St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Church on Main Street, where God's love is lived.

CELEBRATING 175 YEARS (1851 - 2026)

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 13, 2026

Holy Eucharist, Rite II at 10:00 am

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

The second Sunday of the month we have our "Second Sunday Intergenerational Service." Our children and youth join us for the entirety of the service, with some serving as liturgical ministers. We use child specific resources for some of the readings and prayers, and make other changes so the liturgy is more accessible to the younger among us.

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

SSH 1 Sing a new Church *Nettleton*



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WELCOME

Word

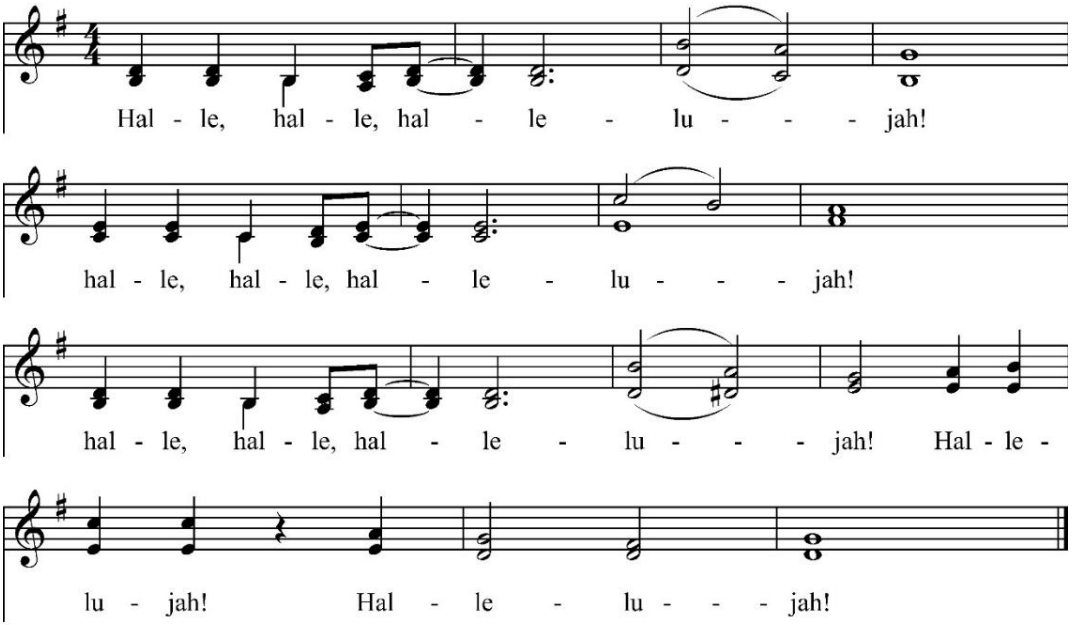
We hear and respond to the story of God's liberating acts.

Blessed are you, holy and living One.
You come to your people and set them free.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GLORIA

Halle, halle, hallelujah! *Traditional Caribbean*



Words and Melody: Traditional Caribbean. Arr. Mark Sedio (b. 1954) © 1995 Augsburg Fortress, PO Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1209 [www.augsburgfortress.org]. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

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

We give you thanks, O Lord of glory, for the example of the first martyr Stephen, who looked up to heave and prayed for his persecutors to your Son Jesus Christ, who stands at your right hand; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE LESSON

Our first lesson is a reading from the Acts of the Apostles *6:8-72a,51c-60 ICB*

Stephen was richly blessed by God. God gave him the power to do great miracles and signs among the people. But some Jews were against him. They belonged to a synagogue of Free Men (as it was called). (This synagogue was also for Jews from Cyrene and from Alexandria.) Jews from Cilicia and Asia were also with them. They all came and argued with Stephen.

But the Spirit was helping him to speak with wisdom. His words were so strong that they could not argue with him. So they paid some men to say, "We heard him say things against Moses and against God!"

This upset the people, the Jewish elders, and the teachers of the law. They came to Stephen, grabbed him and brought him to a meeting of the Jewish leaders. They brought in some men to tell lies about Stephen. They said, "This man is always saying things against this holy place and the law of Moses. We heard him say that Jesus from Nazareth will destroy this place. He also said that Jesus will change the things that Moses told us to do." All the people in the meeting were watching Stephen closely. His face looked like the face of an angel.
Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
Thanks be to God.

THE RESPONSE

Let us read responsively from Psalm 31 *GWMV*

Whenever I am in trouble, I always run to you, God.
There is no shame in hiding with you. You come to my rescue.
Bring your ear close to me now. And hurry, because I need rescuing. Again.
Let me see your shining face. Love me, God, and save me.

