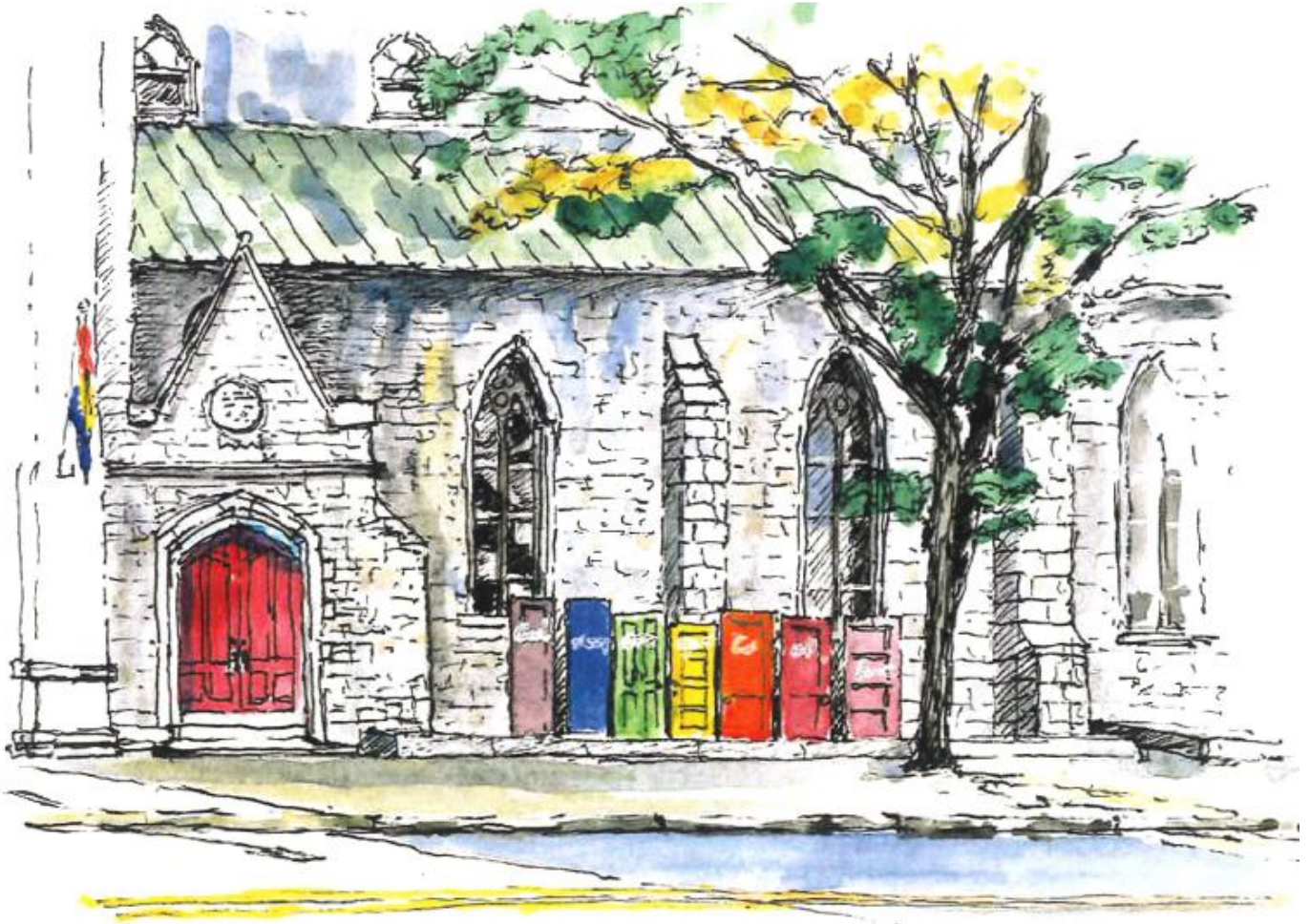




St. Paul's
Syracuse

The Downtown
Episcopal Church



"GOD'S DOORS ARE OPEN TO ALL. LOVE

W. ELKINS

AUGUST 31, 2025
9:30 AM
THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Understanding Episcopal Liturgy

#33. What is the reason the processions at the beginning, middle, and end of worship are led by a person carrying a processional cross?

