

Use the following worship guide as we gather on Sunday morning via Zoom. Simply click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2398495210>

\*\* Announcements are at the end of this order of worship. \*\*

The Service of Worship

## First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ

Baltimore, Maryland

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany – Year A

February 5, 2023

10:30 a.m.



*If you are visiting online, please place your email address in the chat.  
We will gladly send you the weekly Order of Worship and Announcements.*

Prelude

*Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice*

Nancy Chronister, Director of Music

by Culli

Welcome

Rev. Kelly M. Sisson, Pastor

Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures

*Isaiah 58:1-12*

Justin Christian, Liturgist

Call to Worship Litany

(Congregation reads bold)

Called to be light,

**we would carry God's hope into the shadows of the world.**

Called to be salt,

**we would enhance the lives of those around us, with joy.**

Called to live in God's reality,

**we would welcome everyone as sisters and brothers in faith.**

Hymn for Worship

NCH #312 *We Love Your Realm, O God*

ST. THOMAS

(as able, please stand)

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Rev. Sisson

*Please remember these shared concerns:*

- Our siblings in the Ukraine, and prayers for peace
- Our church as we make decisions about our future
- Bonnie Duff – Sharon Barr's mother
- Carl and Patti Flandermeyer – Nancy Chronister's parents
- Catherine McDougal – Bill Ingram's daughter
- Emily's friend, Sharon. Living with cancer.
- Karen Lovelace awaiting surgery on Feb. 13
- Martha Wharton's father and step-mother
- Jen Langdon's nephew, Bryce
- Teresa Summers' friend with breast cancer
- Tiffany Summers, Teresa's daughter – expecting a baby
- Stef's brother, David, living with Alzheimer's

Call to Reconciliation

This is what God hopes for us - that we will speak of the mistakes we make, so we might be forgiven. Relying on the Spirit for the right words, let us pray together, saying,

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

It is true we break your commandments, God of our lives. Much worse, we break your heart when we point the finger at those who are different from us; when we gossip about our friends and neighbors; when we think everything is all about us.

Forgive us, Loving God, we pray. We long to know your ways, so open our ears to hear those words we always ignore. We search for you each day, so open our eyes to your wonders so we may see them anew. We would believe in your promises, so fill our hearts with the presence of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

*Silence is kept*

Assurance of Pardon

God will show us the way to God's realm. Gracious, merciful, and righteous is our God of salvation!

God rebuilds our lives, repairs our mistakes, fills our emptiness with hope and joy. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

Hymn for Justice NCH #181 *You Are Salt for the Earth, O People* BRING FORTH  
*(as able, please stand)*

The Scripture Lesson *Matthew 5:13-20* Justin Christian, Liturgist  
Anthem Choir

The Message *The Ministry of Earl's Place*  
Sheila Helgerson, Joseph Anderson, Renard Noble

Hymn for Communion NCH #340 *We Are People on a Journey* SOMOS PUEBLO  
The Welcoming Table

We believe that the invitation to this table comes not from any church or individual, but from Jesus. We therefore invite in Christ's name all who hear that invitation and who wish to respond by sharing the bread and the cup. Please hold the elements after you receive them so that we may all partake together.

Breaking of the Bread  
Sharing of the Cup

Making our Offerings

Please consider making an offering through on-line giving, or mail your check to the church address. You can find information on our church web page: [first-ststephens.org](http://first-ststephens.org) You may also place your offering in the offering plate in the back of the sanctuary.

Prayer of Dedication *~congregation reads bold print~*

May the gifts we offer, Loving God, be used to fix breakfast for hungry children, to shower others with grace, and to patch the potholes poverty has created in the roadways of the kingdom. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn for Commitment VU #701 *What Does The Lord Require of You*  
*(as able, please stand)*

Sending

To those huddled in the shadows of fear and worry,  
God sends us to be light.

To those whose lives and hopes have lost all flavor,  
Jesus sends us to be salt.

To a society where love is tossed aside as easily as a food wrapper,  
Spirit sends us to be faithful caregivers of everyone we meet.

Postlude

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Worship Resources for today are adapted from:  
Thom Shuman, PCUSA

**Today, we are delighted to be joined by friends from Earl's Place.**

**Sub-committees** of the Congregational Meeting will meet directly after the service today.

**Changing the Cycles** is an effort to end menstrual poverty in Baltimore schools. You can be a part of this effort by bringing sanitary products and placing them in the box in the foyer beside the red wagon.

**ACTC** – is in need of your support. They are requesting the following items immediately:

- 16 oz jars of peanut butter
- boxed macaroni and cheese
- peanut butter crackers
- baby wipes
- deodorant
- full size toothpaste
- full size lotion
- small vaseline jars
- small packs of tissues
- paper towels

Please fill the red wagon on Sundays with any of these items so that we can deliver generously on Mondays.

**Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> is Mardi Gras Sunday.** Wear your Mardi Gras attire, plan to sing and celebrate as we prepare for the Lenten season.

**Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at 6p.m.** come for the pancakes, stay for the ash! Come together for “**Mardi GrAsh**” as we begin the Lenten season.

**Lenten Day Retreat** – Saturday, April 1, 2023 from 9:30a.m. – 3:30p.m. at the church. Our time together will focus on **creating mandalas as a means of prayer**. The retreat is limited to 12 participants, so sign up early! Participants will need to commit to being present for the entire time. Cost: \$25 includes supplies, breaks, and lunch.