Be like a strong rock. Be a big castle to keep me safe. I count on you.
Because you are who you are, show me where I should go.
I'm all tangled up in a net that people secretly set for me.
Come and get me out of this mess. I count on you and your strength.
Let me see your shining face. Love me, God, and save me.

I put myself and my future in your hands.
Because you have kept me for yourself, God of all that is true,
every minute of my life is in your hands now.
Let me see your shining face. Love me, God, and save me.

Please stand as you are able.

SEQUENCE HYMN

We sing of the saints



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THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew. *23:34-39 ICB*

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

So I tell you this: I am sending to you prophets and wise men and teachers. You will kill some of these people. You will nail some of them to crosses. You will beat some of them in your synagogues. You will chase them from town to town. So you will be guilty for the death of all the good people who have been killed on earth. You will be guilty for the murder of that good man Abel. And you will be guilty for the murder of Zechariah son of Berakiah. He was murdered when he was between the Temple and the altar. I tell you the truth. All these things will happen to you people who are living now.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets and kill with stones those men God sent to you. Many times I wanted to help your people! I wanted to gather them together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you did not let me. Now your home will be left completely empty. I tell you, you will not see me again until that time when you will say, 'God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

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.

RENEWAL OF OUR BAPTISMAL COVENANT

Do you believe in God the Father?
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?
PeopleI believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?
I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
I will, with God's help.

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
I will, with God's help.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
I will, with God's help.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

I will, with God's help.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Form III (adapted)*

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons; for Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury; Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Carley, our Diocesan Bishop; Paula, our Rector; Karen, our Deacon, and Jane, our faithful friend.
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

For those who have been harmed, live in fear, or experience anxiety because of the words or actions of leaders anywhere;
That they may know your healing love.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake; for our Ministry Partners: Apostles' House, Cross Roads, Family Promise Essex County, North Jersey Pride, and North Porch; for our sister congregations in the Evelyn Underhill Regional Ministry Network: Calvary, Summit; Christ Church in Short Hills; St. Paul's, Chatham, St. George's, Maplewood; and Grace, Madison; in the Diocese of Newark, let us pray for St. John's, Passaic and St. Paul's, Paterson; the ministries of the Rev. Sr. Eleanor Francis Reynolds, the Rev. Dr. Karen Rezach, the Venerable Diane Riley, and the Rev. Deacon Dr. Len Roberts; and the work of the Commission on Hispanic/Latino Ministry; in the Anglican Communion, let us pray for the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.
That our works may find favor in your sight.

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;
That they would find strength and courage by your Holy Spirit.

For all who serve in our worship, formation, hospitality, outreach, administrative ministries, and the preschool staff whose devotion and creativity enrich the life of our community;
That they would find joy and fulfillment in their ministry.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble; for those on our parish prayer list:

Mary Ruth Stone	Boyd Hunnaman	Maggie Holland	Timothy M.
Kris Hunt	James K.	Celine Ghiara	Barbara H.
Aldaiza DaSilva	Ron G.	Carol McManus	Ellen K.
Martha Lipowski	Sue and Larry H.	Ambika Bedi	Kyle McManus

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

For our own needs and those of others, whom we name either silently or aloud

Holy One of blessing, you are the source and giver of all good things, hear the prayers of our hearts, minds, and lives; and give us the wisdom and grace to embody your way of love each and every day. **Amen.**

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, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Saviour Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

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.**

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.

