



ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Order for Worship for the Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2020 at 10am

PRELUDE

OPENING HYMN — 400 All creatures of our God and King



1 All crea - tures of our God and King, lift up your voic - es, let us
*2 Great rush - ing winds and breez - es soft, you clouds that ride the heavens a -
*3 Swift flow - ing wa - ter, pure and clear, make mu - sic for your Lord to
4 Dear mo - ther earth, you day by day un - fold your bless - ings on our
5 All you with mer - cy in your heart, for - giv - ing o - thers, take your
*6 And ev - en you, most gen - tle death, wait - ing to hush our fi - nal
7 Let all things their cre - a - tor bless, and wor - ship him in hum - ble -



1 sing: Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Bright burn - ing
2 loft, O — praise him, Al - le - lu - ia! Fair ris - ing
3 hear, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Fire, so in -
4 way, O — praise him, Al - le - lu - ia! All flowers and
5 part, O — sing now: Al - le - lu - ia! All you that
6 breath, O — praise him, Al - le - lu - ia! You lead back
7 ness, O — praise him, Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God the



1 sun with gold - en beams, pale sil - ver moon that gen - tly gleams,
2 morn, with praise re - joice, stars night - ly shin - ing, find a voice,
3 tense and fierce - ly bright, you give to us both warmth and light,
4 fruits that in you grow, let them his glo - ry al - so show:
5 pain and sor - row bear, praise God, and cast on him your care:
6 home the child of God, for Christ our Lord that way has trod:
7 Fa - ther, praise the Son, and praise the Spi - rit, Three in One:

Refrain



O praise him, O praise him, Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

Glory to God for ever and ever.

Mysterious God, whose imagination and desire embrace all: We seek to discern you in the interplay of forces, in the order and the chaos of the universe, and in the complexities of every living system. Give us grace to honor your goodness in what we know and in what we do not know, in the world's harmonies and turbulence, and in its promise and change. For you are in, through, and beyond all that is: one God, made known to us in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, our inspiration and guide. **Amen.**

SONG OF PRAISE — Sacred Creation

Sac-red the land, sac - red the wa - ter, sac-red the sky, ho - ly and true.

Sac-red all life, sac - red each o - ther; all re - flect God who is good.

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COLLECT OF THE DAY

Let us pray,

God of debts forgiven, you call to account our hunger for power; you disturb hierarchies which crush the weak: break the vicious cycles of revenge and domination that we might look to him whose mercy never ends, Jesus Christ our redeemer. **Amen.**

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS

(Exodus 14:19-31)

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

PSALM 114



**1 Alleluia! When Israel came out of Egypt, *
the house of Jacob from a people of strange speech,**

**2 Judah became God's sanctuary *
and Israel God's dominion.**

Response

**3 The sea beheld it and fled; *
Jordan turned and went back.**

**4 The mountains skipped like rams, *
and the little hills like young sheep.**

Response

**5 What ailed you, O sea, that you fled; *
O Jordan, that you turned back?**

**6 You mountains, that you skipped like rams; *
you little hills, like young sheep?**

Response

**7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of God, *
at the presence of the God of Jacob,**

**8 Who turned the hard rock into a pool of water *
and flint-stone into a flowing spring.**

Response

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A READING FROM PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

(Romans 14:1-12)

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in

honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

SEQUENCE HYMN — No saint on earth lives life to self alone

1. No saint on earth lives life to self a - lone
2. For to this end our Lord by death was slain,
or dies a - lone, for we with Christ are one.
that to new life he might a - rise a - gain.
So if we live, for Christ a - lone we live,
Through sor - row on to tri - umph Christ has led,
and if we die, to Christ our dy - ing give.
and reigns o'er all: the liv - ing and the dead.
In liv - ing and in dy - ing this con - fess:
In liv - ing and in dy - ing, him we bless.
we are the Lord's, safe in God's faith - ful - ness.
We are the Lord's, safe in God's faith - ful - ness.

THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

(Matthew 18:21-35)

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

HOMILY —The Rev. Christy Laborda Harris

HYMN — I will sing a song of mercy

**I will sing a song of justice,
sing a song of praise,
sing a song of mercy,
sing a song of love.**

**I will live a life of justice,
live of a life of praise,
live of a life of mercy,
live of a life of love.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Blessed God, whose love calls the whole creation into covenant with you, and who puts in our hands responsibility for the care of the earth and its creatures: we pray for all to whom you have given life and being, saying, "Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace."

