

The Second Sunday after Christmas

January 4, 2026



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
1935 The Plaza
Parish Office: 1229 Baker Avenue
Schenectady, New York 12309
518-346-6241; office@st-stephens.church

The Holy Eucharist: Rite II
The Second Sunday after Christmas
January 4, 2026

The Entrance Rite

The Prelude *To Follow the Star* Ritter

The Processional Hymn Hymnal #83, v. 1,2,3,6

The Word of God

The Opening Acclamation Page #355

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People: **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Gloria Page S-278

All: **Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect for Purity Page #355

Celebrant: 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.

People: **Amen.**

The Collect of the Day Page #212

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

The Lessons

The First Lesson

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Lector: A reading from the book of Jeremiah.

Thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
"Save, O Lord, your people,
the remnant of Israel."

See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame, those with child and
those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

For the Lord has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,

says the Lord.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Psalm

Psalm 84:1-8

1 How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts! *
My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

2 The sparrow has found her a house
 and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
 by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts,
 my King and my God.

3 Happy are they who dwell in your house! *
 they will always be praising you.

4 Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *
 whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

5 Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of
 springs, *
 for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.

6 They will climb from height to height, *
 and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.

7 Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
 hearken, O God of Jacob.

8 Behold our defender, O God; *
 and look upon the face of your Anointed.

The Second Lesson

Ephesians 1:3-6,15-19a

Lector: A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Sequence Hymn

LEV #27

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

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

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Celebrant: In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
 are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

A Christmas Pageant

The Nicene Creed

Page #358

All: **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:
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.**

Prayers of the People:

Celebrant: As we join the angels and celebrate with joy the birth of the Son of God, let us offer prayers to God who gives new birth to sons and daughters in every place.

Intercessor: For the birth of the timeless Son of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: For all bishops, priests, and deacons and all who minister in Christ; for all the holy people of God.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: For all who are preparing for Baptism and for all believers who put their trust in the incarnate Son of God.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: For the leaders of the nations and all in authority, and for peace and justice.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: For the giving of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the whole human race.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: For travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for the hungry and the oppressed, for all refugees, for those in prison, and for the dying and the dead.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: For our deliverance from all affliction, violence, strife, and need.
People: **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Intercessor: Remembering our most glorious and blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.
People: **To you, O Gracious God.**

Celebrant: Loving God, the joyful message of the angels fills us with gladness as we celebrate the coming of the Christ child to live among us in vulnerable humility: Let your divine light so dwell within us, that we may treasure your words, ponder them in our hearts, and continue the work of Christ's incarnation in our day, through Jesus our Savior, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever.
All: **Amen.**

The Peace

Page #360

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**

The Announcements

The Holy Communion

The Offertory Anthem

The Wise Men

Tours

The Doxology

Hymnal #380, V.3

The Great Thanksgiving - Eucharistic Prayer B

Page #367

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 God thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you,

Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

(Here a Proper Preface is sung or said.)

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

Hymnal S-128

All:

**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.

Celebrant:

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, 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, according to his command, O Father,

All:

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

Celebrant:

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with St. Stephen and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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.

All:

AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

Page #364

Celebrant:

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

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today 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

Page #364

Celebrant: Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:
People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Fraction Anthem: Agnus Dei

Hymnal S-161

All: **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
 have mercy on us.**
**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
 have mercy on us.**
**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
 grant us peace.**

The Invitation

Page #364

Celebrant: 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.

Celebrant/Minister: The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. **Amen.**
 The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. **Amen.**

The Communion Hymn:

Hymnal #345

Post-Communion Prayer

Page #366

Celebrant: Let us pray.
All: **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 Concluding Rite

The Blessing

Page #366

The Recessional Hymn

Hymnal #117

The Dismissal

Page #366

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Postlude

Siyahamba

S. African/arr. Behnke

Our Intercessions

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of the Province of Central Africa.

Our Leaders: Donald Trump, President of the United States; Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York; and Gary McCarthy, Mayor of Schenectady.

Our Church Leaders: Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop; Jeremiah Williamson, Bishop of Albany; and Lisa Busby, Rector.

