

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

All Are Welcome!

Thanksgiving Day Service

November 28, 2024, 10:00 am



Garden with Sunflowers

Thanksgiving Day Service

Prelude

Entrée on “Kremser”

R. Rowland-Raybold

✝ *This symbol represents the point at which we sign ourselves with the sign of the cross during worship.*

The Word of God

Please stand for the Opening Prayer.

Opening Hymn ***Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*** Hymnal 290

Come, ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest-home:
all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest-home.

All the world is God's own field, fruit unto his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown, unto joy or sorrow grown:
first the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear:
grant, O harvest Lord, that we wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take his harvest home;
from his field shall in that day all offenses purge away;
give his angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store in his garner evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come to thy final harvest-home;
gather thou thy people in, free from sorrow, free from sin;
there, for ever purified, in thy presence to abide;
come, with all thine angels, come, raise the glorious harvest-home.

The people standing, the Celebrant says

✠ Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Celebrant and People

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.

Song of Praise, all standing

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Hymnal 376

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
drive the dark of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.

Thou art giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
well-spring of the joy of living,
ocean-depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother:
all who live in love are thine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine.

The Collect for Thanksgiving Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty and gracious Father, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we pray, faithful stewards of your great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Lessons

May we hear the Word of God through these words.

A Reading from the Prophet Joel 2:21–27

Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the LORD has done great things! Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield. O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the LORD your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the LORD, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

The Word of the Lord.

People ***Thanks be to God***

Psalm 126 *(to be read in unison)*

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

Then they said among the nations, *
"The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

At the end of the Psalms is said

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

May we hear the Word of God through these words.

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to Timothy 2:1–7

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For

there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
who gave himself a ransom for all

— this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God

Gradual Hymn

For the Beauty of the Earth

Hymnal 416

For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies,

*Christ our God, to thee we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower,
sun and moon, and stars of light,

Refrain

When the Gospel is being announced, a cross is made,

✝ (on the forehead) in my mind to understand it,

✝ (on the lips) on my lips to proclaim it, and

✝ (over the heart) in my heart to live it.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 6:25–33
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, "I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you — you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon Hymn

For the joy of ear and eye,
for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony
linking sense to sound and sight,

*Christ our God, to thee we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild,

Refrain

A sermon or meditation may follow the Gospel.



Christ: Consider the Lilies

The Nicene Creed

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

We bow for the two lines in bold.

he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. 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 and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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.*

A Litany of Thanksgiving

For the Prayers of the People a Litany of Thanksgiving is used.

People sit or kneel for the Litany.

Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us. For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

For the communion of saints, in all times and places,

People ***We thank you, Lord.***

Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;

People ***To him be praise and glory, with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.***

Confession of Sin

Celebrant says Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Celebrant and People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Celebrant stands and says

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

People Amen.

Please stand.

The Peace

Jesus said, *Peace I leave with you; my Peace I give to you . . .* John 14:27

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

At the conclusion of the peace the Celebrant says:

Celebrant God is Good!

People All the Time.



The Holy Communion

Offertory *Rondeau on “Royal Oak”*

M. Helman

Doxology—to be sung

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
praise Him, all creatures here below;**

O Praise Him! Alleluia!

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:

praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

O Praise Him! O Praise Him!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving Eucharistic Prayer A

People remain standing.

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 him thanks and praise.**

The Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every-where to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For with your co-eternal Son and Holy Spirit, you are one God, one Lord, in Trinity of Persons and in Unity of Being: and we celebrate the one and equal glory of you, O Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

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:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

✠Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Please sit, kneel or remain standing.

Holy and gracious Father: 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 Father 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:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, 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 Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

And now, let us sing in thanksgiving the prayer our Savior Christ taught us,

Celebrant and People

**Our Father, which 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever. *Amen.***



The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant and People to be sung

Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

Christ our Pass-o-ver is sac-ri-ficed for us;

There-fore let us keep the feast.

Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

The Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith,
with thanksgiving.

This is the Lord's 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.

Please join in singing our Communion Hymns

Let Us Break Bread Together

LEVAS 152

Let us break bread together on our knees;
Let us break bread together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees;
Let us drink wine together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees;
Let us praise God together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

We Gather Together

Hymnal 433

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
he chastens and hastens his will to make known;
the wicked oppressing now cease from distressing:
sing praises to his Name; he forgets not his own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
ordaining, maintaining his kingdom divine;
so from the beginning the fight we were winning:
thou, Lord, wast at our side: all glory be thine!

We all do extol thee, thou leader triumphant,
and pray that thou still our defender wilt be.
Let thy congregation escape tribulation:
thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

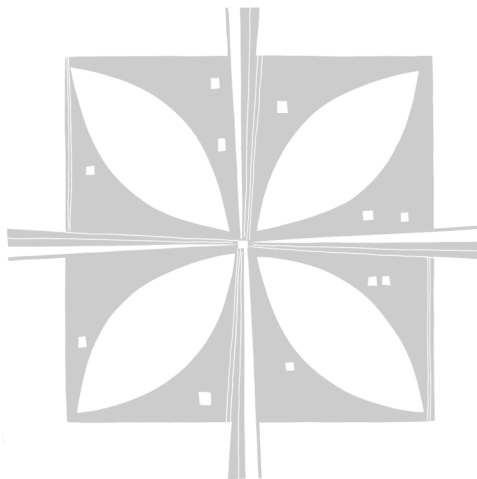
After Communion, the Celebrant says: Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant gives the blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and your loved ones far and near and remain with all of you for ever. **Amen.**



Now thank we all our God,
 with heart, and hands, and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
 in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
 hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
 and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
 through all our life be near us!
With ever-joyful hearts
 and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
 and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
 in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
 the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
 with them in highest heaven,
eternal, Triune God,
 whom earth and heaven adore;
for thus it was, is now,
 and shall be, evermore.

The Celebrant, dismisses the people.

Priest We are called to be one with God and each other in Christ.
People ***By living the Gospel with love and compassion.***

Priest Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us go in peace to love and serve God and one another.

People ***Thanks be to God Alleluia. Alleluia.***

Postlude

Ceremonial Procession

R. Haan



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Our Mission

is to be one with God and humanity in Christ by living the Gospel with love and compassion.



Our Vision

is to become comfortable with Jesus Christ and boldly proclaim Him.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE CELEBRATION AT ST. STEPHEN'S

Ministers: The Congregants of St. Stephen's, Family, Friends and Visitors

Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant II

Deacon: The Rev. Kim Hoop

Director of Music: Roberta Rowland-Raybold

Vergers: Cathy Fellows and Robert Dunn

MINISTERS and LAYLEADERS

The Most Rev. Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church

The Right Rev. Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Bishop, The Diocese of SC

The Very Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant, II, Rector

Vestry Members

- ❖ Will Bridges, Senior Warden (2025) ❖ Richard B. Martin, Jr. (2024)
- ❖ Mike Raley (2024) ❖ Bill Simpson, Jr. (2024) ❖ Veronica Brown (2025)
- ❖ Marrjo Shattuck (2025) ❖ Sue Crouch (2026) ❖ Robert Dunn (2026)
- ❖ Wayne Mumford (2026).

Associate Vestry Members

- ❖ Barbara DiMartini (2024) ❖ Bud Nelson (2024)

Vestry Officers

- ❖ Bill Mann, Treasurer ❖ Cheri Spence, Assistant Treasurer
- ❖ Jane Buckner, Parish/Vestry Clerk, Vickie Arrington, Asst Parish/Vestry Clerk

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