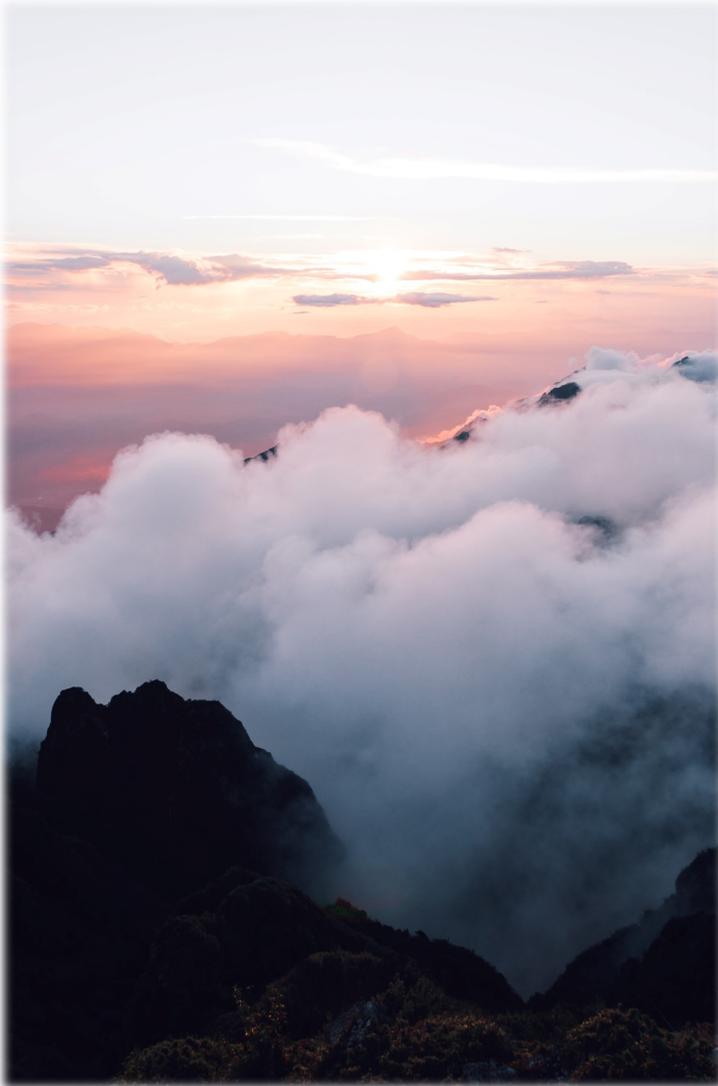


ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The First Sunday of Advent

November 27, 2022, 8:00 am and 10:30 am Worship Services



Keep awake
therefore, for
you do not know
on what day your
Lord is coming.

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.

WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S!

It is a joy to have you worship with us today. We believe everyone who worships with us is sent to us by God. So, welcome.

As we gather for worship, we want to remind everyone of a few important items:

- Please turn off or silence your electronic devices.
- We strongly encourage you to enter the sanctuary in silence as you prepare for worship. Thank you.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

As you come in this morning and settle into your seat, I invite you to think about the following:

- ❖ Wherever we go, we have a reason for going there. What is your reason for being here this morning?
- ❖ God is merciful and kind to us each and every day. What thanksgiving do you bring to God this morning?
- ❖ Because each day brings many challenges, what concern(s) do you bring to God this morning?
- ❖ As your Rector, I have come with thanksgiving for God's grace and mercy and to worship Him; because today is a reminder to me that another week has ended and a new week has begun. It is my hope that you have come to do the same. I encourage you to join me as we call upon our God and worship Him.

Canon Wilmot—a son of God

The flag for November is raised in memory and
in honor of all military veterans.

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

Prelude

Veni Emmanuel

C. Cooman

✝ Announcements ✝

Please stand

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Leader Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.

People Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.

Leader Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved:

People O Lord God of Hosts.

Leader Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

People Come and save us, O Lord God of Hosts.

Leader Show us your mercy, O Lord:

People And grant us your salvation.



A Penitential Order: Rite II

BCP 351

Opening Hymn ***Come, Thou Almighty King***

Hymnal 365

Come, thou almighty King,
 help us thy Name to sing,
help us to praise.
 Father whose love unknown
all things created own,
 build in our hearts thy throne,
Ancient of Days.

Come, thou incarnate Word,
 by heaven and earth adored;
our prayer attend:
 come, and thy people bless;
come, give thy word success;
 stablish thy righteousness,
Savior and friend.

