St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Church on Main Street...
where love begets love

HOLY SATURDAY

April 4, 2026

Holy Eucharist, Rite II



Welcome to St. Stephen's Church. We are delighted that you are here.

Gather

We come together to praise God.

Please stand as you are able.

Let us pray.

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

A Reading from the Book of Job 14:1-14

Job said, "A mortal, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble,
comes up like a flower and withers,
flees like a shadow and does not last.
Do you fix your eyes on such a one?
Do you bring me into judgment with you?
Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?
No one can.
Since their days are determined,
and the number of their months is known to you,
and you have appointed the bounds that they cannot pass,
look away from them, and desist,
that they may enjoy, like laborers, their days.

"For there is hope for a tree,
if it is cut down, that it will sprout again,
and that its shoots will not cease.
Though its root grows old in the earth,
and its stump dies in the ground,
yet at the scent of water it will bud
and put forth branches like a young plant.
But mortals die, and are laid low;
humans expire, and where are they?
As waters fail from a lake,
and a river wastes away and dries up,
so mortals lie down and do not rise again;
until the heavens are no more, they will not awake
or be roused out of their sleep.
Oh that you would hide me in Sheol,

that you would conceal me until your wrath is past,
that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me!
If mortals die, will they live again?
All the days of my service I would wait
until my release should come."

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

THE RESPONSE

Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16, *The Saint Helena Psalter*

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame; *
deliver me in your righteousness.

Incline your ear to me; *
make haste to deliver me.

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold; *
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.

Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, *
for you are my tower of strength.

My times are in your hand; *
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.

Make your face to shine upon your servant, *
and in your loving-kindness save me."

SECOND READING

A Reading from the First letter of Peter. 4:1-8

Since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 27:57-66
Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, `After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, `He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please be seated.

THE HOMILY *The Rev. Paula J. Toland*

Please stand as you are able.

In the midst of life we are in death;
from whom can we seek help?
From you alone, O Lord,
who by our sins are justly angered.
Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy and merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

Lord, you know the secrets of our hearts;
shut not your ears to our prayers,

but spare us, O Lord.
Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy and merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

O worthy and eternal Judge,
do not let the pains of death
turn us away from you at our last hour.
Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy and merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

Our Father and Mother in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

LITURGICAL STEWARDSHIP

Officiant:	The Rev. Paula J. Toland
Tech Verger:	Ron

Source for today's lectionary: The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL)
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Upcoming Events

Details can be found in the weekly e-newsletter, which is available on our website.

DATE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
4/5 Easter Sunday	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	11:30 AM	Easter Egg Hunt
	1:00 PM	AA Meeting
4/6	7:30 PM	MA Meeting
4/12	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	1:00 PM	AA Meeting

ST. STEPHEN'S FRIENDS OF MUSIC ORGAN RECITAL – On Sunday, April 26th at 4:00pm, internationally renowned concert organist Damin Spritzer will present a special organ recital at St. Stephen's Church in Millburn. Though often promoting the works of lesser-known composers, Dr. Spritzer will focus on the music of the great Baroque master, Johann Sebastian Bach, for this performance.

General admission will be available at the door.
A $20 cash donation is suggested.
Artist's reception to follow the recital.

St. Stephen's Organ recitals are made possible through financial support from St. Stephen's Friends of Music. Tax deductible donations can be made to St. Stephen's, entitling sponsors admission to the recital and acknowledgement in our organ recital programs. Donations to the Special Gifts - Friends of Music fund *may be made online via Tithely.*

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

"A diverse Episcopal parish, a life-giving sanctuary, a place where love begets love. Seekers, doubters, and believers find a comfortable place in our midst."

119 Main Street, Millburn, NJ 07041 / 973-376-0688 / ststephensmillburn.org
Rector: The Rev. Paula J. Toland; Emergency Contact: 508-542-1327

Parish Administrator: Maria T. Card

Minister of Music: Kim Williams; Organist: John Schucker

Members of the Vestry
Maryalice Chech: Warden, People & Programs; Roger Riedel, Warden, Property & Preschool; Ashley Morgan: Treasurer; Fran Taber; Julia Dorn; Kira Hanson; Linda Soughan; Steve Moran; Tom Hillemeier; Barbara Riedel: Recording Secretary & Clerk

Sheelagh Clarke; Eugene Foley: Vestry Emeriti

If you wish to receive the weekly e-newsletter, please contact the parish office at 973-376-0688 or church@ststephensmillburn.org.