SUNDAY JUNE 1, 2025

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Happy Pride!



It is important that we continue to hold and honor the stories of those in our lives, our friends, our family members, our neighbors, who have faced, and continue to face, persecution and violence simply because of who God made them to be.

This is especially true when the calendar turns to June and we look to celebrate with joy Pride Month. Our LGBTQIA+ siblings in Christ have faced persecution for generations both in our society at large and within the church. In the Episcopal Church we have worked hard to atone for that sin of persecution, becoming a church that is radically inclusive and affirming for all people, especially our LGTBQIA+ siblings.

Here at St. Stephen's we practice that radical welcome through being a reconciling, affirming, and inclusive Christian community striving through worship, love and service to welcome all people just as God created you. We believe that God delights in the diversity of creation and so do we!

It is especially appropriate to celebrate today as we near the end of our Easter celebration, to hold onto the joy and hope that is present in Christ's resurrection, a hope that is afforded to all in faith, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We are glad you are here with us!

ic Nather

RECTOR



#### Jesus at the Gay Bar

By Jay Hulme

He's here in the midst of it – right at the centre of the dance floor, robes hitched up to His knees to make it easy to spin.

At some point in the evening a boy will touch the hem of His robe and beg to be healed, beg to be anything other than this;

and He will reach His arms out, sweat-damped, and weary from dance. He'll cup the boy's face in His hand and say,

my beautiful child there is nothing in this heart of yours that ever needs to be healed. Often to be found high on a crumbling spiral staircase, or alone on a long walk, Jay Hulme is (so the biographies often say) an award winning transgender poet, theologian, speaker, and educator.

With a special interest in queer rights, nature, and theology, Jay's work engages particularly with ideas of faith, place, and identity. Here there are no boundaries, as he intertwines the urban and pastoral; the sacred and mundane; the likely and the impossible.

At the heart of all of Jay's work is a vision of a world full of beauty and possibility, offered up to us all through strange lichenous poems full of wilderness, mysticism, and love.

*From Jay Hulme, Poet:* The poem quite obviously riffs off Mark 5, drawing a parallel between the unnamed woman in the passage, and queer people - more particularly, the "boy" in the poem, a young LGBT man struggling with his queerness, and, it is suggested, struggling with how that reconciles with his faith. To understand the parallel more clearly you first have to understand the context behind Mark 5. Under Levitical law, as it was followed at that time, the woman would have been deemed 'unclean' by religious authorities, and she would have been cast out from society for the 'good' of that society. Religious authorities, leaning on the harshest proscriptions of scripture and disregarding its wider message, deemed the woman in Mark 5 a danger to society, disgusting, and someone to be cast aside. Do we see any parallels to queer people and our relationship with some religious authorities today?

And, of course, going back to that section of Leviticus, Jesus should be horrified by the touch of this woman - the Levitical code states that her uncleanliness is passed on by touch, after all - but he is not horrified. In fact, by reaching out to him in faith the unnamed woman is welcomed.

Jesus defies expectations and "rules" and instead provides healing and love. But, in this poem, there is no healing, Jesus states "there is nothing in this heart of yours that ever needs to be healed" Or... is that not quite true?

You see, there is healing in this poem - it's just not the healing you'd expect. In the poem, just as in Mark 5, and throughout the Gospels, Jesus does the unexpected (especially if what is 'expected' is the 'letter of the law' as proscribed by religious authorities). The boy's queerness is not healed, because, as stated, it does not need to be healed. And it is through not healing their queerness that the boy (and hopefully the reader) is healed of whatever it was that made them reach out to Jesus in the first place, and beg to not be queer.

#### Hail the day that sees him rise

The Hymnal 1982, #214



Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt. Music: Llanfair, Robert Williams (1781-1821).

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

(Please be stand as able)

Alleluia. Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.