Come, holy Comforter,
 thy sacred witness bear
in this glad hour:
 thou, who almighty art,
now rule in every heart,
 and ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of power.

To Thee, great One in Three,
 the highest praises be,
hence evermore;
 thy sovereign majesty
may we in glory see,
 and to eternity
love and adore.

✠ Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People His mercy endures forever.

The Decalogue *Please sit or kneel*

The Celebrant continues

Hear the commandments of God to his people:

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage.

You shall have no other gods but me.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Honor your father and your mother.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit murder.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit adultery.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not steal.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not be a false witness.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Confession of Sin

The Celebrant continues

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1:8, 9*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence is kept.

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.

Holy God,

Holy and Mighty,

Holy Immortal One,

People Have mercy upon us.

The Collect for The First Sunday in Advent

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People Amen.

The Lessons

May we hear the Word of God through these words.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 2:1–5

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

The Word of the Lord

People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 122

(to be read responsively by the Lay Reader and the Congregation)

- L I was glad when they said to me, *
"Let us go to the house of the LORD."
- C **Now our feet are standing *
within your gates, O Jerusalem.**
- L Jerusalem is built as a city *
that is at unity with itself;
- C **To which the tribes go up,
the tribes of the LORD, *
the assembly of Israel,
to praise the Name of the LORD.**
- L For there are the thrones of judgment, *
the thrones of the house of David.

- C Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: ***
"May they prosper who love you.
- L Peace be within your walls *
and quietness within your towers.
- C For my brethren and companions' sake, ***
I pray for your prosperity.
- L Because of the house of the LORD our God, *
I will seek to do you good."

Celebrant and People

**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 Letter of Paul to the Romans 13:11–14

You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The Word of the Lord

People Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn ***Lo! He Comes, with Clouds Descending*** Hymnal 57

Lo! he comes, with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

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 24:36–44
People *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

Jesus said to the disciples, “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

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

Sermon Hymn

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
 high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
 claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

❖ Sermon Wilmot Merchant ❖

Please use this time to silently reflect on what the Lord has spoken to you.

Please stand.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and 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.*

Please sit or kneel for The Prayers of the People.

The Prayers of the People

The Prayer Leader and People pray responsively.

Leader The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Leader Let us pray.

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;

People *That we all may be one.*

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

People *That your Name may be glorified by all people.*

We pray for Justin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael our Presiding Bishop, Ruth our Bishop, Wilmot our Priest, and for all bishops and other ministers;

People *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, for Joseph our President, Henry our Governor, and Marilyn our Mayor;

People *That there may be justice and peace on the earth.*

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

People *That our works may find favor in your sight.*

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

People *That they may be delivered from their distress.*

Give to the departed eternal rest;

People *Let light perpetual shine upon them.*

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

People *May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.*

Let us pray for our own needs and those of our loved ones and others, for the men and women who are serving in the armed forces, and all others who serve to preserve and protect lives, and those who have asked us to remember them in our prayers, especially our families, friends, and loved ones.

Lord in your mercy

People *Hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for the people in disaster and troubled areas and those affected by acts of violence here at home and all around the world, especially in those communities where mass shootings have occurred. Let us also pray for the many volunteers who are working to assist our brothers and sisters in those areas that have been devastated either by man-made or natural disaster.

Lord, in your mercy.

People *Hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for God's people throughout the world, especially the Anglican Communion, The Episcopal Church, and The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina. Today we are praying for:

Lord, in your mercy.

People *Hear our prayer.*

A Prayer for the Human Family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth, especially during this time of war for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, that in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People *Amen*

**Additional Prayers*

LET US GIVE THANKS FOR OUR VISITORS.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO: Joyce Burns (11/29), Dottie Glover (11/30), Charlotte Houghtaling (12/1), James Benson (12/1), Michele Hennessy (12/2).

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO: Mike & Babs Raley (11/30).

LET US PRAY FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY.

INTERCESSORY AND THANKSGIVING PRAYER. As we continue to hold one another up in prayer in this parish, this week we are praying for: **Vickie** Arrington, **Len & Cathy** Arruzzo, **Harry, Amy, Harry III, & Sarah** Austin, **Holly & Bob** Ayer, **James, Mark, Luke, & Ashley, Mike & Becky** Baker, **Terry & Nancy** Barbee, **Nina** Barnes, **Pete & Betsy** Barr, **Carolyn & Jerry** Bart, **Sherrie** Bellamy.

