



**NOTE: Please be aware that office hours have changed to Monday -Thursday, 09:00 AM - 2:00 PM. The office will continue to be closed on Friday. AND: The office will be closed December 25, 2023 - December 28, 2023.**

## Advent/Christmas Events at St. Stephen's

**Use this quick list to mark your calendars!**

**Sunday, December 17:** Lessons & Carols and Catered Dinner - 5:00 PM

**Sunday, December 24:** Choral Eucharist - 9:00 AM in the Parish Hall

**Sunday, December 24:** Nativity Pageant / Holy Eucharist - 4:00 PM

**Christmas Eve, December 24:** Carol Vigil / Festal Choral Eucharist - 10:00 PM

**Christmas Day, December 25:** Christmas Day Eucharist - 10:00 AM

**NY's Eve, Sunday, Dec 31:** First Sunday After Christmas Eucharist - 10:00 AM

## Christmas Altar Flowers

Contributions are being accepted for the Christmas Altar Flowers. Please mark your check "Altar Flowers." The Sunday bulletins have an insert for the donation information or you may stop by the office to drop off your donation. Flowers may be given as a Memorial or a Thank Offering.

## St. Stephen's E-News Printable Copy

Download printable copy: [St. Stephen's E-News for December 15, 2023](#)

## This Sunday - December 17, 2023

### Third Sunday of Advent

*Note: During the season of Advent, all services will be celebrated as Rite I.*  
There will be two services on Sunday:  
- 7:45 AM: Spoken Holy Eucharist - Rite I - in the Nave (no streaming)  
- 10:00 AM: Choral Eucharist - Rite I - in the Nave (live-streamed)  
Bulletins for the services can be downloaded [here](#).

We light the Advent Wreath candles on the four Sundays of Advent. Each candle of the Advent wreath has a meaning. This week we will light the Third Candle: The Shepherd Candle or Candle of Joy. The Candle of Joy represents a Sunday of rejoicing in anticipation of Christ's coming.

## Plate Offering

This week, the plate offering supports the General Fund.

## Conversations on the Mission of St. Stephen's

### **When: Sunday, December 17, 2023**

This Sunday, in place of our usual adult education after the 10:00AM service, Fr. Bailey will lead a conversation on the mission and vision of St. Stephen's as we prepare to enter 2024. He will present some current ministry that the parish is pursuing. In addition, these conversations are opportunities for you to share new ideas and ways in which we can grow both in deepening the involvement of our parishioners and our witness in the wider community.

So please join us at 11:30 AM, this Sunday and next in the Pollard Room. Look forward to seeing you there!

## Christian Education

December 17, 2023: Pageant rehearsal following 10 AM Service  
December 24, 2023: Christmas Pageant 4 PM

## Rite of Reconciliation

During this penitential season of Advent, Frs. Bailey and Ashton will be offering the Rite of Reconciliation (known in other traditions as "confession"). It is, in the good Anglican way, not necessary but very beneficial in one's faith journey. Please contact either Fr. Bailey or Fr. Ashton to set up a time.

You can read more about this Sacrament here: [Rite of Reconciliation](#)

## This Week's Outreach Spotlight

►St. Stephen's church is providing Christmas bags for 38 Clearfork Camp children from 18 families for the purpose of giving the children educational and constructive activities to occupy them during Christmas vacation. The bags contain crafts, books, snacks, cookies to decorate, a puzzle for the family to do together, and rocks and fossils donated by an amateur geologist with a book to help with rock collecting and identifying. Last year we started including much needed hygiene products that are not covered by food stamps or other government programs.

Many thanks to everyone who donated books and the egg cartons to help with the rock collecting project.

►Please keep the Blessing Box needs on your shopping list. This week we are requesting donations of toothpaste, single pack toothbrushes, and soup.

## This Sunday - St. Stephen's Parish Events

### Upcoming Parish Events

**Sunday, December 17, 2023 - Lessons and Carols - 5:00 PM**

JOIN US THIS SUNDAY EVENING FOR  
LESSONS AND CAROLS FOLLOWED BY A CATERED DINNER

Our annual service of Lessons and Carols will be held at 5:00 p.m. this Sunday. Following the service, we will have a catered dinner in the Parish Hall. The cost will be \$15 per person/ \$45 per family. We have a few spots still available for the dinner and ask that you sign up on the St. Stephen's website if you intend to come.

