



**St. Stephen's United Methodist Church  
Norman, Oklahoma**



**Childcare** is available during worship for infants in Rooms 1 and 2. A greeter can direct you. "Celebration," a worship preparation experience for children preschool – 2nd grade, is offered during the 10:50 a.m. worship hour. Children are always welcome to join in worship services and are encouraged to sit with their parents. We have a Safe Sanctuary policy in place during worship time. **If your child must leave the worship space while under your care, please accompany them during that time to ensure the safety of your child.** **Special Assistance** is available if you have difficulty hearing and would like to use one of our personal hearing devices, or need other assistance. Please ask a greeter for help. There are large print bulletins available as well.

**This Week at St. Stephen's:**

<b>Today:</b>		
4:00	Youth	Community Hall
4:00	Confirmation	Zoom
6:00	Meditation	Zoom
<b>Monday:</b>		
6:30	Finance Committee Meeting	Zoom
<b>Tuesday:</b>		
7:00	Fiction Club	Zoom
<b>Wednesday:</b>		
2:30	Sacred Journey	Zoom
7:00	Choir	Zoom
<b>Thursday:</b>		
<b>Friday:</b>		
6:30	Living Room NA	Community Hall
<b>Saturday:</b>		

Video recordings of sermons are available at the website listed below, on our Facebook page, and on YouTube.

Email – [ststephensumc@coxinet.net](mailto:ststephensumc@coxinet.net) Website – <http://ststephensnorman.org>

Church phone: 405.321.4988

*Onelicense.net #A-721089*

God calls us to be partners in community and partners for justice. In the Spirit of Christ we will:

- ❖ *Care for one another*
- ❖ *Offer sanctuary and healing*
- ❖ *United head and heart*
- ❖ *Do justice*

*April 11, 2021*

*8:30am, 10:50am and online*

**Meditation**

Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things. Every single creature is full of God, and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God. If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature - even a caterpillar - I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature.

*Meister Eckhart*

Humans are amphibians – half spirit and half animal. As spirits they belong to the eternal world, but as animals they inhabit time.

*C.S. Lewis*

The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans any more than black people were made for whites, or women created for men.

*Alice Walker*

**Gathering Thoughts**

(10:50) Sharing our Joys and Concerns

(11:00) Ring the Bell

**Gathering Music**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Candle Lighting**

Call to Worship:

One: All God's family, come and praise our Creator!  
**Many: We come with eyes to see, and ears to flap and hear,**  
 One: All creatures lift your voices singing, mewling and barking.  
**Many: We come to celebrate God's marvelous creation!**  
 One: With dogs and cats , hamsters and snakes  
**Many: We come to thank the Giver of all life!**  
 One: All creatures that crawl, all sea serpents that swim and feathered birds that fly  
**Many: We come to praise our Creator!**  
*Circle of Praise, inspired by Psalm 148, worshipwords.co.uk*

Hymn "God of the Sparrow God of the Whale" red #122, v 1, 3, 6  
 1. *God of the sparrow God of the whale God of the swirling stars  
 How does the creature say Awe How does the creature say Praise*  
 3. *God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty grave  
 How does the creature say Grace How does the creature say Thanks*  
 6. *God of the ages God near at hand God of the loving heart  
 How do your children say Joy How do your children say Home*

Prayer  
**Source and sustainer of life, we cherish the myriad works of your hands. Water, earth, and sky are yours, as are all their inhabitants, wild and tame. We thank you for creatures that nourish and serve us, befriend, enrich, entertain, and protect us. May we, who are made in your image, care for them well. And may your groaning yet wondrous creation rally and thrive, revealing to all who come after us your wise, redemptive, transfiguring love; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**  
*letallcreationpraise.org, used with permission.*

(8:30) Blessing of the Animals

Sing to our Kids "Where Children Belong" black #2233  
 Children's Time

Offering Ourselves, Our Tithes, Gifts, and Prayers

Offertory

Special Music

Scripture Reading Psalm 104: 1a, 10-24

Sermon "The Whole Being" Rev. Jennifer Ahrens-Sims

Reflection

(8:30) Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

(8:30) The Lord's Prayer (sung)

(10:50) The Lord's Prayer

**Loving Creator we honor you, and we honor all that you have made. Renew the whole world in the image of your love. Give us what we need for today, and a hunger to see the whole world fed. Strengthen us for what lies ahead; heal us from the hurts of the past; give us courage to follow your call in this moment. For your love is the only power, the only home, the only honor we need, in this world and in the world to come. Amen.**  
*Paraphrased by Sarah Dylan Breuer.*

Hymn "Creation Sings" green #3018

1. *Creation sings! And we are in the music, the movement of God's energy and art, a liturgy that links our life to angels, a litany that rises from the heart. The Spirit sings! Through love and lamentation, from Pentecost to joy of Easter Day the universe is resonant with music, the smallest creature dances to its play.*  
 2. *Creation groans at our discordant clashing: the Spirit comes with music as our friend to bring the harmony of peace and beauty, to teach the textures of the way to blend. O God, you draw the melody from silence, you make of us the instruments of song! We offer thanks in worship and in wonder that such a gift to humans belong.*

Benediction

Sending Forth "Song of Hope" black #2186  
*May the God of hope go with us every day, filling all our lives with love and joy and peace. May the God of justice speed us on our way, bringing light and hope to every land and race. Praying, let us work for peace; singing, share our joy with all; working for a world that's new, faithful when we hear Christ's call,*

Postlude