



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 BIRGITTA OF SWEDEN

9:30 am Wednesday, 8 Oct 2025

MORNING PRAYER

[From Lessor Feasts & Fasts](#)



Birgitta Birgersdotter came from a noble Swedish family and was born in 1303. Early in her life she discerned a religious vocation, but was married against her will at the age of 13 to a member of the Swedish nobility. The couple had eight children. Birgitta sought to live a holy, religious life. When her husband was absent, she openly practiced a strict asceticism, and when he was home, she did so secretly. Both she and her husband became members of the Franciscan Third Order, which admitted laypeople.

From childhood, Birgitta had experienced visions. Christ, Mary, and the saints spoke with her often in Swedish and shared with her warnings intended for others, which Birgitta would write down or dictate to her confessor. Eventually these messages became increasingly political, which caused her great discomfort. Although Birgitta enjoyed a good relationship with the royal family, she sharply criticized the king, becoming a symbolic leader for the aristocratic Swedish opposition.

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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 First Samuel (28:3-19):

Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. Saul had expelled the mediums and the wizards from

the land. The Philistines assembled, and came and encamped at Shunem. Saul gathered all Israel, and they encamped at Gilboa. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. When Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, not by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, so that I may go to her and inquire of her." His servants said to him, "There is a medium at Endor."

So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes and went there, he and two men with him. They came to the woman by night. And he said, "Consult a spirit for me, and bring up for me the one whom I name to you." The woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the wizards from the land. Why then are you laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?" But Saul swore to her by the Lord, "As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" He answered, "Bring up Samuel for me." When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!" The king said to her, "Have no fear; what do you see?" The woman said to Saul, "I see a divine being coming up out of the ground." He said to her, "What is his appearance?" She said, "An old man is coming up; he is wrapped in a robe." So Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance.

Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" Saul answered, "I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams; so I have summoned you to tell me what I should do." Samuel said, "Why then do you ask me, since the Lord has turned from you and become your enemy? The Lord has done to you just as he spoke by me; for the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand, and given it to your neighbor, David. Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord, and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the Lord has done this thing to you today. Moreover the Lord will give Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines; and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me; the Lord will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines."

Reader The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

The PSALM: Psalm 12 (read in unison)

**1 Help me, Lord, for there is no godly one left; *
the faithful have vanished from among us.**

2 Everyone speaks falsely with his neighbor; *

with a smooth tongue they speak from a double heart.

3 Oh, that the Lord would cut off all smooth tongues, *
and close the lips that utter proud boasts!

4 Those who say, "With our tongue will we prevail; *
our lips are our own; who is lord over us?"

5 "Because the needy are oppressed,
and the poor cry out in misery, *
I will rise up," says the Lord,
"and give them the help they long for."

6 The words of the Lord are pure words, *
like silver refined from ore
and purified seven times in the fire.

7 O Lord, watch over us *
and save us from this generation for ever.

8 The wicked prowl on every side, *
and that which is worthless is highly prized by everyone

Second Lesson: A Reading from First Corinthians (14:6-12):

Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you in some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? It is the same way with lifeless instruments that produce sound, such as the flute or the harp. If they do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is being played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? So with yourselves; if in a tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is being said? For you will be speaking into the air. There are doubtless many different kinds of sounds in the world, and nothing is without sound. If then I do not know the meaning of a sound, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. So with yourselves; since you are eager for spiritual gifts, strive to excel in them for building up the church.

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

Gospel Lesson: Luke (21:1-4) *(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 looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord **4 People: Praise to you, Lord Christ**

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: **O God, who beholds all things and whose judgment is always mercy; by the example of your servant Birgitta of Sweden, give to us in this life the vision of your kingdom, where Jesus Christ is all and in all, that we may pattern our earthly lives on things heavenly, where our lives are hidden with Christ in you; who with him and the Holy Spirit live and reign 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.**

Prayer for St. Stephen's:

Presider: Almighty God, giver of every good gift; look graciously on your church, and so guide the minds of our search committee, wardens, and vestry, who are in discernment for St. Stephen's church, Sierra Vista, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**Other Intercessions and Thanksgivings:
Birthdays, Anniversaries, Healing, Travel, Gratitude**

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:

Birgitta advised popes and rulers throughout Europe, and criticized the extravagant lifestyles of the clergy, monastic orders, and laity, challenging four popes to return to Rome from Avignon. She also tried to persuade the rulers of England and France to negotiate peace and end the war that would later be called the Hundred Years' War. Because of her struggles, she was recognized throughout Europe as an uncomfortable counselor and a visionary.

After the death of her husband in 1344, Birgitta devoted herself entirely to the religious life. The Order she founded, the Brigittines, was based on the revelations she had received earlier in her life. Her monastery would always have a women's and men's cloister next to one another, joined by a shared church, in which the monks, nuns, and laity would pray together. The abbess would be in charge of both the men's and women's cloister. To get papal approval for her order's founding, Birgitta traveled to Rome. In 1370, Urban V recognized the new order and allowed its foundation at Vadstena, Sweden. Birgitta was, in fact, not the first abbess there, but rather her daughter Catherine.

Except for several pilgrimages, Birgitta remained in Rome for the rest of her life. She ministered to both rich and poor, sheltered the homeless, and worked untiringly for the return of the pope from Avignon to Rome. In 1372, she was spurred by a vision to visit the Holy Land. On the return trip from Jerusalem Birgitta fell ill and entered eternal life on July 23, 1373. In Sweden she is celebrated on October 7, which is the anniversary of her canonization.

More from [Wikipedia the free encyclopedia](#)

[Bridget of Sweden, OSsS \(c. 1304 – 23 July 1374\)](#), also known as Birgitta Birgersdotter and Birgitta of Vadstena (Swedish: heliga Birgitta), was a Swedish Catholic mystic and the founder of the Bridgettines. Outside Sweden, she was also known as the Princess of Nericia and was the mother of Catherine of Vadstena.[3]

Bridget is one of the six patron saints of Europe, together with Benedict of Nursia, Cyril and Methodius, Catherine of Siena and Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Biography

Drawing of the tomb of Bridget's parents in Uppsala Cathedral

Saint Bridget in the religious habit of a Bridgettine nun, in a 1476 breviary of the form of the Liturgy of the Hours unique to Order of the Most Holy Savior

The most celebrated saint of Sweden, Bridget was the daughter of the knight Birger Persson[4] of the family of Finsta, governor and lawspeaker of Uppland, and one of the richest landowners of the country, and his wife Ingeborg Bengtsdotter, a member of the so-called Lawspeaker branch of the Folkunga family. Through her mother, Bridget was related to the Swedish kings of her era.

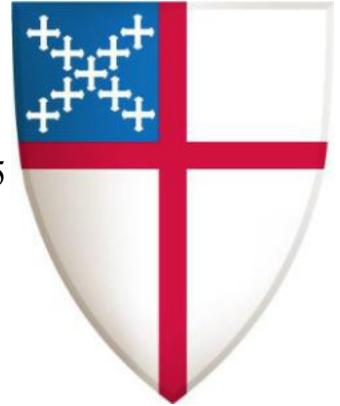
She was born in 1304. The exact date of her birth is not recorded. In 1316, at the age of 13[4] she married Ulf Gudmarsson of the family of Ulvåsa, a noble and lawspeaker of Östergötland, to whom she bore eight children, four daughters and four sons. Six of her children survived infancy, which was rare at that time.

[Continued online](#)

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



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