



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

Wednesday, 8 November 2023 9:30am—The feast of Ammonius

November is Native American Heritage Month. It is celebrated to honor the remarkable Native Americans who have contributed a lot to improve the character of the nation. This month is the time to rejoice in diverse and rich cultures, histories, and traditions and to appreciate the great contributions of the Native Americans.

From the Episcopal Journal

Drive far from your church, O God, every vain spirit of clerical ambition, that, like your servant Ammonius, we may refuse to conflate ordination and leadership, and may never confuse rank with holiness; in the name of your son Jesus Christ our Lord, who alone is our great High Priest. Amen.

I had never heard of Ammonius until I discovered that today is his feast day. Ammonius was the founder of a fourth century monastic community of hermits in Egypt and had a clear call to live not only as a hermit, but as a spiritual director and guide. Others viewed him as a natural leader and

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Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Allison Cornell

Presider: Blessed be the One who creates all things.

People: The Holy One's love is new every morning.

Gloria:

H1982 #385 Many and Great O God

1 Man - y and great, O God, are thy works, ma - ker of
2 Grant un - to us com - mun - ion with thee, thou star - a -
earth and sky; thy hands have set the hea - vens with stars;
bid - ing one; come un - to us and dwell with us;
thy fin - gers spread the moun - tains and plains. Lo, at thy
with thee are found the gifts of life. Bless us with
word the wa - ters were formed; deep seas o - bey thy voice.
life that has no end, e - ter - nal life with thee.

Presider: God our Creator be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

The Collect:

All: Drive far from your church, O God, every vain spirit of clerical ambition, that, like your servant Ammonius, we may refuse to conflate ordination and leadership, and may never confuse rank with holiness; in the name of your son Jesus Christ our Lord, who alone is our great High Priest. Amen. Amen.

(Please be seated for the reading of the lessons)

First Lesson: A reading from 1 Samuel (10:20-27):

Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the family of the Matrites was taken by lot. Finally he brought the family of the Matrites near man by man, and Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not be found. So they inquired again of the Lord, “Did the man come here?” and the Lord said, “See, he has hidden himself among the baggage.” Then they ran and brought him from there. When he took his stand among the people, he was head and shoulders taller than any of them. Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see the one whom the Lord has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people.” And all the people shouted, “Long live the king!”

Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship; and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord. Then Samuel sent all the people back to their homes. Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went warriors whose hearts God had touched. But some worthless fellows said, “How can this man save us?” They despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

Reader The Word of the Lord

People Thanks be to God

The Psalm: Psalm 24

- 1 The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, *
the world and all who dwell therein.**
- 2 For it is he who founded it upon the seas *
and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.**
- 3 "Who can ascend the hill of the Lord? " *
and who can stand in his holy place?"**
- 4 "Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, *
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,
nor sworn by what is a fraud.**
- 5 They shall receive a blessing from the Lord *
and a just reward from the God of their salvation."**
- 6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, *
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.**
- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.**
- 8 "Who is this King of glory?" *
"The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle."**
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.**
- 10 "Who is he, this King of glory?" *
"The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory."**

Gospel Lesson:

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Matthew (23:1-12):

People: Glory to you Lord Christ.

Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father-- the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you Lord Christ.

SERMON

Nicene Creed *(Traditional)*

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.**

Prayers of the People: *The Leader and People pray responsively*

Leader: For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God

People: And for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

Leader: For our Bishops, Priests, and Deacons

People: And for all clergy and lay ministers, let us pray to the Lord

Leader: For our President, for the leaders of the nations

People: And for all in authority around the world, let us pray to the Lord

Leader: For seasonable weather

People: And for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord

Leader: For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans

People: And for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord

Leader: For the poor and oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute

People: For prisoners and captives and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Leader: For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection

People: And for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

Leader: For deliverance from all danger

People: And from all violence, oppression and degradation, let us pray to the Lord

Leader: In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for *The Diocese of Argentina*
– *The Anglican Church of South America*

People: Lord, bless and keep them.

Leader: In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for *St. Paul's, in Tombstone*

People: Lord, bless and keep them.

Leader: For the first peoples of this land, especially the Apache and Tahona
Odum peoples who called this area home.

People: Lord, bless and keep them.

Presider: Lord, hear the prayers of your people; and what we have asked
faithfully, grant that we may obtain effectually, to the glory of your
Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Confession

Deacon: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Short Silence may be kept.)

All: 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.

Presider: Almighty God have mercy on us forgive us all our sins through our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace:

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

(People greet each other with signs of peace)

Offertory

Presider: Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to the Lord.

Doxology - *(Tune Lasst Uns Erfreuen) (Peoples' offerings are brought to the altar)*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise him all creatures here below

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Praise him above, ye heavenly host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving - ELCA Rite X

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider

It is indeed right, and our duty and our joy that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks and praise, for you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ your Son.