The Church of England, the Anglican Communion and The Right Reverend and Right Honorable Dame Sarah Mullally, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Those who are ill, recovering from surgery, or in need of strength and healing: Mary Ann Harrington, Marilyn Causey, Vincent Avila, Peter Nelson, Basil Dewdney, Austin Spang, Don Regula, Chris Morin, Helen Perkins, Perrin, Denise Crates, Mtr. Sally Heiligman, Linda, Ann M., Jean V., Bill Frank, Rick Morin, Tom Miller and Jane Brockway.

For all public employees that they may continue their work for justice, peace, and the common good, for those who have lost their jobs, and for all those who live in fear.

For those in the Military: Zachary.

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Announcements

Serving Today:

Altar Guild:	Carolyn Morin Basil Dewdney
Ushers:	Bob Brockway Vicki Hoshko
Eucharistic Minister:	Basil Dewdney
Acolyte:	George Woodzell
Lector:	Marilyn Humphrey
Intercessor:	Dave Crates
Counter:	Diana Belardo
Coffee Hour:	Sara and Joe Palko

Today's postlude is an arrangement of *Siyahamba*, a South African freedom song possibly of Zulu origin. The English translation is “we are marching in the light of God”. The song became known in the 1980’s through a publication by Swedish composer Anders Nyberg. John Behnke, professor of music emeritus at Concordia University, arranged this piece for organ.

The Messenger: Please submit any items for publication in the January issue of our newsletter as soon as possible.

Welcome our new Sexton - Effective December 1, we now have a new Sexton, Gary Busby. Gary will be responsible for general cleaning and maintenance, as well as ensuring that the Church is safe, welcoming, and functional. He will be working part time, and he will take direction from Jon, our Office Manager, and report to George Woodzell, our Senior Warden. You may have noticed how much cleaner our facilities are already. Welcome, Gary, to your new role!

Roxbury Farms: The last Winter Pick-up for Roxbury Farms is Tuesday, January 6th. 4-6 p.m.

Annual Parish Meeting: The annual meeting for St. Stephen’s will be held on Sunday, January 18. The meeting will be called to order, and the polls for election will be opened at the start of the service, and the business meeting will resume immediately after worship. Please note, the deadline for submitting Ministry/Committee reports for the Annual Report is Monday, January 12th.

Free Community Meal: Save the date!! Wednesday, January 21st, St. Stephen's will offer a Free Community Meal. More details to follow.

Wednesday Mornings: You are invited to rejoin Mother Lisa in reading and reflecting on the upcoming Sunday's bible readings Wednesdays, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. No prior study is required, and you can take part on just those mornings when you are able to come for this hour.

Food for Pantry: Please bring in peanut butter, canned fruit, or cooking oil. To make your contribution go further, you may also donate online at <https://sycamorecollab.org>.

Coffee Hour and Altar Flowers - There are new sign-up sheets in the back of the church which will take us through mid-February (coffee hour) and through June (Altar Flowers). We need volunteers! Please consider signing up to host a Sunday .

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UPCOMING EVENTS At St. Stephens

Tuesday, 1/6, afternoon: Roxbury Farms Winter Pick-Up.

Wednesday, 1/7, 10:00 a.m.: Bible Reading and Reflections meeting today.

Thursday, 1/8, 7:00 p.m.: Chancel Choir rehearsal.

Saturday, 1/10, 9:30 a.m.: Fabricators and Yarners.

Sunday, 1/11, 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist.

Pastoral Care Committee meeting following the service.

Monday, 1/12, 7:00 p.m.: Vestry Meeting.

Deadline for submission of reports for the Annual Report.

Tuesday, 1/13, 1:00 p.m.: Book Club meeting.

Wednesday, 1/14, 10:00 a.m.: Bible Reading and Reflections meeting today.

Saturday, 1/17, 9:30 a.m.: Fabricators and Yarners.

Sunday, 1/18, 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist.

Annual Meeting follows the service.

Monday, 1/19, 7:00 p.m.: Worship Committee meeting.

Wednesday, 1/21, 10:00 a.m.: Bible Reading and Reflections meeting today.

Free Community Meal.

