

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

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Year B

September 1, 2024

10:30 a.m.



Prelude

*Thy Word*

Nancy Flandermeyer Chronister, Director of Music

Music by Michael W. Smith, arranged by John Carter

Welcome

Amanda Ajulu, Consistory President

Scripture Lesson

*James 1:17-27*

Kevin Adson, Liturgist

Call to Worship

~ congregation reads **bold print** ~

Here, our Beloved speaks to us; the voice of our Beloved sounds in our hearts:

**calling us to generous acts, to share the gifts we have been given.**

Now, our Beloved speaks to us; the voice of our Beloved sounds in our land:

**calling us to generous acts, to open our hearts to all in need.**

In every place, in every moment, our Beloved speaks to us; the voice of our Beloved sounds in all creation:

**calling us to generous acts, to stand with God's people: the least, the lost, the little, the last.**

Hymn of Praise NCH #12 *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*

ELLACOMBE

~ as you are able, please stand ~

Our Joys and Concerns

Jen Langdon

*Remember these known joys and concerns:*

- Peace in our world
- Karen Lovelace – elbow surgery
- Those with COVID
- Harry Claridge after heart surgery
- Jen's friend, Andrew and his family
- Andrew Sisson, at home
- Laura Weaver Haas's mother
- Bryce – Jen Langdon's nephew

*If you share a concern and wish for it to be printed on this list, please consult with the person/s whose names are involved, then let the pastor know in writing via email they give their consent.*

Call to Reconciliation

Do we honor God only with our lips, while keeping our hearts from the Holy One? Do we deceive ourselves, thinking we are religious rather than living faithful lives? Let us confess to God our wrongs, trusting in the One who seeks to make us whole.

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

Holy One of leaders and little children, we hear your words every day, but rarely live them out. Our anger roars like a flooded creek, but our forgiveness drips like a rusty faucet. Our impetuous tongues rush to judgment, while our words of hope sound like a sluggish soundtrack. We listen with impatient ears to the cries of the poor.

Father and Mother of Lights, may your mercy fall on us like a summer shower on parched grass; may your hope overflow our hearts; may your Beloved Child, Jesus Christ, speak to us and call us to life.

*Silence is kept  
Kyrie Eleison*

Congregational Response

Assurance of Pardon

Listen and understand - the voice of the Beloved speaks to us, implanting the word of hope, the word of grace, and the word of forgiveness into our hearts.

**We listen and understand. Every gift comes from God, especially the gifts of mercy and love. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.**

Scripture Lessons *Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23* Kevin Adson, Liturgist

Musical Meditation *Adagietto* by G. Mahler Nancy Chronister

The Message *The 3 R's* The Rev. Kelly M. Sisson, Pastor

Hymn for Communion NCH #338 *Sheaves of Summer* UNA ESPIGA

*~ as you are able, please stand ~*

The Welcoming Table

The Rev. Bill Ingram

*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. In the spirit of inclusion – the cup is alcohol-free; and there is a gluten-free option for bread.*

Communion Music

Taylor Ramage

Breaking of the Bread

Sharing of the Cup

Making an Offering

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 sanctuary. Or, you may use the QR Code that is at the end of the announcements.

Prayer of Dedication/Offering *(congregation reads bold print)*

Let us be slow in our yearning to hang on to our blessings, and quick to share them with the hungry, the lonely, the forgotten, and the hurting of our world, that our gifts might become a kind of first fruits for those whose lives are so empty. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Hymn for Sending NCH #524 *This Little Light of Mine*

THIS JOY

*~ as you are able, please stand ~*

Benediction

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Worship Resources are adapted from:  
Thom Shuman, PCUSA

**Welcome!** We are glad you are here. If you are visiting with us, please fill out a visitor's card from the back of one of the chairs and place it in the offering plate or hand it to the pastor after the service. Join us for light refreshments immediately after the service in the Gathering Room behind the sanctuary.

**Next Sunday** – All across the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ churches are celebrating **“Rejoice in Our Welcome.”** Individuals are encouraged to reach out to friends who might be interested in visiting First and St. Stephen's, attending our gallery reception after the worship service, and celebrating being a united and uniting congregation. As you prepare to come to worship next week, consider the question, **“What brings you joy at First and St. Stephen's?”**

The gallery exhibit of the photography of **Tom August and Cara McAllister August** is open through mid-September. The gallery is open on Sundays between noon and 2p.m. or by appointment by calling: 540-230-6903. Please spread the word, and let your friends know about this new exhibit. The gallery reception will be next Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. If you can volunteer to be a docent, contact Sharon Barr: sharonbarr0227@gmail.com

It is time to sign up for the **Open Doors dinner** to support Cornerstone Community Housing. The dinner and auction this year is on **Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>**. The cost is \$80/person. If you would like to sit at the First and St. Stephen's table, please reserve your place with the pastor asap. Seats will be available on a first come/first served basis.

**ACTC** is asking for any non-perishable food items. Please bring **individual size servings of fruit, healthy snacks, or other school lunch foods**. Place items in the red wagon in the foyer so they may be delivered weekly.

To Make an Offering Now



Church Staff

Kelly M. Sisson **Pastor** fssuccpastor@gmail.com (410)832-3974  
Nancy Chronister **Director of Music** nancyfc88@comcast.net (610)724-6096  
Alex Vishio **Theologian at Large** avishio@mail.smu.edu  
Zach Langdon-Kennedy **Artist in Residence** tinnatupaws@gmail.com  
Deb Taylor **Administrative Assistant** fss.church.ofc@gmail.com (410)377-5224  
Renard Noble **Properties Caregiver** (410) 419-5199

**Church Office (410) 377-5224**

**WiFi Password: ONAcomma**

## Consistory for 2024

Amanda Ajulu – President - amandamajulu@yahoo.com

Jen Langdon – Vice President - jenjele@gmail.com

Bill Ingram – Treasurer - william.ingram@gmail.com

Richard Arrington - richard\_arrington2003@yahoo.com

Emily Perl – emilyperl78@gmail.com

Laura Weaver Haas – laurahaas0720@gmail.com

Nancy Ciesla - nciesla62@gmail.com

Nancy Chronister – Member at Large - nancyfc88@comcast.net

Kelly Sisson – Ex-Officio - fssuccpastor@gmail.com