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

#S128

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest

The Presider continues

O God most mighty, O God most merciful, O God our rock and our salvation, hear us as we praise you, call us to your table, and grant us your life.

When the world was a formless void, you formed order and beauty. When Abraham and Sarah were barren, you sent them a child. When the Israelites were enslaved, you led them to freedom. When Ruth faced starvation, David fought Goliath, and the psalmists cried out for healing and full of compassion, you granted the people your life.

You entered our world in Jesus our savior. He was born among the poor, he lived under oppression, he wept over the city. With infinite love, he granted the people your life.

In the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, gave thanks; broke the bread and gave it to his followers saying: Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering his death: We cry out Amen!

Celebrating his resurrection: We shout Amen!

Trusting his presence in every time and place: We plead Amen!

O God, you are Breath: Send your Spirit on this meal (+). O God, you are Bread: feed us with yourself. O God, you are Wine: warm our hearts and make us one. O God, you are fire: transform us with hope (+).

O God most majestic, O God most motherly, O God our strength and our song, you show us a vision of a tree of life with fruits for all and leaves that heal the nations. Grant us such life, the life of the Father to the Son, the life of the Spirit of your Christ, life in you, now and forever. AMEN.

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

Lord's Prayer: (Traditional)

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 priest breaks the bread in silence)*

Fraction Anthem

(S-156)

**Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us
Therefore let us keep the feast**

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: 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 and with thanksgiving.

(All are invited and welcome to come forward and receive communion in this church. The bread is gluten free and the wine is real wine. If you prefer to intinct/dip your bread into the wine, please come to the left altar rail. If you prefer to sip the wine from the cup, please come to the right altar rail. If you would prefer a priest's blessing instead of the wine and bread, please come to the rail and cross your arms over your chest.)

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Healing Prayer, Travelers, Gratitude Sharing

Post Communion Prayer *The people stand as they are able.*

Presider Let us Pray

All: Most gracious God, by whose knowledge the depths are broken up and the clouds drop down the dew: We give you hearty thanks and praise for the return of seedtime and harvest, for the increase of the ground and the gathering of its fruits, and for all other blessings of your merciful providence bestowed upon us as a nation and a people.

And we ask that you would give us a just sense of your great mercies that may appear in our lives by a humble, holy, and obedient walking before you all our days: through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be all glory and honor, world without end. Amen.

Benediction/Blessing:

Presider: *God the Creator, who loves us and gave this world to be our home, God the Redeemer, who loves us and by dying and rising again leads the way to freedom, God the Sanctifier, who spreads the divine love in our hearts, God the three in one and one in three, bless you and keep you now and forever.*
Amen.

Dismissal:

Deacon: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon: *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in God's Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (Alleluia!)

Continued from front

tried to convince him to be ordained, but he declined. In fact, he so fervently opposed it that he chopped off his own ear, citing the passage in Leviticus 21 which required priests of God to be whole. His protestation did not deter the crowd, so he threatened to cut his tongue out, as well.

Ordination is tricky in the Christian world. Each denomination has developed its own theology regarding ordination and discernment. In the Episcopal Church, many people believe that the ordained person experiences an ontological change that continues regardless of whether the ordinand is serving in a faith community, or not. In other denominations, people treat the ordained person as being more special or holy than others, which of course is not true. (I know many lay people who are holy and several priests that are not!) Seeking ordination is about discerning God's call on one's life, as Ammonius exemplifies.

The call of all baptized Christians, as our Episcopal Catechism asserts, "is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread for the kingdom of God" (BCP 856). The ministries of bishop, priest/presbyter, and deacons suggest distinct gifts particular to those roles and which support the foundational call of being a Christian.

Discernment can lead to many paths, and ordination should not be seen as a better or higher path to serving God. In some cases, ordination restricts a person to a role that limits what God might be calling the person to – perhaps to something more expansive than the parameters of serving the church. I sense that Ammonius imagined that this would happen to him, if ordained, and wanted the freedom to serve God in the way God had called him.

Discernment is important—both individual and communal—and should be focused on God's call. Discernment is lifelong and its outcome may change depending on one's season of life.

I am grateful for Ammonius' example and his passion in following what God called him to do instead of what the people thought he should do.

You can read more about Ammonius [here](#).

The Rev. Danae M. Ashley, MDiv, MA, LMFT is an Episcopal priest and marriage and family therapist who has ministered with parishes in North Carolina, New York, Minnesota, and is serving part-time as the Associate Rector at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Seattle and a therapist at Soul Spa Seattle, LLC. She has written for a number of publications, produced a play, and has been featured on several podcasts regarding fertility struggle and faith. Danae's favorite past times include reading, traveling with her husband, dancing with wild abandon to Celtic music, and serious karaoke.

