

ST. STEPHEN'S NEWS

Sunday, November 19, 2023

The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Gratitude Sunday

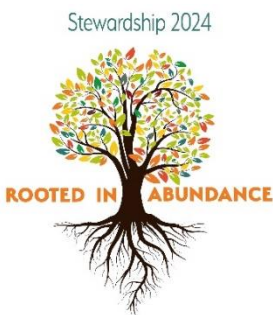
WELCOME!

If you are worshipping at St. Stephen's for the first time today, you are welcome to share in the Holy Communion. Please fill out a "Visitor" card at one of the Greeters tables and/or the guest book on the podium before you leave and get a welcome packet.

COMMUNION

If you are in need of a gluten free wafer during Communion, please let an usher know before the offertory or let one of the persons serving the host know. If you have a mobility problem, please let an usher know before the service begins and communion will be brought to you.

LOOKING FORWARD



Our annual Pledge campaign has begun! *Rooted in Abundance* is a theme that illustrates the meaning of our giving, the deep root of our faith that builds and sustains powerful growth upward as exemplified by a tree. It's a

reminder to us that we are inspired to give of ourselves not only from our treasure but also of our time and talent. We give because of the love we have experienced in the story of our faith. to transform that goodness into work, service, and joy in a world that needs us.

Every gift matters. Each Pledge Card, whether electronic or paper, is welcomed. On Gratitude Sunday, November 19th, we will bring all to the altar, and bless them before God and our community.

[PLEDGE CARD](#)

[GRATITUDE CARD](#)

Links can be found on the giving tab of the St-stephens.org website or by using links above. Thank you for your generosity and your prayerful consideration of your pledge to St. Stephen's. In gratitude,
Cathy Gero and the Stewardship Committee

Gratitude Sunday Potluck

Join us for a Potluck lunch Sunday, November 19 in Spurling Hall following the 9:00am service.

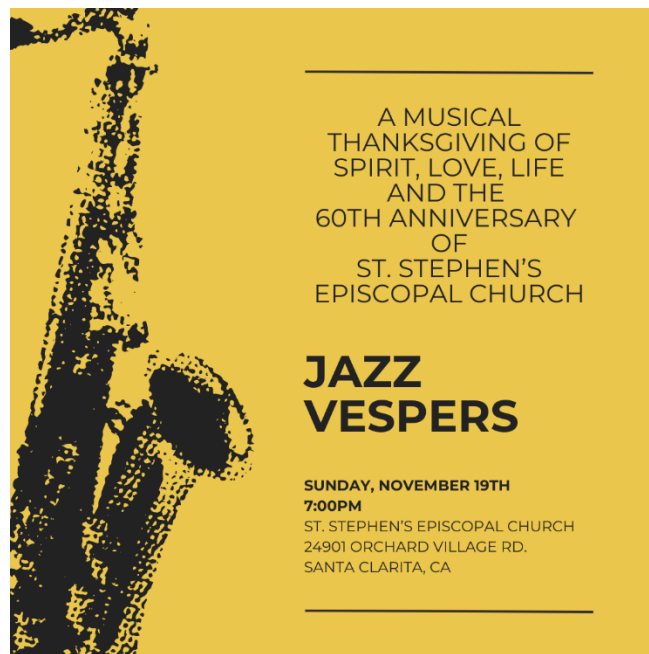
Gratitude Sunday is the day of our pledge ingathering and a day on which we give special thanks for St. Stephen's and all of our wonderful people and ministries. We celebrate with a shared meal and joyful fellowship!

Sign up [here](#)

Upcoming holiday closures for the Church and Preschool offices.

Thanksgiving holiday

Thursday and Friday, Nov. 23-24.



If you wish to have your birthday or anniversary prayed for during Sunday services or if you would like a white rose to signify a death in your family or a red rose to signify a birth in your family, please email Tracy in the Church office at office@st-stephens.org no later than 5:00pm on Thursdays with all of the relevant details.



Join us on Thanksgiving Eve, Wednesday, November 22nd at 7:00PM for a special service of Thanksgiving and Communion.

Before we gather at our tables for the holiday let's gather at The Table here in our sanctuary and offer thanks for the blessing of our lives. All are invited to bring items that will be placed on their Thanksgiving tables (bread, wine table dressings, etc) to be blessed during the service. We look forward to seeing you there as we kick off the holiday weekend. This service will not be available via livestream



This holiday season we will be helping out six young adults with Fostering Youth Independence. This is a time to help make their holiday

wishes come true! FYI envisions a future in which every youth leaving the foster care system feels safe, connected and loved. They believe that with a consistent, nurturing community, foster youth can become successful, thriving adults.