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.** 

Children are invited to follow the procession of the cross from the Church to the Parish Hall for Sunday School. While the program is geared for children 10 & under, ALL children are welcome to attend. Parents are also welcome to attend. Children will return to the church in time for Eucharist (typically returning after the passing of the peace).

#### GLORY TO GOD MOST HIGH

*Misa del Mundo* Jesse Manibusan



8

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen**.

God of all Creation, you have made us in your image, a rainbow of every color, culture, gender expression, language, orientation, and nation; grant that, when we look at one another, we may see You, expressed in yet another language of love; and grant that we may honor your holy presence in every life. We pray because of Jesus, who shows us the way. **Amen**.

#### (Please be seated for readings from Holy Scripture)

A Reading from Acts 16:16-34

With Paul and Silas, we came to Philippi in Macedonia, a Roman colony, and, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 97

- 1 The Lord is King; let the earth rejoice; \* let the multitude of the isles be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him, \* righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.
- 3 A fire goes before him \* and burns up his enemies on every side.
- 4 His lightnings light up the world; \* the earth sees it and is afraid.
- 5 The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, \* at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
- 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, \* and all the peoples see his glory.
- 7 Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods! \* Bow down before him, all you gods.
- 8 Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, \* because of your judgments, O Lord.
- 9 For you are the Lord, most high over all the earth; \* you are exalted far above all gods.
- 10 The Lord loves those who hate evil; \* he preserves the lives of his saints and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
- 11 Light has sprung up for the righteous, \* and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted.
- 12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, \* and give thanks to his holy Name.

A reading from Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

At the end of the visions I, John, heard these words:

"See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.

"It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let everyone who hears say, "Come." And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.

The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Procession (before reading) & Recession (after reading) (Please stand as able)



## The Holy Gospel of Our Savior According to John 17:20-26 Glory to you, O Christ.

Jesus prayed for his disciples, and then he said. "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

"Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

The Gospel of Our Savior. Praise to you, O Christ.

#### Homily--Fr. Nic Mather

## THE NICENE CREED

(Please stand as able)

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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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

*Celebrant:* God, you have never lost hope in us. Help us to live into that hope and fulfill Jesus' prayer that we may all be one in Christ. In gratitude, and anticiapation of your will being made manifest in our lives, we offer our prayers as we say, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for the people of God across the world and for the church in all its wondrous diversity, that we migh find common ground for continuing Christ's mission together, grounded in our common love of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** 

We pray for those in leadership in all the nations of the world. Guide them, inspire them, grant them wisdom so that there might be peace and shared prosperity across the whole human race. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** 

We pray for the places we call home. Embolden us to use our gifts and energies to proclaim our hope in you through service to our neighbors. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** 

We pray for the natural world that sustains us. Help us to be effective stewards of the environment and natural resources so that the created abundance of life my not be despoiled or destroyed.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for all who suffer in soul, body or mind. Grant them healing and release them from pain and suffering. Especially we pray for David Hughey, Ron & Harriet Byrnes, Shirley Johnson, Lyn Spens, Reed Nunnelee, D Rowley and those you now name either silently or aloud. *pause*. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

We pray for those who have died, that they may rest in peace and rise in glory in your promised new age.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God, who made us in your infinite creativity, you have chosen the spectrum of the rainbow to be the sign of your blessing and protection.

We pray for your children in the rains of inequality and oppression, that they would see your blessing.

On this Pride Sunday, we remember those who have blazed the trail for LGBTQ+ equality and justice.

We pray for those who continue to fight for full equality under the law.

I invite your prayers for communities that have been violated by violence; for our neighbors struggling for food, shelter, and dignity; and for our efforts to be loving neighbors and steadfast friends who walk beside them. **We pray for all who struggle in this world.** 

We pray for those who continue to live under the threat of intimidation, oppression, or violence in our communities because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or the color of their skin.

#### God of life, help us to see you in all forms of identity and expression.

We pray for LGBTQ+ children and youth who struggle with isolation and shame, who have no safe space to retreat to, or mentors who can teach and guide them through their journey of self-discovery.