The cross is the primary symbol for Jesus' disciples. The physical, tragic reality of the cross is that many thousands of people have been put to death by crucifixion in many different times and places. Some of these people were being punished for crimes they committed. Many of them were being tortured and executed in savage, senseless displays of cruelty and power, as a means of instilling fear in a population or for punishing political prisoners. Christ Jesus was one of this large group of innocent people who were put to death on a cross.

Many interpretations and meanings of Christ's crucifixion have been articulated during the past two thousand years. Two ideas are primary:

1. Christ's death on the cross is part of God's work of reconciling Godself with humankind, in the person of Christ Jesus. We can never fully describe the mystery of the reconciliation of God with humankind. It's helpful to talk about God's reconciling work in simple terms, such as 'just as we are broken, God was broken.'
2. Christ intentionally emptied himself of power in his suffering and death on the cross. We know this was a primary theme for early Christians, because St. Paul quotes the text of an ancient Christian hymn that addresses the theme of Christ's self-emptying in Philippians 2:6-11.

As we watch and follow the processional cross at the beginning, the end, and often in the middle of our worship services all of these ideas come to mind. We are disciples of the Lord of love who was willing to be crucified for the sake of the world. Just as God reconciled Godself with all humankind, so we also should be actively engaged in the work of reconciliation. As Christ emptied himself of power, we who follow Christ also empty ourselves of power in order to do the work of love.

If you have a question about something in our liturgy, I will be happy to answer it. Please ask in person, or send an email to me at revmajor@stpaulsyr.org.

Fr. Philip +

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

The people are invited to stand.

HYMN 51 • “We the Lord’s people, heart and voice uniting”

Decatur Place

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Celebrant † Blessed be the one, holy, and living God:
People **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

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.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

God of unclean hands, touching those rejected by the world, despised by the religious; guide us from the false purity that hides our brokenness, lead us to the joyful feast in which all are renewed; through Jesus Christ, the true bread.

All **Amen.**

Please be seated.

LESSON • Jeremiah 2:4-13

Lector A reading from the Prophet Jeremiah.

Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.

Thus says the LORD:

What wrong did your ancestors find in me

that they went far from me,

and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves?

They did not say, "Where is the LORD

who brought us up from the land of Egypt,

who led us in the wilderness,

in a land of deserts and pits,

in a land of drought and deep darkness,

in a land that no one passes through, where no one lives?"

I brought you into a plentiful land

to eat its fruits and its good things.

But when you entered you defiled my land,

and made my heritage an abomination.

The priests did not say, "Where is the LORD?"

Those who handle the law did not know me;

the rulers transgressed against me;
 the prophets prophesied by Baal,
 and went after things that do not profit.
 Therefore once more I accuse you, says the LORD,
 and I accuse your children's children.
 Cross to the coasts of Cyprus and look,
 send to Kedar and examine with care;
 see if there has ever been such a thing.
 Has a nation changed its gods,
 even though they are no gods?
 But my people have changed their glory
 for something that does not profit.
 Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
 be shocked, be utterly desolate, says the LORD,
 for my people have committed two evils:
 they have forsaken me,
 the fountain of living water,
 and dug out cisterns for themselves,
 cracked cisterns
 that can hold no water.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People **Thanks be to God.**

THE RESPONSE

Psalm 81:1, 10-16 *Exultate Deo*

- 1 Sing with joy to God our strength *
and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.
- 10 I am the LORD your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt and said, *
"Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."
- 11 And yet my people did not hear my voice, *
and Israel would not obey me.
- 12 So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their hearts, *
to follow their own devices.
- 13 Oh, that my people would listen to me! *
that Israel would walk in my ways!
- 14 I should soon subdue their enemies *
and turn my hand against their foes.
- 15 Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him, *
and their punishment would last for ever.
- 16 But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat *
and satisfy him with honey from the rock.

