St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Sunday, March 15, 2026

Holy Eucharist, Rite II at 10:00am

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

All of what you need to join us is in this bulletin or in one of two hymnals:

Hymnal 1982 (the blue book)
"H" followed by a number indicates hymns.
"S" followed by a number indicates selections that appear in the front section of the blue hymnal.

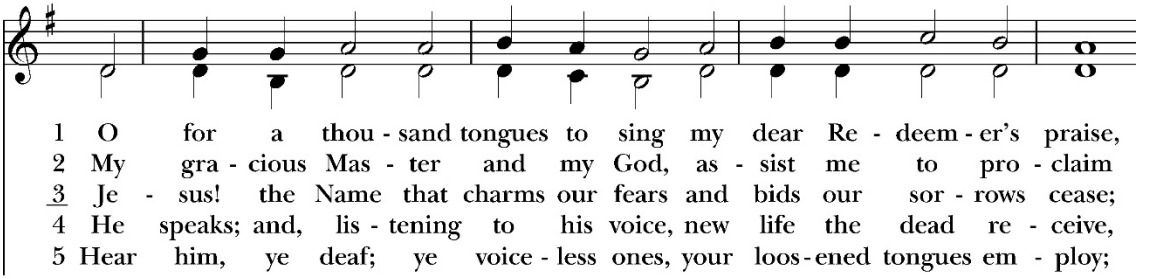
St. Stephen's Hymnal (the red spiral bound book):
"SSH" followed by a number indicates hymns.

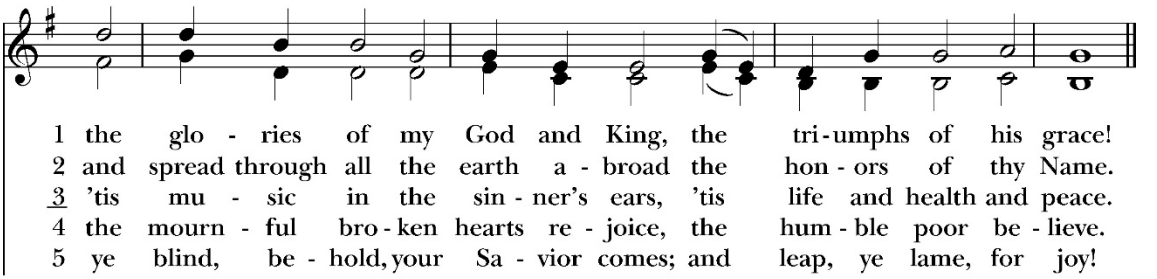
PRELUDE

Gather
We come together to praise God.

Please stand as you are able.

GATHERING HYMN
H 493 O for a thousand tongues to sing *Azmon*





6 Glory to God and praise and love
be now and ever given
by saints below and saints above,
the Church in earth and heaven.

WELCOME

Word

We hear and respond to the story of God's liberating acts.

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.
His mercy endures for ever.

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord your God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

