Saint Stephen's EPISCOPAL CHURCH

October 2, 2026

Greetings Friends!



This Sunday, October 4 is the **Feast of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.** We will celebrate at St. Stephen's with an outdoor service of joyful prayer and **blessing of animals at 11:00 am**. See below for details.

In honor of St. Francis's love for all God's creatures, we share this poem by Seamus Heaney titled "Saint Francis and the Birds."

When Francis preached love to the birds
They listened, fluttered, throttled up
Into the blue like a flock of words

Released for fun from his holy lips.
Then wheeled back, whirred about his head,
Pirouetted on brothers' capes.

Danced on the wing, for sheer joy played
And sang, like images took flight.
Which was the best poem Francis made,

His argument true, his tone light.

Sunday Hymns Preview

Click on the title to listen

#372, Praise to the Living God

#711 Seek Ye First

#405 All things bright and beautiful



Blessing of Animals on the Feast of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi

October 4, 11:00 am on the Front Lawn

After the service this Sunday, we will **gather outside on the front lawn** on the feast of St. Francis and St. Clare to give thanks for creation and our animal companions. We will **welcome our neighbors and bless all animals** who attend. Invite your friends and

bring your beloved pet to this joyful event! If your pet is too shy, feel free to bring a photograph and we will bless them in absentia.

Also, take a peek at our new Blessing of the Animals banner. You may recognize a familiar face!

Last Call for the Women's Retreat!

Encountering the Divine Feminine
October 9-11, 2026 at Sacred Waters Center for Restoration and Retreat



Learn about the Women's Retreat on our webpage and register here. Rev. Jennifer and Victoria Scarlett, a scholar and teacher about sacred art, will **explore the divine feminine through image and story**. The cost is $300 per person, with scholarships available. Contact **Kathy Graunke** for more information.



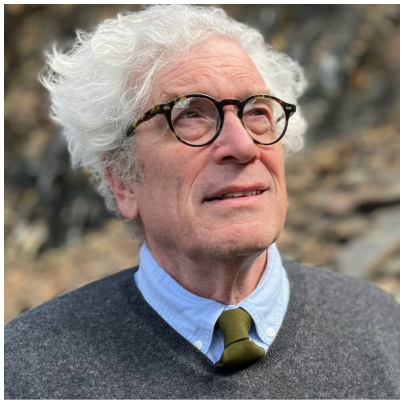
New Date! Sunday Forum: Mutual Ministry Goals

October 18, 11:30 am in the Parish Hall

On Sunday, October 18 we'll gather after church for **a conversation led by Senior Warden Chris Dorling** on the mutual ministry goals of the parish and where the spirit is leading St. Stephen's.

Letter from the Palestinian Prison

David Wild, Executive Producer
October 25, 11:30 am in the Parish Hall



After church on October 25, we'll welcome Producer David Wild, where **he'll share his 12 minute film *Letter from the Palestinian Prison***, shot in the West Bank in 2025.

David says this about his film: "After years of watching films and reading books about the situation in Palestine, last September I decided to visit. I travelled there alone and my goal was to meet Palestinian Christians and bring a message back to my friends in Western Washington. I was pretty much alone -- the only visitor at the Jordan River Baptismal Site and by myself in the Tomb at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. I interviewed four amazing people who changed my life. Their grace under this apartheid is incredible. The message I brought back surprised me.

After screening the film, we will have a discussion. Some friends of mine who are much more familiar with the current situation can help answer questions about education, the legal system, land use and housing and pilgrimage. This is meant to bring awareness to the plight of our Palestinian brothers and sisters. It's not political — it is based on our common baptismal covenant 'to respect the dignity of every human being.'"

David Wild is a filmmaker based in Seattle. Learn more about David **here.**



All Saints Day with Baptism

November 1, 10:00 am in the Nave

On Sunday, November 1 **we'll celebrate all Saints Day with the baptism of Maddie Rivera!** After church, we'll commemorate the occasion with cake, so mark your calendars!

Sunday Forum: Finances and Budget

November 8, 11:30 am in the Parish Hall

Join the community on Sunday, **November 8 for a conversation about the church budget** and how the church can invest in its ministries and service to the community in the coming year.





When Chess Pieces Come Alive by Elizabeth Clark-Stern

November 14, 2:00 pm in the Parish Hall

Our comedy, Elizabeth Clark-Stern's, **WHEN CHESS PIECES COME ALIVE** features a Black Pawn whose mispronunciations are corrected by a superior White Pawn, a Black Knight who quotes Shakespeare to his beloved White Castle, and a King who thinks he is the most powerful monarch in the world, even though he can only move one square at a time! When George the Mastiff exercises his appetite for small wooden things, the Chess Pieces are thrown into chaos. **Must they continue to die in every game? Can the rules be changed? Can they embrace love instead of war?**

What: When the Chess Pieces Come Alive by Elizabeth Clark-Stern
When: Saturday, November 14th @ 2pm. Doors open at 1:30.
Where: St. Stephen's, Parish Hall.
Cost: Free! Suggested donation to St. Stephen's: $25.

New Date! Liturgical Minister Training

November 22, 11:30 am in the Nave

This training prepares volunteers to assist with worship services through theological reflection, role instructions, and practical practice. **Liturgical ministers include anyone who serves on the altar guild, acolytes, eucharistic ministers, lectors, and intercessors.**



Community Bulletin Board

Laurelhurst Early Learning is always looking for new toys, activities and supplies. If you would like to purchase items that the school needs, please check out their **Amazon Wishlist**. Used items are also welcome. Thank you for your continued support!

There are now 5x7 inch flyers for Laurelhurst Early Learning located on the Narthex table. It would be a great help if everybody grabbed a few to **distribute to local businesses and families.** The staff of LEL thanks you!

Coming Up at St. Stephen's

Sundays 10:00 am Holy Eucharist and Coffee Hour (Nave and Parish Hall)
Sundays 3:00 pm Youth Group Food Program (Narthex)
Tuesdays 11:00 am Still Waters: Community, Contemplation, and Action (Parish Hall)
Wednesdays 6:30 pm Men's Bible Study (Duchess Tavern)
Wednesdays 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study (Vestry Room)
Thursdays 6:30 pm Choir Practice (Nave)

October 4, 11:30 am Blessing of Animals on the Feast of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi (Front Lawn)
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October 25, 11:30 am *Letter from the Palestinian Prison* by David Wild, Executive Producer (Parish Hall)
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