EPISTLE • Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Lector A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.
 Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honor by all, and

let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." So we can say with confidence,
"The Lord is my helper;
I will not be afraid.

What can anyone do to me?"

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Lector

People

Thanks be to God.

The people are invited to stand.

GRADUAL HYMN 679 • "Surely it is God who saves me"

Thomas Merton

Please remain standing

HOLY GOSPEL • Luke 14:1, 7-14

Celebrant

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

People

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Celebrant

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Celebrant

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus.

People

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

The Rev. Philip Major

A brief silence follows the sermon.

The people are invited to stand.

NICENE CREED

The word “creed” comes from the Latin credo, translated here as “we believe.” Credo is not simply belief in accurate propositions, but more deeply a sense of relationship or trust—an alternate translation might be “we give our heart,” “we trust,” “we rely upon.” Developed in the fourth century as a means of unifying a divided church, the Nicene Creed has been used by Christians in

worship for almost two thousand years, and connects us to our ancient ancestors in the Communion of Saints. The Creed is used in worship not because it comprises a list of doctrinal statements one must affirm in order to be considered a Christian, but rather as a song of praise and confidence in the Holy Trinity: God in three persons who creates, redeems and sanctifies a holy people.

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.**

Please remain standing.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Christ teaches us that if we ask, it will be given, if we seek, we will find, and, if we knock, the door will be opened. Almighty God, we pray now as faithful people who have turned our hearts to you.

The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

Show us your mercy, O Lord: **And grant us your salvation.**

Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. Endow our secular leaders, and our faith leaders, with wisdom and courage to mark the path that leads to forgiveness and love.

The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

Show us your mercy, O Lord: **And grant us your salvation.**

By creating the world, you prepared the ground for our existence. Having taken root on Earth, help us prudently tend to this garden, ensuring that its bounty can shelter and support all people.

The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

Show us your mercy, O Lord: **And grant us your salvation.**

Despite your admonition to love you and each other, the sword still rages in cities across the globe. Lord, let us each be channels of your peace, working for an end to war and persecution everywhere. We pray especially for an end to the conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, and Ukraine.

The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

Show us your mercy, O Lord: **And grant us your salvation.**

We cry to you in our trouble that you may deliver us from our distress. Help us recognize those among us who are suffering and show us how best to provide comfort. We pray especially for *n.*, and those we name silently or aloud.

The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

Show us your mercy, O Lord: **And grant us your salvation.**

The loss of one person impacts their family, but that loss ripples outward, diminishing our entire community. We pray for those who have died, especially *n.*, and those we name silently or aloud.

The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

Show us your mercy, O Lord: **And grant us your salvation.**

The Celebrant adds a concluding prayer.

CONFESSION

The people are invited to sit / kneel.

Officiant

Let us confess our sins to God.

All

God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

Officiant

† Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

All

Amen.

The people are invited to stand

THE PEACE

Celebrant

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People

And also with you.

LITURGY OF THE TABLE

The bread and wine for communion and the offering plates are brought forward at the beginning of the offertory.

OFFERTORY

*At the Offertory, we return thanks for God's blessings in our lives and invite you to place your contribution in the offering plate in the main aisle or give by texting 73256 entering **stpaulsy** (all lower case) and the amount you want to give.*

Celebrant

All things come of Thee, O Lord.

People

And of thine own have we given thee.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, Eucharistic Prayer A

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 our 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 . . . Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS

Hymnal S-130

Franz Schubert

Celebrant 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:

All **Christ has died.**
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Celebrant 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.

All **Amen.**
Celebrant And now, as our Savior has taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All **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

The breaking of the bread may be seen as the culminating activity of our worship. It is the ritual action symbolizing the activity whereby God emptied Godself of divine power for purpose of reconciling Godself with us. We have no words to accurately describe this divine activity, thus a period of 10-15 seconds of silence is kept following the breaking of the bread and before the singing of the Fraction Anthem.