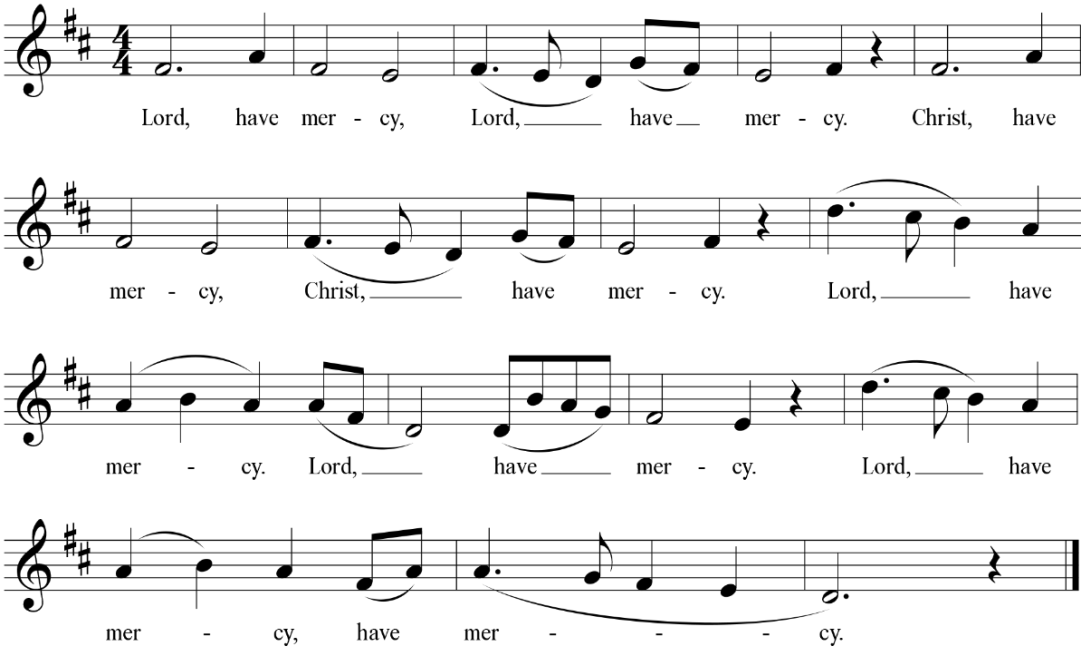
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

KYRIE

S 96 Lord, have mercy upon us *Schubert*



Setting: From Deutsche Messe; Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828); arr. Richard Proulx (b. 1937)

COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**.

Please be seated.

THE FIRST LESSON

A Reading from the First book of Samuel. 16:1-13

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for

I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

THE RESPONSE

Psalm 23, *The Saint Helena Psalter*

O God, you are my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
You make me lie down in green pastures *
and lead me beside still waters.
You revive my soul *
and guide me along right pathways for the sake of your Name.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.
Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of God for ever.

THE SECOND LESSON

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Ephesus. 5:8-14

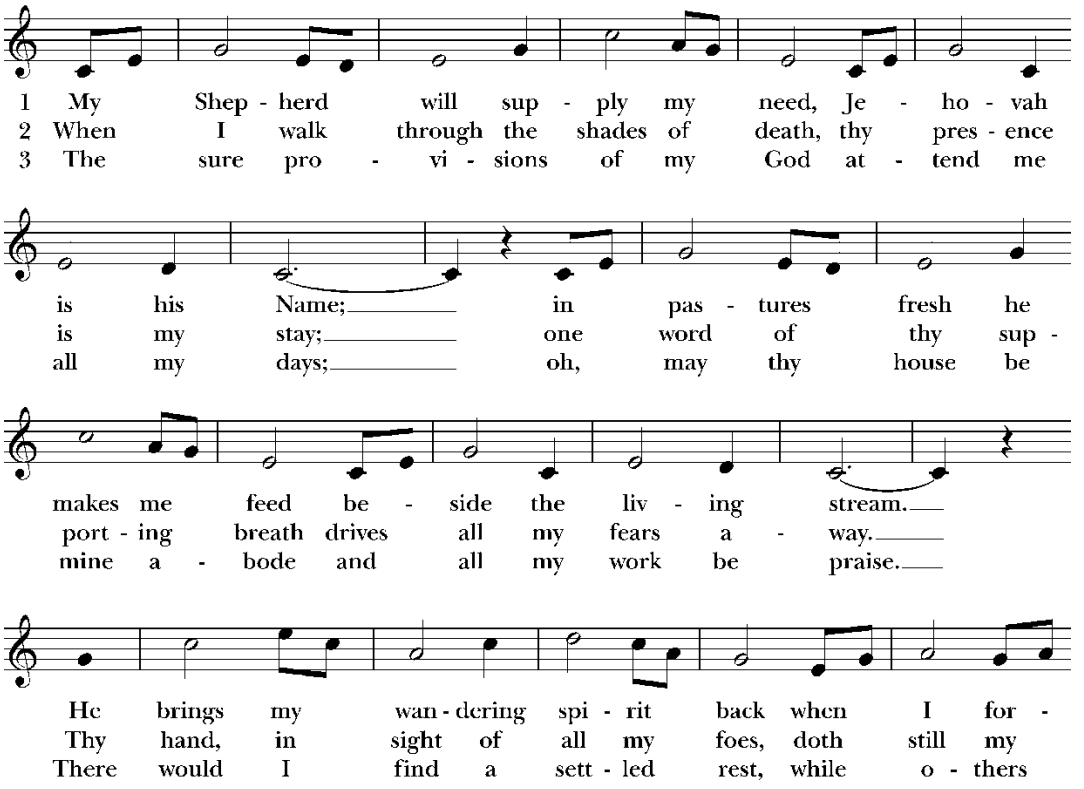
Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you."

