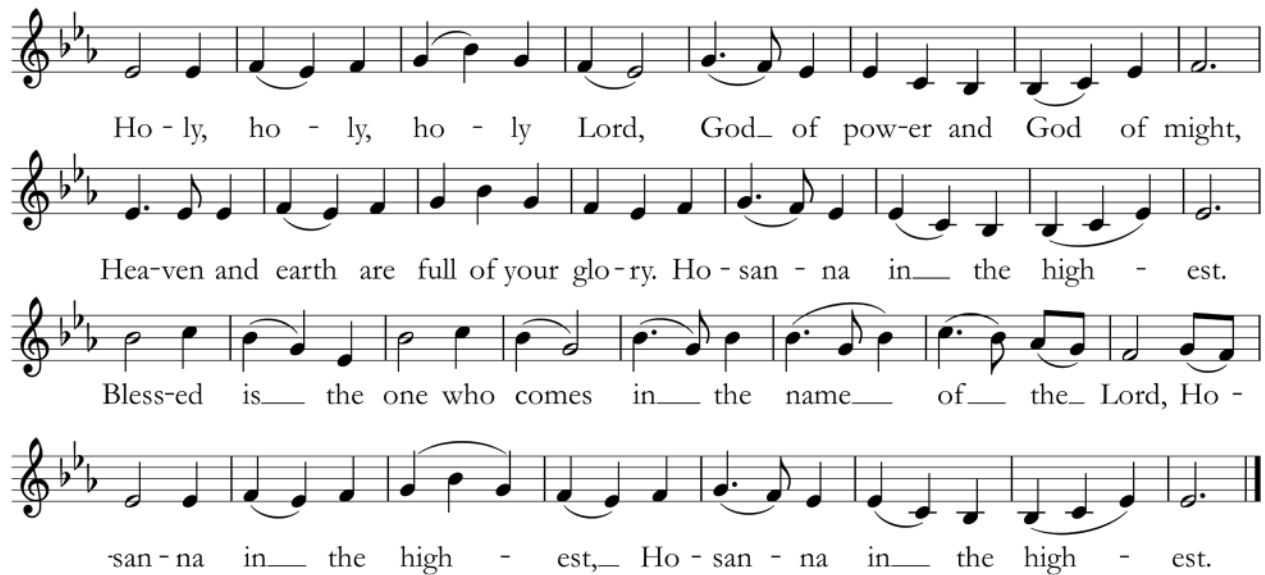
Celebrant It is right indeed, it is our joy and delight, O holy, everlasting God, at all times and in all places to give you thanks and praise through Christ your only Son. You are the source of all life and goodness; through your eternal Word you created all things from the beginning and formed us in your own image. When we turned away from you, you called us back to yourself and gave your Son to share our human nature. Through Christ Jesus you have made us your holy people.

Therefore, with the faithful who rest in him, with the angels who sing “Glory,” and with all the saints and ancestors who have known you to be with us, we proclaim your great and glorious name together:

Sanctus

Sung by all.

Banks and Braes, arr. Larkin Bryant/Robert Feol



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and God of might,
 Hea-ven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless-ed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord, Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Celebrant Blessed are you, most holy, in your Son, who washed his followers' feet.

All **“I am among you,” he said, “as one who serves.”**

Celebrant On that night before he died, he shared a meal with his friends. He took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them saying:

All **“Take and eat. This is my own body given for you. Do this to remember me.”**

Celebrant After supper he took a cup of wine, gave thanks to you, and gave it to them saying:

All **“This is my life-blood given for you. Do this to remember me.”**

Celebrant Therefore with this bread and wine we recall your goodness to us. In this sacrament of the suffering and death of your Son, we now celebrate the wonder of your grace and proclaim the mystery of our faith,

All **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come in glory.**

Celebrant God of all creation, you bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and these your gifts that we who receive them may indeed be the body of Christ, and we who share his cup draw strength from the one true vine.

All **Called to follow Christ, help us to reconcile and unite. Called to suffer, give us hope in our calling.**

Celebrant For you, O heavenly one, make all things new; you are the beginning and the end, the last and the first.

All **All praise, glory and love be yours, O Holy God, this and every day, from us and all people, here and everywhere. 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.
For - give us our sins as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.
Save us from the time of tri - al, and de - liv - er us from e - vil.
For the king - dom, the power, and the glo - ry are yours,
now and for ev - er. A - men.

The Breaking of the Bread

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

Celebrant We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **We who are many are one body, for we all share the one bread.**

This antiphon will be sung by the cantor, then by all, and repeated after each verse.

Mason Martens



Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.

Cantor: 1. The bread which we break, alleluia, is the communion of the body of Christ. *Antiphon*

2. One body are we, alleluia, for though many we share one bread. *Antiphon*

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*Kōjō no Tsuki* (Moon over the ruined castle)

Taki Rentarō, arr. Yamada Kōsaku

Song to the Moon

Antonín Dvořák

Autumn

Kavin Hoo

After Communion*Please stand.*

Enriching Our Worship 1

Celebrant

Let us pray.

*All***God of abundance,****you have fed us****with the bread of life and cup of salvation;****you have united us****with Christ and one another;****and you have made us one****with all your people in heaven and on earth.****Now send us forth****in the power of your Spirit,****that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world****and continue for ever****in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.****The Blessing***Celebrant*

God be your comfort, your strength;

God be your hope and support;

God be your light and your way;

and the blessing of God,

Creator, Redeemer and Giver of life,

remain with you now and for ever. **Amen.****Hymn**

Let us now depart in your peace

*Sung by all.**A la puerta*

1. Let us now de - part in your peace, bless-ed Je - sus. Send us to our

2. Let us now de - part in your love, bless-ed Je - sus. Send us on our



homes with God's love in our hearts. Let not the bus - y world

way with your joy in our hearts. Help us to show your love,



claim all our loy - al - ties. Keep us ev - er mind - ful of you, O Lord.

lead us to do your will. Keep us ev - er faith - ful to you, O Lord.

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***My Yellow-Haired Lad* (*Mo Bouchaleen Bwee*)

trad. Irish, arr. Sylvia Woods

Postlude The Shores of Amerikay

trad. Irish, arr. Frank Gallagher

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

Memorial

The flowers are given to the glory of God and in memory of Jeffrey Forbes Meadows by his family.

Participants

Celebrant and Reflector: The Rev. Cate Anthony; **Deacon:** The Rev. John Jenkins; **Subdeacon:** Chip Jamerson; **Reader:** Sara Mackey; **Intercessor:** Daniel Mullery; **Chalice Bearers:** Howard Anderson, Alice Meadows, Kim Spensieri, Cary Wyatt; **Musicians:** Matt Hassmer, *cantor*; Alyssa Evans, *violin*; 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

Copies of the parish prayer list are available at Information Central 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: "Postscript" by Seamus Heaney, from *The Spirit Level*. © Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996. Reprinted with permission

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