FRACTION ANTHEM

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

You are invited to consume the consecrated bread immediately after you receive it. If you choose to receive the wine, drink directly from the cup. We are not dipping the bread into the wine at this time. Our understanding is that the sacrament of communion is complete if the bread or wine is received; it is not necessary to receive both.

^s

During the distribution of communion, Prayers for Healing and Wholeness may be offered at the Peace Altar.

HYMN AT COMMUNION: 325

The People are invited to stand.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Officiant Let us pray.
All **God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

BLESSING

HYMN 686 • “Come, thou fount of every blessing”

Nettleton

DISMISSAL

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

Please Keep These People in Your Prayers:

Destany W., Anne D., Ruth L., Cheryl G., Daniela B., Kira D., Kingsley L., Caleb H., Mary H., Jennie L. and Ken R.

We remember those who have died in recent days: Tahiana F. Rakotonanahary

Our thanks today for the...

Altar Guild: Father Philip

Lay Reader: Willson Cummer

Ushers: David Ridings

Flowers: Betsy Elkins

Announcements

This morning we welcome guest musician Pat Marcus Doherty who is filling in for Jim Potts.

The flowers today are given in loving memory of Clara and Nathaniel Abbott by their daughter Betsy Elkins.

Monday, September 1, our offices will be closed for Labor Day.

Today, Sunday, August 31: Come have some fun working together. Volunteers are needed to help affix mailing labels, address envelopes & add small notes for the invitation to the Open Doors ribbon cutting event to be held on October 17. Please help if you can.

Be sure to pick up a copy of the September Courier in the back of the church. Lots of great information and photos inside. Or you can read it online on our website. www.stpaulsyr.org



Updated Important Information About Parking in Our Lot

until construction is completed



Evenings (after 5:00 p.m.) and Sundays, you may park anywhere in the lot.



Monday-Saturday: The only parking available during the day is the few spots on the fence (not on the wall) until after 5:00 p.m. Downtown workers have paid to park in our lot. We have signed a contract with them, that they are guaranteed their parking place Monday through Saturday.



The construction workers who park around the dumpster, usually leave about 4:00 p.m. If they have gone, you can park there after 4:00 p.m.



The September Courier is hot off the press.

You can read it online on
our website, or pick up a
paper copy in the back of
the church.

Officers

Senior Warden: Joe Moorman
Junior Warden: Ieva Doyle
Treasurer: Doug Mouncey
Assistant Treasurer: Sandi Yingling
Clerk of the Vestry: Anita Wagner

2025

Vestry & Team Leaders

2025: Matthieu van der Meer, Harry Lambright, Barbara Bell
2026: Jeanne Chu, Tim Cassavaw, DJ Igelsrud
2027: Willson Cumber, Joe Russo, Tim Simmons
Finance Committee Chairperson: David Ridings
Children's Ministry Leader: Jeanne Avery
Worship Ministry Team Convener: Laurie Sanderson
Formation Ministry Team Convener: Jeanne Avery
Mission & Service Team Convener: Betsy Elkins
Community Fellowship Min. Convener: Elizabeth Belden-Handler
Buildings & Grounds Chair: Bill Pitcher
Office Volunteers: Liz Handler, Kira Dirghalli, Betsy Elkins, Sandi Yingling

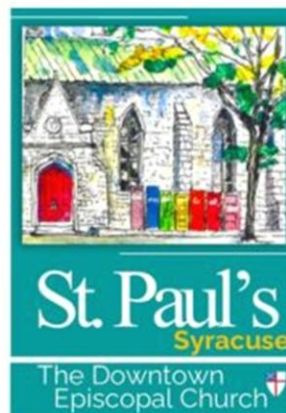
Staff

The Right Reverend Dr. DeDe Duncan Probe, Bishop of Central New York
The Reverend Philip Major, Rector of St. Paul's
James L. Potts, Organist and Choirmaster
Judy McAdoo-Pelton, Operations Manager
Doug Mouncey, Parish Assistant (Volunteer)
Mark King, Technology Assistant
Derek Lane, Security



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