



St. Stephen's E-NEWS

...Where God is seen, love is felt and lives are changed!

December 11, 2020

3 Advent:

Psalm 126

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

SUNDAY WORSHIP

This Sunday, we will have two services of **Morning Prayer**.

Our livestream is at 9 a.m. on our [YouTube Channel](#). Call 865-498-6483 to listen to the service, if you do not have a computer.

Our in-person worship will be at **10:30 a.m., outside** in our Grove.

The in-person service will be canceled if the forecast shows a 60% or greater chance of rain during our worship time. **If the service is canceled we will notify the parish by 3 p.m. Saturday** via email, social media, and a message on our phone system. You may tune in to the livestream at **9 a.m.** in lieu of the in-person service. No notification will be sent if the service is on as planned.

SUNDAY SOCIAL TIME

We have two virtual social hours on Sunday mornings and evenings on Zoom! Stop by and say hello!



[Morning Coffee Hour](#) is at **10 a.m.** between our livestream and in-person worship services, for a brief bit of fellowship. **Morning Meeting ID: 848 0379 6165**
Password: 609987

[Evening Social Hour](#) is at **5 p.m.**, and will be available for about an hour.

Evening Meeting ID: 816 4332 4827
Password: 999944

PASTORAL CARE

JOIN US AS WE PRAY THIS WEEK FOR:

Caleb & Molly Justice
(*newlyweds!*)

Please include these people in your prayers.

CARE MINISTRY BEGINS THIS MONTH!

On **December 13, 2020**, at the Sunday morning worship services, we will celebrate the beginning of a new parish-wide ministry. The goal of CARE – which stands for **Connecting And REconnecting** – is to ensure that each person at St. Stephen's knows they are remembered and valued. A team of 25 trained CARE callers will each be contacting a number of parish families and individuals every month, simply to "check in." CARE calls will complement Bailey's ministry by helping identify situations where more parish help might be welcome. CARE phone calls will also help identify opportunities to celebrate joyous occasions, or just be times to talk and get to know some of our fellow parishioners a little better.



Each parish family will receive a letter this week that provides more information about CARE. Until then, if you have questions, feel free to contact the CARE coordinators, Liz and Steve Herbes via email: liznsteveherbes@yahoo.com, or by phone: Liz: 865.228.2537 or Steve: 865.250.9123. We're excited about this new opportunity to connect and re-connect with each other, as members of St. Stephen's parish family.

AN UPDATE ON COVID-19

With COVID numbers shooting up in our region, not to mention a number of parishioners at St. Stephen's who have been affected, we will continue to stream our indoor service and meet outdoors for in-person worship as long as we are able. We have purchased three large propane heaters to help provide some warmth on these cold Sunday mornings!

It pains me that we still cannot worship inside, but it is simply **not practical right now**. My philosophy remains that we don't return to indoor worship until I am reasonably certain that we can start it *without stopping it* due to another spike in COVID cases. Rest assured, it is a priority for me to resume "regular" worship as soon as practically feasible.

In the meantime, please note our Christmas schedule on the next page. We will plan on having in-person worship Christmas Eve, weather and COVID permitting. We will also livestream one of these services. Our other services will be pre-recorded.

Please note that Blue Christmas, which has become a very meaningful and special service for so many, will not take place in large part because a great deal of the power of that service is in gathering together. We will be reaching out to a number of people in our congregation and community during this holiday season who might normally attend this service to let them know that the church is praying for them. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you know of someone to whom we need to reach out during this season.



In spite of the continued difficulties with COVID, we want to offer each of you a special Advent and Christmas season. In addition to the services, please check out this month's edition of the Evangel, which shares a tremendous number of resources for these upcoming liturgical seasons. We look forward to helping you find the abiding and joyful presence of God during these strange times.

~ Fr. Bailey



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CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

DEC. 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE
1 PM AND 3 PM

Holy Eucharist, in-person worship will be outside in the grove.*

DEC. 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE
6 PM

Christmas Lessons & Carols (Pre-recorded)

DEC. 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY
10 AM

Christmas Day Holy Eucharist (Pre-recorded)

CHRISTMAS EVE NOTES

* Sign-ups will be sent out soon to make sure we have enough space.

** Communion bread will be delivered to households that request it.

*** The 1 PM service will be livestreamed.

**** In the event of inclement weather or cancellation due to COVID, in-person services will NOT be held and Christmas Eve will be livestreamed from the nave at 1 PM.



EYF

This week we are having dinner and watching Signs (2002)! We will meet from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. This is our last gathering for 2020! See you Sunday!

Caroline Wood, Youth Minister
youthminister@ststephensor.org



DRIVE-THRU CHRISTMAS, AN OAK RIDGE COMMUNITY EVENT!

The Oak Ridge Ministerial Association is putting on a unique event called "Drive Thru Christmas". In light of the fact that many local churches are not having in-person Christmas events and that many people are still wary of attending services, a number of local churches will be hosting a multi-site nativity scene. The event will be held **Friday, December 19, 2020 from 6 to 8 p.m.** Our scene of the nativity will be the actual scene of Jesus' birth in the stable. If you are interested in participating, please contact Fr. Bailey.



2021 CALENDARS NEEDED

The Outreach Committee is collecting 2021 wall calendars that nonprofits send this time of year. We plan to give them to food basket recipients and others. If you have any extra calendars to share, please place them in the church mailbox, preferably by **Friday, December 4, 2020**. Items after that will be donated to the school resource center.