Please come be a part of this Advent tradition.

- On our website: [RSVP - Lessons & Carols Dinner](#)

**Sunday, December 24, 2023 - Christmas Pageant**

**December 24**



**Christmas Pageant**

Our annual Christmas Pageant returns this Christmas Eve. This is a St. Stephen's tradition for over 40 years! We're excited to be back in the Nave, and we're hard at work getting ready. We need YOU to help us by coming and being part of this celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

**4:00 pm Christmas Eve Family  
Eucharist & Nativity Pageant  
Location: St. Stephen's Nave**

If you have any questions, please contact our Christian Education director, Sherry Burchfield, at [mommaburch@gmail.com](mailto:mommaburch@gmail.com).

### Coming in January

On January 7th, after the 10:00 service, we will celebrate the Feast of the Kings in the Parish Hall. We will be having three kinds of Kings' Cakes; New Orleans' style, French Galettes des Rois, and Mexican Rosca des Reyes. Perhaps you will get one of the tokens, and wear the crown as King/Queen for the day!

Come join us as we begin the season of Epiphany!

## Focus on the Parish

### St Stephen's Financial Status As of December 10, 2023

Here at St. Stephen's, we are blessed to have Rachel Durfee, CPA, to watch our books. As such, we present an updated "snapshot" of the parish finances.

Last Week's Offering: \$ 13,179

2023 YTD Offering: \$ 477,114

2023 YTD Budget: \$ 496,295

Over/Under \$ (19,180)

### Flower / Ambry Candle Sign-up

The 2024 sign-up charts for altar flowers and ambry candles are now posted on the bulletin board outside of the secretary's office. The cost for an ambry candle is \$5.00 and for altar flowers is \$85.00.

You can sign-up on the website: [Donate for Altar Flowers](#) - Just select *Altar Flowers*, and also put in the memo whether you would like to sign up for a candle or the flowers. Someone will contact you to determine a date - thank you!

### Here NOW! The Compassion Tree

This December, our Outreach program will be the Compassion Tree. You will see this Tree set up in the Parish Hall by the stage. The Compassion Tree will be decorated with tags that represent various items and gifts needed for children placed in foster care in the weeks before Christmas, as well as for those coming into care without any clothing or personal items.

It's easy to help out - simply look over the tags and determine where you can help. Pricing begins at \$10. When you find a tag, remove it from the tree and take it with you. After purchasing the item(s), place both the tag and the item(s) under the tree. You don't have to wrap them - we'll do that!

We ask that all items be returned with the tags no later than Wednesday, December 20, 2023. We invite all parishioners to take a tag and make a foster child's Christmas a little brighter!

Here is a partial list of items on the tags:

- ▶ Toy List: Lego (any age), arts/crafts kits, Barbie dolls, remote control cars
- ▶ Other gifts: Scooters, Children's Bibles, \$25 gift cards for teens
- ▶ Necessities: All sizes pajamas, underwear, socks, crib and twin sheets
- ▶ Larger items: cribs, car seats, crib and twin mattresses, pack 'n plays

## Ministry Updates

### Ongoing Church Events

**Tuesday Bible Study - Pollard Room, 10:00 - 11:00 AM**

For more information email [james.rousey@aol.com](mailto:james.rousey@aol.com).

**Wednesday WOW - lunchtime for ORHS juniors and seniors**

Our Walk Over Wednesday (WOW) is on vacation due to the school's winter break.

**Wednesday Men's Group - Pollard Room, 8:30 AM**

**Thursday Contemplative Prayer (Zoom) - 4:00 PM**

If you'd like to join us, feel free to call/text us (Steve Herbes: 865.250.9123; Liz Herbes: 865.228.2537)

### Helpful Links

[Those Who Serve](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

[News and Events from the Episcopal Diocese of East Tennessee](#)

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**The church's office hours** are 9:00 am to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Offices are closed on Fridays and weekends.



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee  
[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)