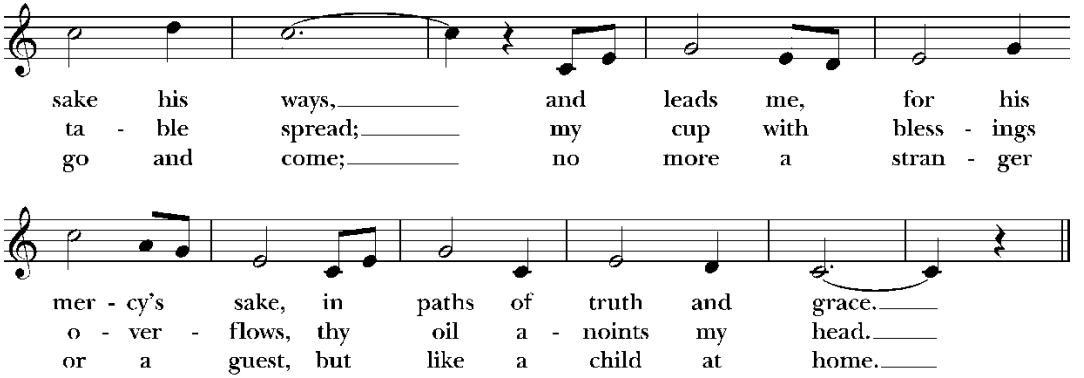
The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

SEQUENCE HYMN

H 664 My shepherd will supply my need *Resignation*





THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. 9:1-41

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said

this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Please be seated.

THE SERMON *The Rev. Paula J. Toland*

Please stand as you are able.

THE NICENE CREED *Enriching Our Worship*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and

is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *for Social Justice*

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

God of love, we pray for your church: For Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury; Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Carlye, our bishop; for all lay and ordained ministers; and for all who seek you in the community of the faithful. We pray for Paula, our Rector; Karen, our Deacon; and Maryalice and Roger, our Wardens. Equip us with compassion and love, to carry out your work of reconciliation in the world.
God of love, **Hear our prayers for the church.**

Silence

God of freedom, we pray for our nation, and all the nations of the world: For peace and unity across barriers of language, color, and creed; for elected and appointed leaders, that they would serve the common good. Inspire all people with courage to speak out against hatred, to actively resist evil. We pray for Donald, our President; J.D., our Vice-President; Mikie, our Governor; and Frank, our mayor. Unite the human family in bonds of love.
God of freedom, **Hear our prayers for the world.**

Silence
God of healing, we pray for healing and peace, for all who have been harmed, live in fear, or experience anxiety because of the words and actions of leaders anywhere. Give those who are at risk an awareness of your love and protection.
God of healing, **Hear our prayers for our vulnerable siblings.**

Silence

God of strength, we pray for allies and advocates everywhere that they may continue the fight to uphold the dignity and worth of every human being as they walk alongside those who have experienced dehumanizing or demoralizing treatment of any kind. Give us courage to fight injustice in all its forms**.**
God of strength, **Hear our prayers for bold resisters.**

Silence

God of justice, we pray for the earth, your creation entrusted to our care: For the animals and birds, the mountains and oceans, and all parts of your creation that have no voice of their own.

