



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

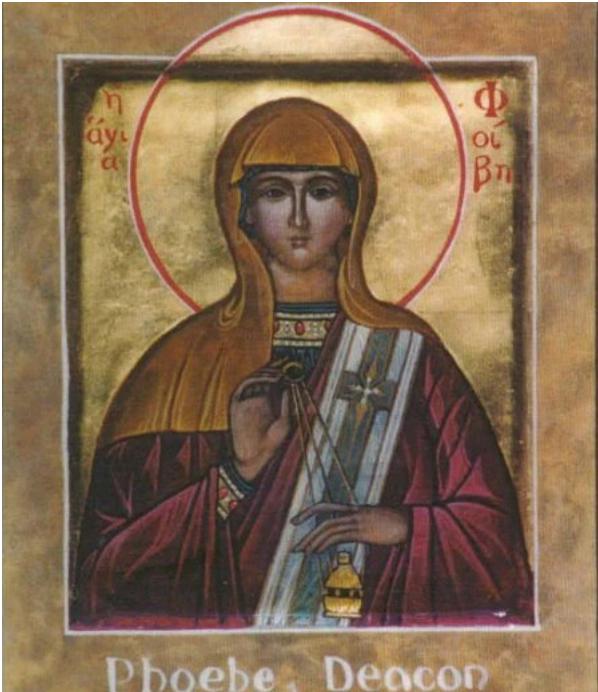
Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

FEAST OF PHOEBE, DEACON

9:30 am Wednesday, 3 Sep 2025

MORNING PRAYER

[From Lessor Feasts & Fasts](#)



Phoebe appears once in Paul's letter to the Romans (16:1), where she is referred to as both a deacon in the church at Cenchræe, near Corinth, and a benefactor of Paul and others. The fact that Paul commends her to the Roman church at the end of the letter suggests the possibility that she was the messenger, which would speak highly of Paul's trust in her. There may even have been more to her mission, as Paul commands the Christians in Rome to help her in whatever she needs.

It is unknown what other impact she had in the early church, but she is an example of the many early workers who supported Paul in the spreading of the Gospel, often personally carrying that message across the Empire. We may often think that Paul did it all himself, or at least with the help of only a few of the more prominent individuals such as Luke. But the brief mention of Phoebe gives us an example of

[Continued Pg 7](#)

Opening Sentences *(Please stand as you are able)*

Leader: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. *(Psalm 43:3)*

Confession of Sin

Deacon/Leader: 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.

Deacon/Leader: 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 Invitatory and Psalter

Leader: Lord, open our lips.

People: **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Jubilate *(For the Gloria):*

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; * serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.

Know this: The Lord himself is God; * he himself has made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise; * give thanks to him and call upon his Name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; * and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

LITURGY OF THE WORD: *(Please be seated for the lessons)*

First Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Ezekiel (2:1-7):

He said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord God." Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

And you, O mortal, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words, and do not be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. You shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house.

Reader The Word of the Lord **People** **Thanks be to God**

The PSALM:

Psalm 40:4-10 (read in unison)

- 4 Happy are they who trust in the Lord! ***
they do not resort to evil spirits or turn to false gods.
- 5 Great things are they that you have done, O Lord my God!**
how great your wonders and your plans for us! *
there is none who can be compared with you.
- 6 Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! ***
but they are more than I can count.
- 7 In sacrifice and offering you take no pleasure ***
(you have given me ears to hear you);
- 8 Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required, ***
and so I said, "Behold, I come.
- 9 In the roll of the book it is written concerning me: ***
'I love to do your will, O my God;
your law is deep in my heart.'"
- 10 I proclaimed righteousness in the great congregation; ***
behold, I did not restrain my lips;
and that, O Lord, you know.

Second Lesson: A Reading from Romans (16:1–7)

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well. Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus, and who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ. Greet Mary, who has worked very hard among you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

Reader The Word of the Lord **People** **Thanks be to God**

Gospel Lesson: Luke (11:42-54) *(Please stand as you are able)*

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Luke**:

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

Jesus said, “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love to have the seat of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces. Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without realizing it.”