Please help us by using [this link](#) and choosing a youth from the site. Here you will find different options to choose from, once you are ready to drop the gift off, please return to Church no later than Sunday, November 26th. Thank you all so much!

For more information, please contact Sheri Flay.



Join us for a day of creativity, reflection, and delicious treats as we come together to celebrate the start of Advent.

Unleash your artistic talents by crafting your very own Advent wreath which will serve as a centerpiece for your Advent Journey. **Bring in your Advent candle holder, and we'll provide the greenery and decorative items.** Extra Advent candle holders and candles are available to purchase. Learn about the traditions and rituals that make Advent a special time of reflection and anticipation. Discover how to incorporate these meaningful practices into your home, creating cherished moments with family and friends. Bring a plate of Christmas cookies to share, and we will provide the hot chocolate.



To make a reservation for you and/or your family, please RSVP to Stephanie at 661-259-8527 or stephanie@st-stephens.org.



Annual Nativity Display

Daughters of the King (DOK) will again sponsor an **elegant display of nativities**

from around the world on Sunday, Dec. 3rd after both services.

Please start thinking now about your contribution to the display! All parishioners are invited to participate and nativities of all sizes, shapes, and styles are welcome. You're encouraged to join us on Sat., Dec. 2nd at 2pm to help set up the display in the parish hall.

For each nativity you'd like to display, please write a brief description of where it came from, its importance to you, or something special about the nativity (3 to 5 sentences are fine). To be included in the program, **your description should be sent by email to: maryjohigg@gmail.com** before Monday, Nov. 27th.

If you've submitted a nativity in the past and are planning to display the same one again, we can use the same description from last year's program.

Please bring your nativity to the church office before Dec. 2nd or bring it to the parish hall at 2pm on Saturday, Dec. 2nd. **Be sure your items are well labeled** so we can return them properly.

If you have any questions, please contact Mary Jo Higginbotham at maryjohigg@gmail.com.



**Saturday
December 2nd,
9:00 - 11:00am
Parking Lot**

CRITICAL NEEDS —

- **Cans of Vegetables & Soup**
- **Rice & Pasta (dry)**
- **Laundry Detergent (liquid & pods)**
- **Dish Detergent (not dishwasher)**
- **Warm Socks & Underwear (men/women)**
- **Sweatshirt & Jackets (only new, please)**

NEEDED FOOD ITEMS (Order of need):

- Healthy Cereal — large & reg size boxes
- Canned Meat & Tuna (pull top)
- Individual Fruit Cups (low or no sugar)

OTHER NEEDED ITEMS:

- Toilet Paper — Lg Pks, rolls of 6+
- Rolls of Paper Towels

- Boxes of Kleenex
- Women's Fem Pads (any size)
- Boxes of Dryer Sheets
- Hotel-Size Soap, Shampoo, Conditioner
- Men's & Women's deodorant
- Women's Shave Cream & razors
- Bar Soap, Shampoo & Conditioner

Dec. 2nd is also Recycling Day!

Please bring RECYCLABLE "CRV" plastic, aluminum cans & glass bottles.

Bring pull tabs from cans of soda & food.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!



Education for Ministry (EfM) "lives" in the School of Theology at the University of the South, in Sewanee, TN. **It's a unique, small-group program based on study and practice in theological reflection.**

Through study, prayer, worship, and reflection, EfM participants journey together to better understand how personal experiences and beliefs bring us closer to God. EfM provides an opportunity to **explore the Bible, Christian Tradition, and Church History** in knowledgeable, realistic, and spiritually guided discussions.

The complete, four-year EfM course ends with graduation, however, you are only asked to commit to one year at a time. As a satellite course at St. Stephen's, EfM weekly seminar sessions are led by trained mentors.

EfM provides the opportunity to help you discover your own unique ministry and help you get a better perspective on how we got to where we are today.

The 2023-2024 registration period will begin in early December and weekly, Wednesday evening sessions will start in January, continuing through June. **Watch this space for more details!**

For further information, feel free to contact Mary Jo Higginbotham by email at maryjohigg@gmail.com.