Empower us to walk in the way of love, to welcome the excluded and care for the vulnerable, to work for justice, and rejoice in the spirit of life.

*Celebrant:* Holy One, as you have blessed us and heard our prayers, we pray that you will now send us in your name. Help us to imagine the future and to work toward it, encouraged by your word of hope to us. Strengthen us when we falter; offer us light when we cannot find our way. Grant us joy today as we celebrate, and tomorrow, we ask that you fill us with your light, your love, your power, and your strength for the work at hand. Remind us that you are with us always, even as you push us gently away from the shore. We pray in Jesus' name. **Amen.** 

## THE PEACE & OFFERTORY

The Peace of the Risen Lord be with you and remain with you always. **Thanks be to God!** 

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his name, bring offerings and come into his courts.

#### **Offertory Music**

Berceuse Luke Askeland Flute

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST

(Please stand as able)

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing:

#### Holy, holy, holy Lord [Sanctus]

Wonder Love and Praise, #858



We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he 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." Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

We praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you, and we pray to you, Lord our God.

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

Remember Phil, Nic, Michael, and all who minister in your Church. Remember all your people, and those who seek your truth. Remember all who have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone; bring them into the place of eternal joy and light.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, matriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with Stephen and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **AMEN**.

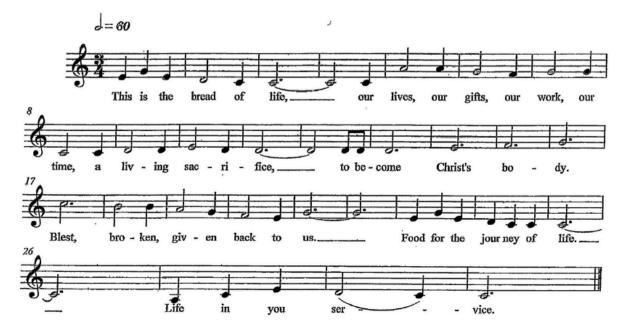
As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

**The Fraction** 

**Food Song** 

Ann Long/Kathleen Patton



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.

You are invited to come forward and receive Eucharist at this time. We will be sharing wine from a common chalice, so if you would prefer intinction please let the priest know so that they may intinct in a separate chalice reserved for this practice. Gluten free communion is available and a non-alcoholic option in place of the wine is also available upon request.

#### For those joining via Live-Stream:

#### A Prayer for a Person Unable to Take the Eucharist

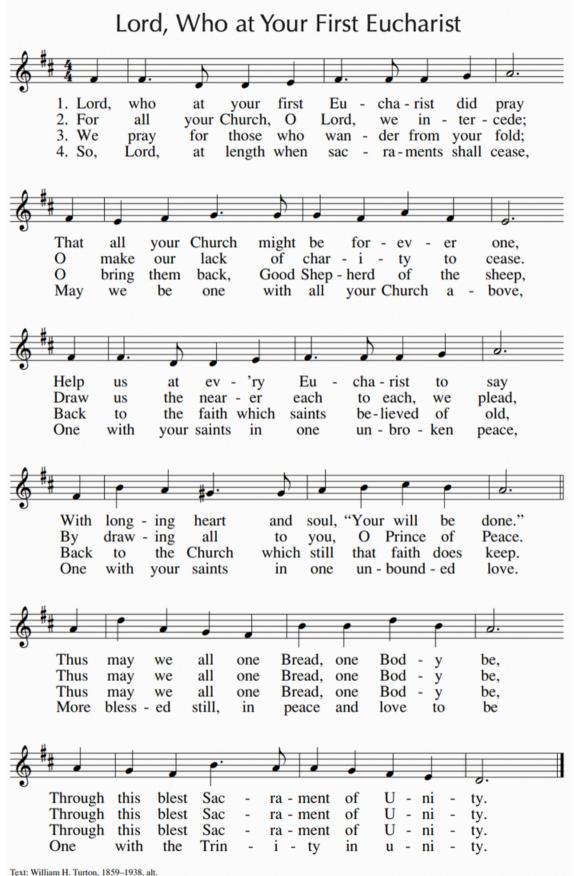
(St. Alphonsus de Liguori, 1696-1787)