Celebrant and People

Gracious and most loving God, we join them in committing to you whatever concerns they may have, asking you to let your will be done for them. We also join them in giving you thanks, for your many blessings bestowed upon them and their loved ones. We praise you and thank you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 (8:00)

Thee We Adore

A. Fedak

Offertory (10:30)

O Come Emmanuel

plainsong

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 and Sanctus 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.**

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. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

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. Hosanna in the highest.
+ Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. 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.

People 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

S164

Je - sus, Lamb of God: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world:

give us your peace, give us your peace.

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.

Break Thou the Bread of Life

LEVAS 146

Break thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,
As thou didst break the loaves beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page I seek thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for thee, O living word!

Bless thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,
As thou didst bless the bread by Galilee;
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall,
And I shall find my peace, my all in all.

Teach me to live, dear Lord, only for thee,
As thy disciples lived in Galilee;
Then, all my struggles o'er, then, vict'ry won,
I shall behold thee, Lord, the living one.

Father, We Praise Thee

Hymnal 1

Father, we praise thee, now the night is over,
active and watchful, stand we all before thee;
singing we offer prayer and meditation:
thus we adore thee.

Monarch of all things, fit us for thy mansions;
banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending;
bring us to heaven, where thy saints united
joy without ending.

All-holy Father, Son, and equal Spirit,
Trinity blessèd, send us thy salvation;
thine is the glory, gleaming and resounding
through all creation.

After Communion, the Celebrant says: Let us pray.

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

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin.

People Amen.

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love.

People Amen.

May you, who rejoice in the celebration of the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life, 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.

People Amen.

Please sit for a brief announcement.

Benediction—*to be sung*

**God be with you till we meet again;
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you,
God be with you till we meet again.**



The King Shall Come

Hymnal 73

The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks;
when beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.

Not, as of old, a little child,
to bear, and fight, and die,
but crowned with glory like the sun
that lights the morning sky.

The King shall come when morning dawns
and earth's dark night is past;
O haste the rising of that morn,
the day that e'er shall last;

and let the endless bliss begin,
by weary saints foretold,
when right shall triumph over wrong,
and truth shall be extolled.

The King shall come when morning dawns
and light and beauty brings:
Hail, Christ the Lord! Thy people pray,
come quickly, King of kings.

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

Celebrant Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us go in peace to love and serve God and
one another.
People ***Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.***

Postlude

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers

R. Rowland-Raybold

THE WORSHIP HAS ENDED. LET THE SERVICE BEGIN.

“... what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

God is good! All the time!

Advent and Christmas at St. Stephen's

Sunday, December 4th, Second Sunday of Advent

10:00 am, Advent Lessons & Carols Holy Eucharist Worship Service
(Episcopal Church Women Cookie Walk following Worship)

Wednesday, December 21st

4:00 pm, Winter Solstice Concert

Saturday, December 24th, Christmas Eve

6:00 pm, Festive Holy Eucharist Family Service

8:30 pm, Christmas Carols

9:00 pm, Holy Eucharist Candle Service

Sunday, December 25th, Christmas Day

10:00 am The Nativity of Our Lord Holy Eucharist

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PARTICIPANTS IN THE CELEBRATION

Ministers: The Congregants of St. Stephen's, Family, Friends and Visitors
Celebrant: The Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant, II
Dir of Music/Organist: Roberta Rowland-Raybold, c.a.g.o.

MINISTERS, LAYLEADERS AND STAFF OF ST. STEPHEN'S

The Most Rev. Michael Bruce Curry, Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church
The Right Rev. Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Bishop, The Diocese of SC
The Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant, II, Rector

Vestry Members

- ❖ Henry Saunders, Senior Warden (2022) ❖ B.J. Mills, Junior Warden (2023)
- ❖ Cheryl Brugier (2022) ❖ Michele Hennessy (2022) ❖ Pete Barr (2023)
- ❖ Babs Raley (2023) ❖ Betty Berginski (2024) ❖ Richard B. Martin, Jr. (2024)
- ❖ Bill Simpson, Jr. (2024) ❖ Joyce Saftner (Associate 2023)

Vestry Officers

- ❖ Eileen Carzon, Treasurer ❖ Bill Mann, Assistant Treasurer
- ❖ Jane Buckner, Parish/Vestry Clerk

Staff

- ❖ Sharon Weaver, Admin. Asst. ❖ June Meletzke, Financial Secretary
- ❖ Roberta Rowland-Raybold, Director of Music/Organist
- ❖ Tommy Mizell, Facility Manager ❖ Nancy Lopez, Sexton