Share the hope of Christmas with a child in your community as you deliver a gift and a personal message of love on behalf of their parent in prison. It starts with a gift, and leads to

restored lives.

Angel Tree is a national program run by Prison Fellowship Ministries. Christmas gifts are provided to children of prisoners. Each child receives gifts on behalf of the prisoner — one clothing item and one other item. Receiving these gifts often makes a big difference for a family helping to nurture the bond between an absent parent and a child.

This year, St. Stephen's will provide gifts to more than 30 children in families all over the Santa Clarita Valley. If you would like to be a part of this ministry and donate, please take an angel off the tree starting **Sunday, November 26th** after either service. All of the gifts need to be returned by Sunday, December 10 so that they can be delivered to the families before Christmas. For more information, contact Victoria Bennett at vbandsf@gmail.com. For more about Angel Tree, please visit www.angeltree.org.

We're also distributing diapers again this year to the parents in need — if we get extras, they'll go to the food pantry. Overnights are popular as well — trauma can cause bedwetting and if you don't own a washer/dryer, changing sheets daily becomes a real challenge.

Please if you take an angel make sure you register it with Victoria Bennett or whoever is with the tree so we can keep track of the angels.

Please keep your gifts to \$25 as we have a lot of family groups and we don't want one child getting a huge present while another gets something more modest as these are on behalf of the parent — "Mom loves me more than you!!" isn't something any child needs to hear.



GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN'S

If you are able to continue supporting the

mission and ministry of St. Stephen's, you can pay your pledge or make a new or recurring donation online here st-stephens.org/giving. You can also text your donation by texting the word GIVE to 661.228.8909 and following the prompts. Click here for an easy [How To Use Text Giving guide](#). We are deeply grateful for your commitment and support.

St. Stephen's Prayer List

On-Going Needs: Joanne, Mary Lou,

Current Needs: Susan, Byron, Wilson, Bree, Sister Miriam, Linda, Joy, Ty, Katherine, Peter, Craig, , Stacey, Vickie, Rebecca, Dorrie, Lorraine, Pat, Beth, Janet, Ana, Malcolm, Dan, Patrick, Laura, Barbara, Bill, Michelle, Jil, Cinda, Adam, Robert, Reverend Rick Bellis' brother, Kathleen, Bill, Julia, Larry and his mother, Blake, Bob, innocent victims of Middle east conflict, Dot, Don, Irene, Mike, Lella, Mary, Bill, Janet, Betsy, Ronnie,

Rest in Peace:, Radiance Findley, Robert Paul George, Roch Guistiniani

If you would like to have prayers for yourself or someone else, please email Peggy Stabile at pstable@pegasus2.net or call the church office at 661.259.7307. Please be aware that your prayer request content will be shared with the members of the prayer chain. If you wish for Peggy to hold your prayer request in confidence, please clarify that in your submission. Prayer requests remain active for 4 weeks and must be renewed thru Peggy or the office to be on the list again.

St. Stephen's Week	November 19, 2023 to November 26, 2023
TODAY'S SERVICE 9:00am	
SUNDAY 11/19	
9:00am	Holy Eucharist (also streamed via Facebook Live) — VPOD Jen Aston
9:00am	Sunday School / Spurling Hall
10:30am	Gratitude Sunday Potluck
7:00pm	Jazz Vespers / Church
MONDAY 11/20	
4:30pm	Den meeting / Spurling Hall
6:45pm	Troop 2019 / Spurling Hall
TUESDAY 11/21	
6:00pm	Finance meeting via Zoom
WED. 11/22	
7:00am	Holy Eucharist
7:45am	Breakfast at Lily's Cafe
9:30am	Circle of Gratitude via Zoom
7:00pm	Thanksgiving Eve Service / Church
THURS. 11/23	
	Thanksgiving Day
	Church & Preschool offices closed
FRIDAY 11/24	
	Church & Preschool offices closed
SAT. 11/25	
NEXT SUNDAY 11/26	
7:45am	Holy Eucharist-VPOD Bob Gregor
9:00am	Cottage Meeting / Spurling Hall
9:00am	Advent Wreath making / Spurling Hall
10:30am	Holy Eucharist (also streamed via Facebook Live) — VPOD Bob Gregor
10:30am	Sunday School / Spurling Hall
12:00pm	Advent Wreath making / Spurling Hall
12:15pm	YESS/Pathfinders / Lounge