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

#### **Prayer for Eucharistic Visitor**

We offer a prayer from our community to those who are unable to join us as we send the sacrament to them carried by a minister of the church

As you go to the sick and homebound, take with you not only the sacrament that we have celebrated, but also the Word of God which we have heard, as well as the affection of this parish community. Ask for the prayers of those whom you visit in return. Go, now, with God's peace and blessing. **AMEN**.



Tune: UNDE ET MEMORES, 10 10 10 10 with refrain; William H. Monk, 1823-1889, alt.

## POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

(Kneeling as able)

Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

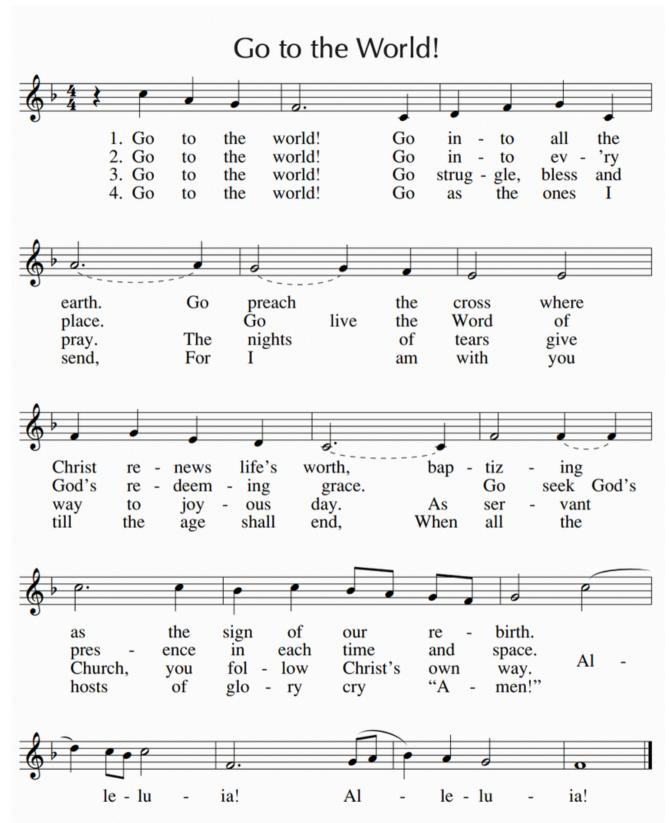
The Wisdom of God, the Love of God, and the Grace of God strengthen you to be Christ's hands and heart in this world, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.** 

(You are invited to stand as able.)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Closing Hymn Community Invitations

Join us next week for our joyful celebration of the Feast of Pentecost! Following the worship join us for a special birthday themed potluck at coffee hour! If able, please bring a dish to share based on the following: Last Name A-H: Side Dish Last Name I-O: Dessert Last Name P-W: Main Dish



Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993, © 1991, GIA Publications, Inc. Tune: SINE NOMINE, 10 10 10 with alleluias; Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958

#### **Worship Leaders**

Celebrant--Fr. Nic Mather Musician--Riki Davis Acolyte--Altar Guild--Gretchen Niemi, Heather Niemi Reader--Ladonna Stacey, Maddy Glaser Greeter--Rob Painter-Johnson Chalice Bearer--Mary Lyons Usher--Don Willows Verger--Lisa Sudar Vestry Presence--Gretchen Niemi, Rob Painter-Johnson

Connect with Fr. Nic:

Please leave your name and email/phone number and Fr. Nic will connect with you this week with an invitation to enjoy a cup of coffee on him!

Name:

Email/Phone: