



ST. STEPHEN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF RIDGEFIELD

*Belonging
with purpose*

Our Mission: Embracing and living God's commandment to love our neighbors through worship, stewardship, and service to others.

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 4, 2026 • 10:00 A.M.

Prelude and Welcome

All stand and join in singing Hymn 405

Royal Oak:

**All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.**

- 1 Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
he made their glowing colors,
he made their tiny wings. *Refrain*
- 2 The purple-headed mountain,
the river running by,
the sunset, and the morning
that brightens up the sky. *Refrain*
- 3 The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden,
he made them every one. *Refrain*
- 4 He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well. *Refrain*

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

All join in The Collect for Purity

**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. Amen.**

*As we sing, children are invited to follow
Storytime Leaders down to the Choir Room.*

All sing the Gloria in excelsis S-280

Robert Powell

Glo-ry to God in the
high - est, and peace to his peo-ple on earth. Lord
God, heaven-ly King, al- migh-ty God and Fa - ther, we
wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your
glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the
Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world: have mer - cy on us; you are
seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re - ceive our
prayer. For you a-lone are the Ho - ly One, _
you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most
High, Je - sus Christ with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the
glo - ry of God the
Fa - ther. A - men.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Most high, omnipotent, good Lord, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may, for love of you, delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

All sit for A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Let me sing for my beloved

my love-song concerning his vineyard:

My beloved had a vineyard

on a very fertile hill.

He dug it and cleared it of stones,

and planted it with choice vines;

he built a watchtower in the midst of it,

and hewed out a wine vat in it;

he expected it to yield grapes,

but it yielded wild grapes.

And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem

and people of Judah,

judge between me

and my vineyard.

What more was there to do for my vineyard

that I have not done in it?

When I expected it to yield grapes,

why did it yield wild grapes?

And now I will tell you

what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge,

and it shall be devoured;

I will break down its wall,

and it shall be trampled down.

I will make it a waste;

it shall not be pruned or hoed,

and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;

I will also command the clouds

that they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts

is the house of Israel,

and the people of Judah

are his pleasant planting;

he expected justice,

but saw bloodshed;

righteousness,

but heard a cry!

Isaiah 5:1-7

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

A Portion of Psalm 80 *sung by the choir*

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

8 You have brought a vine out of Egypt; *

you cast out the nations and planted it.

9 You prepared the ground for it; *

it took root and filled the land.

10 The mountains were covered by its shadow *

and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.

11 You stretched out its tendrils to the Sea *

and its branches to the River.

12 Why have you broken down its wall, *

so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?

13 The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it, *

and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.

14 Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven;

behold and tend this vine; *

preserve what your right hand has planted.

All stand and sing Hymn 518

Westminster Abbey

1 Christ is made the sure foundation,

Christ the head and cornerstone,

chosen of the Lord, and precious,

binding all the Church in one;

holy Zion's help for ever,

and her confidence alone.

2 All that dedicated city,

dearly loved of God on high,

in exultant jubilation

pours perpetual melody;

God the One in Three adoring

in glad hymns eternally.

3 To this temple, where we call thee,

come, O Lord of Hosts, today;

with thy wonted lovingkindness

hear thy servants as they pray,

and thy fullest benediction

shed within its walls away.

4 Here vouchsafe to all thy servants
what they ask of thee to gain;
what they gain from thee, for ever
with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in thy glory
evermore with thee to reign.

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

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

Jesus said, "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes?"

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet. *Matthew 21:33-46*

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon The Rev'd Whitney F. Altopp, D.Min.

A moment for reflection follows the sermon.

All stand for The Nicene Creed

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.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray to the Lord of the Vineyard:

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

All kneel for The Confession of Sin

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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.**

Celebrant 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. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

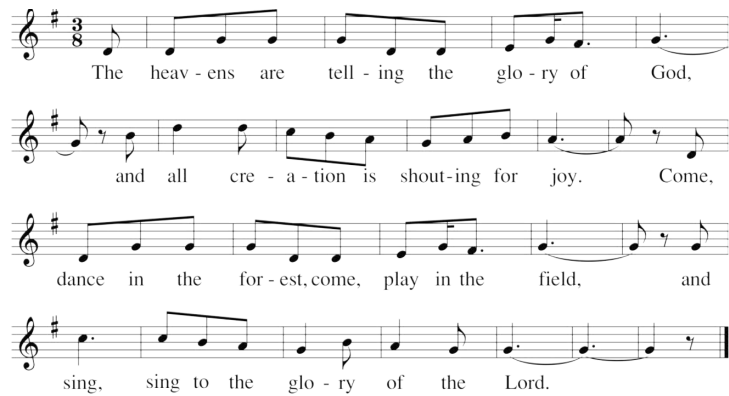
People And also with you.

Offertory Sentence

Celebrant Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and
make good thy vows unto the Most High.

Psalms 50:14

Celebration of Saint Francis



Offertory Anthem

Ralph Vaughan Williams

*Come, my way, my truth, my life:
such a way as gives us breath;
such a truth as ends all strife;
such a life as killeth death.*

*Come, my light, my feast, my strength:
such a light as shows a feast;
such a feast as mends in length;
such a strength as makes his guest.*

*Come, my joy, my love, my heart:
such a joy as none can move;
such a love as none can part;
such a heart as joys in love.*

All stand for the **Presentation Hymn** *Old Hundredth*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him, all creatures here below,
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving *Book of Common Prayer p. 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 him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. *The Celebrant prays a Proper Preface.* 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:

Sanctus

Mass of St. George, Barry Smith



All stand or kneel as the Celebrant continues and ends with

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

All

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

The Celebrant continues and ends with

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

People

Our Father, who 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 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

Celebrant Alleluia: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People Therefore let us keep the feast: Alleluia.

Fraction Anthem

Mass of St. George, Barry Smith



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 of the world, give us your peace.

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the people of God.

All join in singing Communion Hymn



(Haz - me un...)
1 ♪ Make me a chan - nel of your peace. Where
2 ♪ Make me a chan - nel of your peace. Where
4 ♪ Make me a chan - nel of your peace. It
there is ha - tred, let me bring your love. Where
there's de - spair in life, let me bring hope. Where
is in par - don - ing that we are par - doned, in
there is in - ju - ry, your par - don, Lord. ♪ and
there is dark - ness, on - ly light, ♪ and
giv - ing of our - selves that we re - ceive, and in
where there's doubt, true faith in you. joy. 3 Oh,
where there's sad - ness, ev - er dy - ing that we're born to e - ter - nal life.
Mas - ter, grant that I may nev - er seek so
much to be con - soled as to con - sole. To be
un - der - stood as to un - der - stand. To be
loved as to love, with all my soul.

All kneel for the Prayer After Communion

Celebrant Let us pray.

All Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

The Priest pronounces God's blessing and all respond Amen.

All stand and sing Hymn 400 v. 1, 4, 5, 7 Lasst uns erfreuen

- 1 All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voices, let us sing:
alleluia, alleluia!
Bright burning sun with golden beams,
Pale silver moon that gently gleams,
O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 4 Dear mother earth, you day by day
unfold your blessings on our way;
O praise him, Alleluia!
All flowers and fruits that in you grow,
Let them his glory also show:
O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 5 All you with mercy in your heart,
forgiving others, take your part,
O sing now: Alleluia!
All you that pain and sorrow bear,
praise God, and cast on him your care:
O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 7 Let all things their creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness,
O praise him, Alleluia!
Praise God the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:
O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Dismissal

Response Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Postlude

*The flowers on the altar are given
to the glory of God and in memory of*

Michael Sudzina
Elizabeth Sudzina Graham
Marshall Glenn Baldwin
Hazel Baldwin
Mary Ann Baldwin

Music Notes

On this Sunday, when we remember St. Francis and bless the animals, **All things bright and beautiful** invites us to praise God for the creatures and seasons around us. Cecil Frances Alexander wrote the text in the nineteenth century to teach children the words of the Apostles' Creed, "maker of heaven and earth." We sing it to ROYAL OAK, an English folk melody adapted for the hymn by Martin Shaw.

The vineyard in Isaiah and Psalm 80 is a gift entrusted to human care, but it also becomes an image of injustice and loss. Before the Gospel, **Christ is made the sure foundation** turns to the image with which Jesus ends his parable: the rejected stone made the cornerstone. The hymn's ancient Latin text comes to us through John Mason Neale's translation; its tune, WESTMINSTER ABBEY, is adapted from music by Henry Purcell.

At the Offertory, the choir sings Ralph Vaughan Williams's setting of "The Call," a poem by the seventeenth-century priest George Herbert. Its opening words, "Come, my way, my truth, my life," draw on Jesus' words in John 14:6. Herbert's successive invitations—light, feast, strength, joy, love—lead us toward the Eucharist, where Christ welcomes and nourishes his guests.

We depart singing **All creatures of our God and King**, William H. Draper's English paraphrase of St. Francis's "Canticle of the Sun." Its praise embraces the sun, moon, earth, flowers, and fruits; the stanza on mercy calls us to join creation's song through forgiveness. The tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN carries that praise into repeated Alleluias.