Stir up in us a thirst for justice that protects the earth and all its resources, that we may leave to our children's children the legacy of beauty and abundance that you have given us.
God of justice, **Hear our prayers for the earth.**

Silence

God of peace, we pray for this community: For our local leaders; for our schools and markets; for our neighborhoods and workplaces. Kindle in every heart a desire for equality, respect, and opportunity for all. Give us courage to strive for justice and peace among all people, beginning here at home.
God of peace, **Hear our prayers for this community.**

Silence

God of mercy, we pray for all in any kind of need or trouble: For those whose lives are closely linked with ours, and those connected to us as part of the human family. For:

Mary Loucas	Keith Taber	Victor Calantoni
Evie Larson	Maryann Ekberg	Jenna Mitchell
Donna Riggi	Lizzie Ekberg	Brian Nusom
Mary Ruth Stone	Boyd Hunnaman	Melissa Biren
Kris Hunt	James K.	Karen Eberhardt
Aldaiza DaSilva	Walter	Sue and Larry H.
Antonio DaSilva	Ron G.	Maureen Burke Rockaway
Carol & Kyle McManus	Marvin	Maggie Holland
Martha Lipowski	Kayt and Adam Zielinski	Celine Ghiara

For refugees, prisoners, and those in detention; for the sick and suffering, the lonely and despairing; for those facing violence; for all held down by prejudice or injustice. Awaken in us compassion and humility of spirit, as we seek and serve Christ in all persons.
God of mercy, **Hear our prayers for all who are in need.**

Silence

God of grace, we pray for those who have died: For the faithful in every generation who have worked for justice; for prophets who called us to racial reconciliation; for martyrs who died because of hatred; and for all the communion of saints. Make us faithful to your call to proclaim your Good News, by word and example, and bring us at last into the glorious company of the saints in light.
God of grace, **Hear our prayers for those who have died.**

Silence

The Presider offers a Concluding Collect.

Hear our prayers, Holy God. Breathe your Spirit over us and all the earth, that barriers would crumble and divisions cease. Make us more fully your co-healers of the broken world. Unite us

with all people in bonds of love, that the whole earth and all its peoples may be at peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be always with you. **And also with you.**

Table

We offer our gifts, give thanks, and we gather at Christ's banquet.