One of the lawyers answered him, “Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us too.” And he said, “Woe also to you lawyers! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not lift a finger to ease them. Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors killed. So you are witnesses and approve of the deeds of your ancestors; for they killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’ so that this generation may be charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against this generation. Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”

When he went outside, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile toward him and to cross-examine him about many things, lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord
People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

Reflection on readings Deacon Dottie Gutwein

The Apostles Creed:

Deacon/Leader: Let us say together the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth; I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Leader The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Leader Let us pray.

All: Eternal God, who raised up Phoebe as a deacon in your church and minister of your Gospel; Grant us that same grace that, assisted by her prayers and example, we too may take the Gospel to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Suffrages (A)

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;

R. And grant us your salvation.

V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

R. Let your people sing with joy.

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

R. For only in you can we live in safety.

V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

V. Let your way be known upon earth;

R. Your saving health among all nations.

V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;
R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Exchange of the Peace

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you.

The Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The Offertory

Presider: Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself as a offering and sacrifice to God.

Doxology **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.

Collect for Guidance

Leader: O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Other Intercessions and Thanksgivings: Birthdays, Anniversaries, Healing, Travel, Gratuities

Prayer of St. Chrysostom (All in unison)

Leader: Let us Pray

All: Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

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

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon/Leader: Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Deacon/Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all for evermore. Amen.

Continued from front:

the many women and men whose calling was to work faithfully in the background to ensure that the Gospel would spread throughout the world. More from [Wikipedia the free encyclopedia](#)

[Phoebe \(Koine Greek: Φοίβη\)](#) was a first-century Christian woman mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, verses 16:1–2. A notable woman in the church of Cenchreae, she was trusted by Paul to deliver his letter to the Romans.[1] Paul refers to her both as a "servant" or "deacon" (Greek diakonos, which means "servant") and as a helper or patron of many (Greek prostatis). This is the only place in the New Testament where a woman is specifically referred to with these two distinctions. Paul introduces Phoebe as his emissary to the church in Rome and, because they are not acquainted with her, Paul provides them with her credentials.

Background

Paul's letter to the Romans was written in Corinth sometime between the years 56 and 58 in order to solicit support for an anticipated missionary journey to Spain.[2] Although he had not yet visited Rome, Paul would have been familiar with the community and its circumstances through Priscilla and Aquila, who were in Corinth, having previously lived in Rome. Biblical scholars are divided as to whether Chapter 16, Paul's letter of recommendation for Phoebe, was intended for Rome, with whose Christian community he was not acquainted, or with the more familiar community at Ephesus.[2]

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon (servant) of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

The name Phoebe means "pure", "radiant", or "bright"; and was the name of a Titan in Greek mythology.[4]

Some scholars believe Phoebe was responsible for delivering Paul's epistle to the Roman Christian church.[5]

Phoebe is the only woman named as deacon (which means "servant" in Greek) in the Bible.

Greek terms for her titles

diakonos

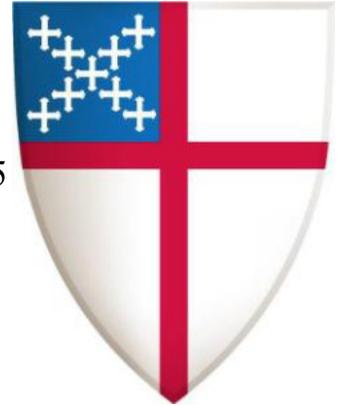
Apostle Paul used the Greek diakonos (διάκονος) to designate Phoebe as a deacon. "Deacon" is a transliteration of the Greek, and in Paul's writings sometimes refers to a Christian designated to serve as a specially-appointed "assistant" to the overseers of a church,[7] and at others refers to "servants" in a general sense. In the letter to the Romans, apart from the debated case of Phoebe, it always refers to "servants" in the generic sense, as opposed to a church office.[8]

However, at this inaugural stage in the Church's formation, some argue, it is premature to think of offices as being consistent or clearly defined, and biblical scholar Rosalba Manes argues that Paul's use of the term "deacon" suggests that, like Stephen and Philip, Phoebe's [Continued online](#)

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Or you can also use the QRC here to fill this out online.



Info Update Giving Envelopes Mail News Letter

Name _____
(first) (Mid.) (Last)

Hm: _____ Cell _____

Avn. Date _____

Email: _____ BrthDate _____

Adrs: _____

City, St., Zip: _____, _____, _____