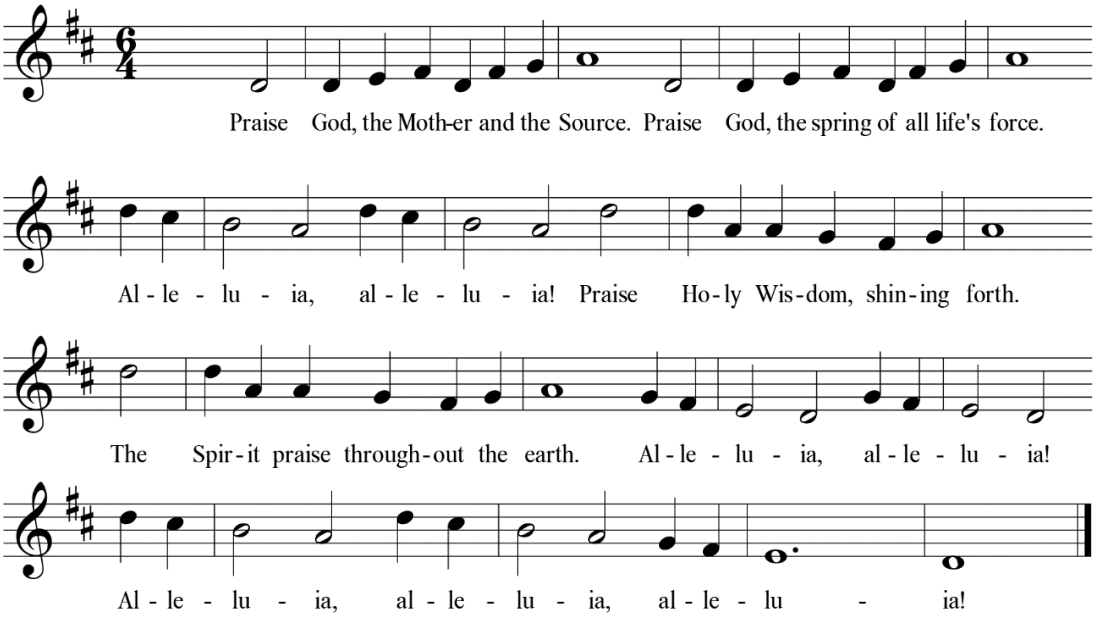
AT THE OFFERTORY

Spread the love around *Williams*
Senior Choir

Please stand as you are able.

THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, the Mother and the Source *Jody L. Caldwell*



Words: Jody L. Caldwell. All rights reserved. Used by permission of the author.
Tune: *Lasst uns erfreuen,* melody from *Auserlesene Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesaeng,* 1623.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER 3 *EOW I*

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.**

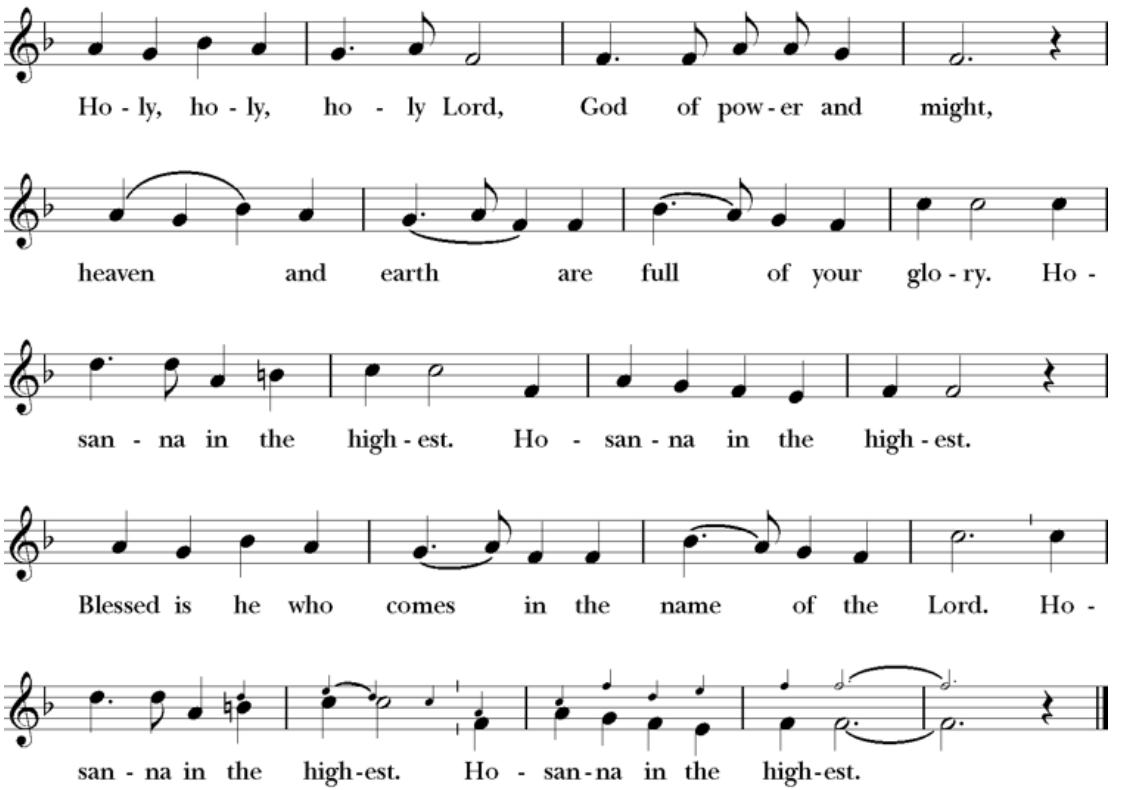
It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices will all creation as we sing:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy Lord *Proulx*



Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Saviour Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said:

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

As supper was ending, Jesus 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 poured our for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ had died. Chris is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to your from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blook of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and son, that with St. Stephen and all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