Please be seated.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

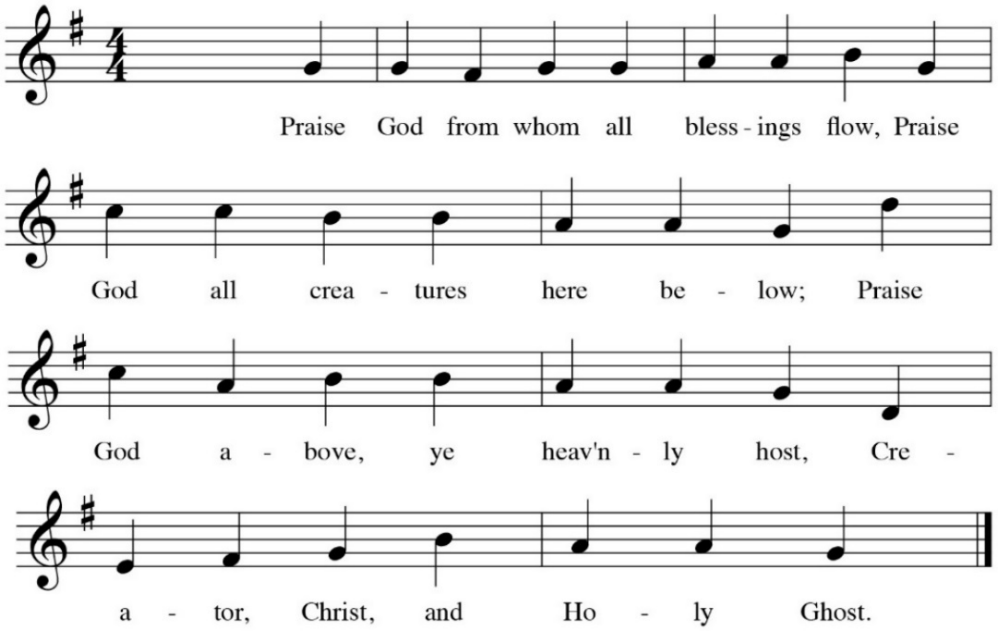
Rise on our wings — *Williams*

Senior Choir

Please stand as you are able.

THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow — *Tallis*



GREAT THANKSGIVING

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every where to give thanks to you, God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts, and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by your Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which you have prepared for those who love you.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS

S 130 Holy, holy, holy Lord *Schubert*

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

Holy and gracious God: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Creator of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O God, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Father, our Mother, 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 INVITATION

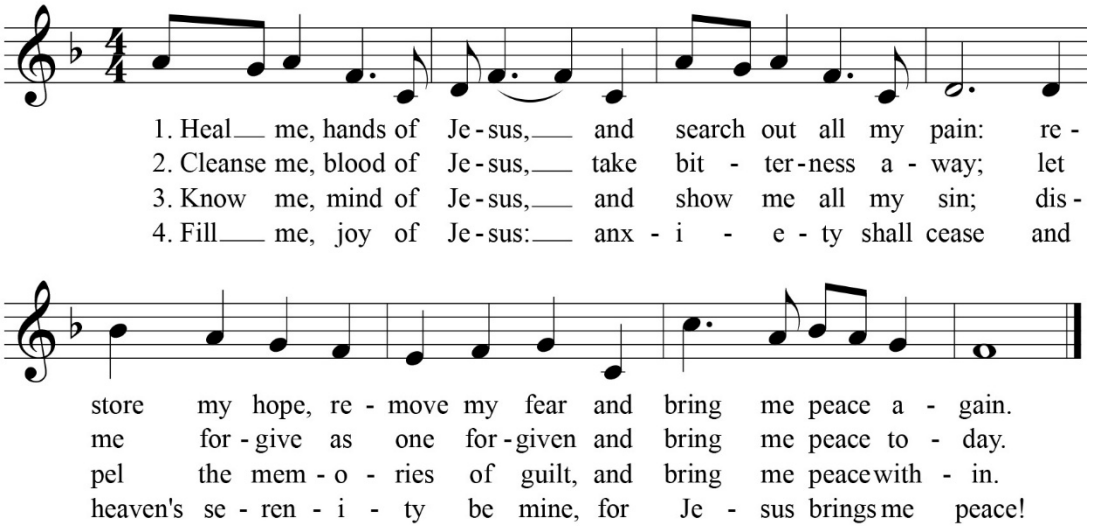
We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.
We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

Whoever you are, where ever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome at Christ's table.

All are welcome at God's table to receive Communion or a blessing. Gluten-free hosts are available. Please use the hand sanitizer available in the pew before coming forward.

COMMUNION HYMN

Heal me, hands of Jesus *Sharpe*



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Music (*Sharpe)* by Carl Haywood, from *Tunes for Grace;* ©1997 Carl Haywood. Used by permission.

Please stand as you are able.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Adapted from *A New Zealand Prayer Book*

Creator of all, we you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup, bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name. Amen.

Sending

We go forth as Christ's body in the world.