Saturday, 1/24, 9:30 a.m.: Fabricators and Yarners.

Sunday, 1/25, 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist.

Wednesday, 1/28, 10:00 a.m.: Bible Reading and Reflections meeting today.

Saturday, 1/31, 9:30 a.m.: Fabricators and Yarners.

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Church Staff & Lay Leaders:

Rev. Lisa Busby, Rector

George Woodzell, Senior Warden
Carole Merrill-Mazurek, Junior Warden
Susan Lohnas, Organist
Douglas Lohnas, Director of the Choirs
Jon Ewbank, Office Manager
Denise Crates, Treasurer
Theresa Fay, Clerk
Gary Busby, Sexton

Vestry

Ruth Basantes	Denise Crates
Basil Dewdney	Linda Emaelaf
Vicki Hoshko	Stan Jakubowski
Deborah O'Connor	Jean Stefanski

Welcome!

We are glad you have chosen to worship and give thanks to God with us.

WORSHIP: The Holy Eucharist or Morning Prayer: Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Join us for refreshments most Sundays in Begley Hall after our service.

Members of the parish offer Morning Prayer on Zoom at 9:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, and 8:00 a.m. on Sunday. Please contact the church office for the link.

Other services are announced.

HYMNS: Our hymns are posted on hymn boards and are listed in our bulletin. They are drawn from the blue *Hymnal* and the black-and-red *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. "Service music," indicated with an "S" before the number, comes at the beginning of the *Hymnal*. Hymns come in the second section. Hymns from *Lift Every Voice and Sing* are preceded by an "LEV."

CHILDREN: We are delighted to have children of all ages and love hearing their voices. We offer a children's sermon when children are present and post a brief children's message each week on our website. The greeters can give them an activity pack. There is a nursery with toys and a comfortable chair if you would like to take a break from the service with your child or find a quiet place to nurse. In the Episcopal Church it is customary for parents to determine the appropriate age for children to take communion. We can always offer "first communion" instruction to you/your children.

COMMUNION: All baptized persons may receive Holy Communion. If you do not wish to take the bread (wafer) or the wine, place your arms across your chest and a member of the clergy will ask God's blessing upon you and on any children not yet receiving communion. If you would like the elements brought to your seat, please speak with a greeter.

FOR THOSE WITH ALLERGIES: If you would like to receive communion wafers that are gluten-wheat-yeast-dairy-egg-soy-nut- and corn-free at Communion, please ask for one from the ministers distributing communion.

OFFERTORY: During the offertory, the greeters take up a collection for funds which support the church and our various ministries. Many people pledge annual support, which is helpful in developing our budget. All contributions are welcomed.

MASKS: The use of masks is optional. The greeters can provide you with one if you like.

CONVERSATION / PASTORAL VISITS are available. Please contact the Parish Office.

MEMBERSHIP: We welcome visitors from other churches as well as those for whom church is a new experience. If you do not have a church home, we would be delighted to talk with you about becoming a member. Please speak with a warden or fill out a pew card for someone to contact you.

LABYRINTH: Our labyrinth, in the courtyard between the church and Begley Hall, is an adaptation of the millennia-old classical type. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has only one path in and out; there are no tricks or dead ends. The path winds from the exterior to the center and can become a mirror for our journey of life, touching our sorrows and releasing our joys. Walk it with an open mind and an open heart. Instructions are available at the back of the church.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION: Please be in touch with the parish office if you have suggestions for this ministry.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Prayer request sheets can be found on the lectern in the back of the church. You can place anyone on our "Prayer Chain" by contacting Suzanne Taylor at popage@aol.com or by contacting the parish office. Please get the permission of those you add for their names to be used. We will include your request for four weeks in our services of Morning Prayer and count on you to keep us updated.

COMMUNICATION: You may contact us at 518-346-6241 (Office Phone); office@st-stephens.church (e-mail); <https://st-stephens.church> (website); and <https://www.facebook.com/SaintStephensSchenectady>. The Parish Office is generally open Mondays-Fridays from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Mother Lisa Busby can be contacted at 518-637-7736 or revlisabusby@st-stephens.church.