For the well-being of the earth; for its resources of water, air, light, and soil, that they may be tended for the good of all creatures, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the waters of the earth; for their careful use and conservation, that we may have the will and the ability to keep them clean and pure, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the mineral and energy resources of the planet, that we may learn sustainable consumption and sound care of the environment from which they come, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the animals of the earth, wild and domestic, large and very small, that they may know the harmony of relationship that sustains all life, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures of the earth who do us harm and those whose place in your creation we do not understand or welcome, that we may see them as beloved creatures of God, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For all who shape public policies affecting the planet and its creatures, that they may consider wisely the well-being of all who come after us, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For all those engaged in conservation, in agriculture and ranching, in aquaculture and fishing, in mining and industry, and in forestry and timber-harvesting, that the health, fruitfulness, and beauty of the natural world may be sustained alongside human activity, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures and the human beings of your world who are ill, or in danger, pain, or special need [especially], and for all who suffer from the unjust, violent, or wasteful use of the earth's resources or their devastation by war, that all may one day live in communities of justice and peace, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the gifts of science and technology and for those who practice these skills, that they may be wise, visionary, and compassionate in their work, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures and the people of the earth whose lives and deaths have contributed to the fruitful abundance of this planet [giving thanks especially for], we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

Gracious God: Grant that your people may have in them the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, and guide us into harmony of relationship through loving-kindness and the wise use of all that you have given; for you are drawing all things into communion with you and with each other by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sin against God and God's creation.

**Holy and merciful God,
we confess that we have failed to honor you
by rightly claiming our kinship with all your creatures. We have walked heavily on your earth,
overused and wasted its resources,
taken for granted its beauty and abundance,
and treated its inhabitants unjustly,
holding future generations hostage to our greed.
Have mercy on us and forgive us our sin.
Renew in us the resolve to keep and conserve your earth as you desire and intend,
with grateful and compassionate hearts,
through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Absolution

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

As our savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father 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 for ever. Amen.

BLESSING

Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you as a mother. Go in peace to follow the good road and may God's blessings be with you always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve God's creation. Alleluia. Alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

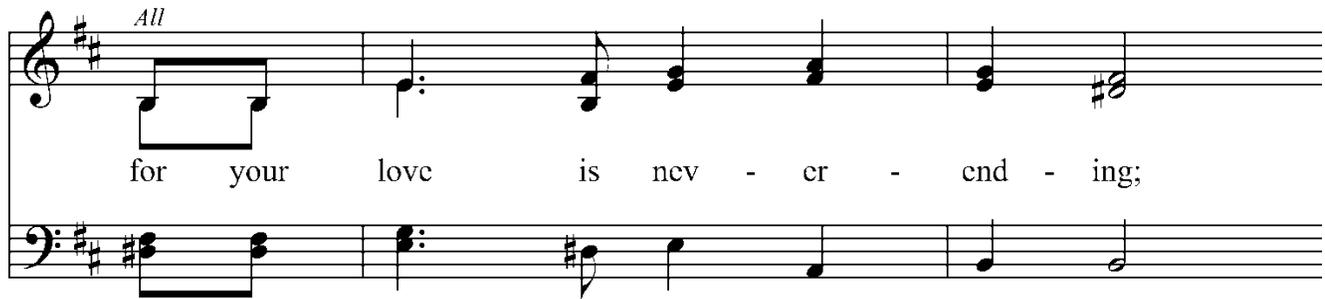
CLOSING HYMN — We give thanks unto you

Cantor



1 We give thanks un - to you, O God of might,
2 From of old you have led your peo - ple in faith,
3 You de - liv - ered the ones who called un - to you,
4 You have o - pened the sea and brought your peo - ple through,
5 You re - mem - ber your prom - ise age to age,

All



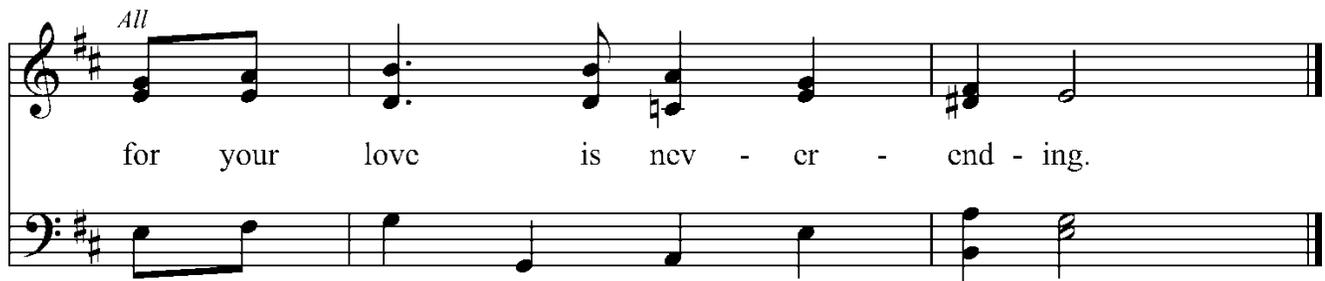
for your love is nev - er - end - ing;

Cantor



we give thanks un - to you, the God of gods,
you have shown your com - pas - sion, strength, and love,
from _____ bond - age to free - dom, you brought them forth,
brought them in - to a land that flows with life,
you show mer - cy on those of low de - grece,

All



for your love is nev - er - end - ing.