Please be seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

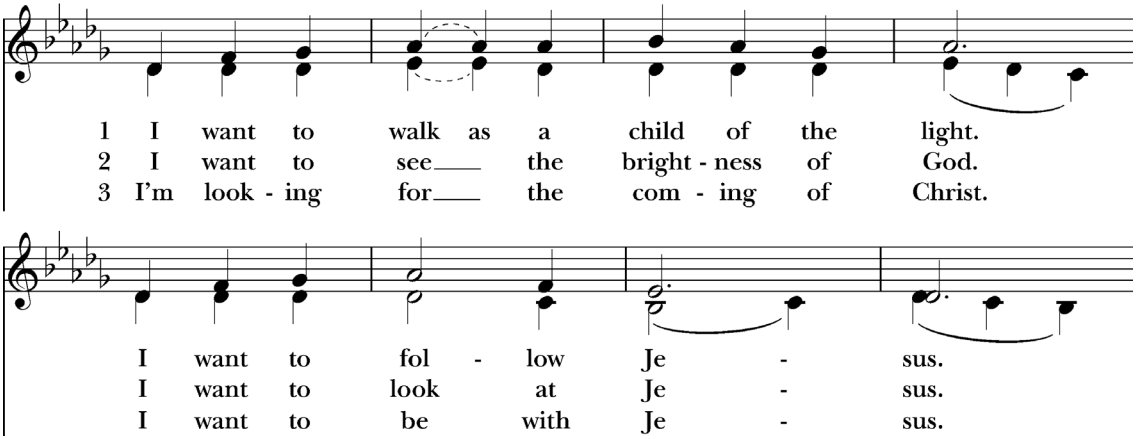
Please stand as you are able.

SOLEMN PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

Look down in mercy, Lord, on your people who kneel before you; and grant that those whom you have nourished by your Word and Sacraments may bring forth fruit worthy of repentance; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

H 490 I want to walk as a child of the light *Houston*





THE DISMISSAL

Let us go forth into the world to walk humbly with our God.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

LITURGICAL STEWARDSHIP

Officiant:	The Rev. Paula J. Toland
Deacon:	The Rev. Deacon Karen Eberhardt
Minister of Music:	Kim Williams
Organist:	John Schucker
Crucifer/Chalicer:	Roger
Reader/Intercessor:	Barbara R.
Greeter/Usher:	Maryalice, Barbara R.
Altar Guild:	Irene
Tech Verger:	Ron
Coffee Hour Hosts:	Rony, Marie

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
3/15	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	11:30 AM	Vestry Meeting
	1:00 PM	AA Meeting
3/16	7:30 PM	MA Meeting
3/18	7:30 PM	Finance Committee Meeting
3/19	7:00 PM	Preschool Committee Meeting
3/22	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	11:30 AM	Lenten Series
	1:00 PM	AA Meeting

DONATIONS FOR EASTER FLOWERS – Help make St. Stephen's especially joyous this Easter! All donations will assist in the purchase of flowers for our Church. Acknowledgements and dedications will be included in our Easter bulletin. Please email the names to Maria. Donations can made online to the Special Gifts - Flowers Fund via Tithely. All donations are due by Friday, March 27th.

AGAPE SUPPER – We will gather in the Parish Hall immediately following our Maundy Thursday Service for a simple Agape meal. Rev. Paula will provide Israeli and Palestinian food. Please let Rev. Paula you are coming by Palm Sunday, or sign up on the bulletin board.

LENT AND EASTER SERVICES

March 29 – Palm Sunday
10:00am Holy Eucharist with Procession of the Palms

April 1 – Wednesday in Holy Week
7:30pm Tenebrae Service

April 2 – Thursday in Holy Week
6:30 - 8:00pm Maundy Thursday and Agape Supper

April 3 – Good Friday
12:00pm Prayer Service
7:30pm Solemn Collects w/ Veneration of the Cross

April 4 – Holy Saturday
10:00am Liturgy of Holy Saturday

April 5 – Easter
10:00am Easter Day Service
11:30am Easter Egg Hunt

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; 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.