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

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

Here is bread for the hungry — John Carter



POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us in Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people on 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 forever in the risen life of Christ our Saviour. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING OF THE SECOND SUNDAY SPECIAL GIVING

To benefit Family Promise Essex County

BLESSING

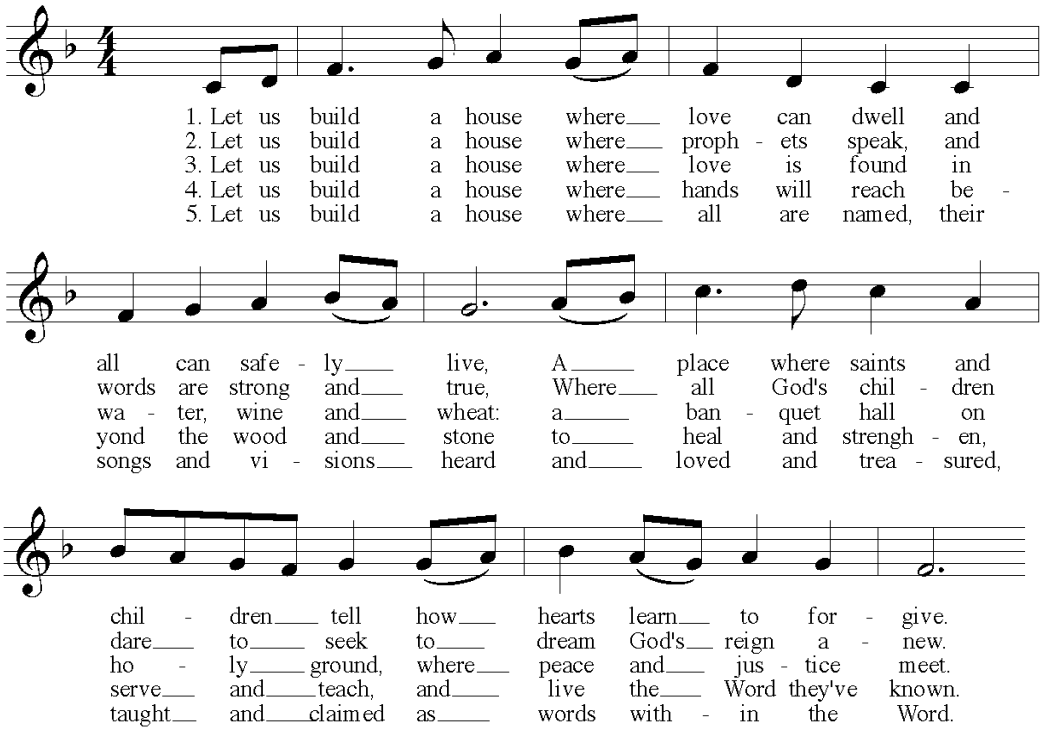
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God's Blessing be with you, Christ's peace be with you, and the Spirit's outpouring be with you, now and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

All are welcome

Marty Haugen





DISMISSAL

Let us go forth into the world to live in newness of life with Christ and each other.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

POSTLUDE

LITURGICAL STEWARDSHIP

Officiant:	The Rev. Paula J. Toland
Deacon:	The Rev. Deacon Karen Eberhardt
Minister of Music:	Kim Williams
Organist:	John Schucker
Altar Guild:	Irene, Nancy
Chalicer/Crucifer/Acolyte:	Eric, Clara, Martin
Reader/Intercessor:	Jennifer, Rosie
Greeter/Usher:	Barbara, Maryalice
Tech Verger:	Ron
Coffee Hour:	Parish Cookout!

Sources for today's lectionary the International Children's Bible (ICB) and God's Word My Voice (GWMV)
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Legacy Giving Through Your IRA

If you are age 70½ and older, a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) can be a powerful stewardship tool. By directing all or part of your IRA distribution directly to St. Stephen's, you can support the ministries and long-term mission of our parish while potentially receiving favorable tax treatment. For those subject to Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs), a QCD may also help satisfy that requirement. As we look toward future ministry, capital improvements, and endowment growth, planned and charitable giving opportunities such as QCDs can create a lasting impact for generations to come. Please consult your tax and financial advisors to learn more.

Upcoming Events

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

DATE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
9/13	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	1:00 PM	AA Meeting
9/14	7:00 PM	Bible Study
	7:30 PM	MA Meeting
9/16	7:30 PM	Finance Committee
9/17	7:30 PM	Preschool Committee
9/20	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	11:30 AM	Vestry Meeting
	1:00 PM	AA Meeting

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
Children & Youth Minister: Julia Kaluzna

Minister of Music: Kim Williams; Organist: John Schucker

Members of the Vestry
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

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