



NOTE: The office will be closed December 22, 2023 - January 1, 2024

Important Dates

- ▶ **New Year's Eve, Sunday, December 31, 2023:**
Holy Eucharist, Rite II - 10:00 AM in the Nave (only one service)
- ▶ **Feast of the Kings Celebration, Sunday, January 7, 2024:**
After the 10:00 service, we will celebrate in the Parish Hall
- ▶ **Envisioning Survey Due Friday, January 12, 2024:**
Please respond to the survey concerning the mission of St. Stephen's
- ▶ **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, Monday, January 15, 2024:**
Oak Ridge Event at Y-12 New Hope Auditorium, 9:45 AM

St. Stephen's Website Links

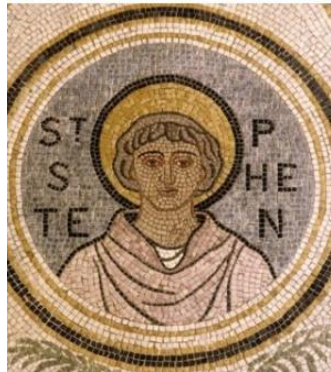
Download printable copy: [St. Stephen's E-News for December 29, 2023](#)
Download the bulletins for this week's services: [Home](#) | [St. Stephen's](#)

This Sunday - December 31, 2023

First Sunday after Christmas / Feast of St. Stephen

This Sunday, December 31:
Holy Eucharist, Rite II - 10:00 AM in the Nave (only one service)
You can watch the service on our [YouTube channel](#).

Feast Day of St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr Patron Saint of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee



Saint Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He was a Hellenist, a Greek-speaking Jew born and reared outside Palestine. His name is Greek, meaning "crown." He was one of the seven chosen by the Jerusalem congregation to see that the Hellenistic Jewish Christians got their fair share of the contributions.

Stephen's preaching caused a revolution in the attitude of some of the Jewish people toward the young Christian church. There was a period of persecution which scattered Christians into many parts of the world outside Jerusalem. The young Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, witnessed Stephen's stoning and heard the martyr's prayer for his enemies. Saul eventually took up the work cut short by Stephen's death.

Tradition says that Stephen's burial place was discovered on December 5, 415, and that his bones were moved to Jerusalem on December 26. Some scholars say that December 26 was chosen as St. Stephen's Day because he was the first martyr for Christ and that he appropriately appears first in the procession of saints who surround the cradle of Christ.

Stephen is commemorated in the Episcopal calendar of the church year on December 26.

Loose Plate Offering

This week's loose plate offering is designated for the General Fund.

This Week's Outreach Spotlight

- ▶ Please keep the Blessing Box needs on your shopping list. This week we are requesting donations of canned chicken, beef, tuna, and peanut butter.
- ▶ Many heart-felt thanks to parishioners for generously donating to the Blankets+ program that Church Women United of Oak Ridge conducts on behalf of Church World Service (CWS). In November, contributions from our loose offering and the clergy discretionary fund, plus \$300 from the Outreach Committee, totaled \$1512.10. Church Women United gratefully sent the funds to CWS for humanitarian relief worldwide, including in Gaza.
- ▶ Committed to strengthening community ties, St. Stephen's joins other Oak Ridge churches and organizations in supporting scholarships awarded annually on the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. Our Outreach Committee donated \$300 to the upcoming awards.

We invite parishioners to attend the MLK program organized by Alpha Kappa Alpha at 9:45 a.m. on Monday, January 15, at the Y-12 New Hope Auditorium, 602 Scarboro Road. The program will include youth performances and a keynote address by Rev. Erica Haigler, Pastor of Spurgeon Chapel, A.M.E. Zion Church. Afterwards, Methodist Medical Center will provide lunch, and Church Women United will provide dessert. Adults and school-age students are invited.

Parish Events 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 24, 2023

Last Week's Offering: \$8,033
2023 YTD Offering: \$ 511,404
2023 YTD Budget: \$ 516,552
Over/Under \$ (5,147)

Survey from Envisioning Committee

The St. Stephen's Envisioning Committee's primary goal is to put forth recommendations on specific improvements related to building and grounds. To that end, we have crafted a brief survey to take the pulse of the parish. It is our sincere hope that you will thoughtfully and prayerfully complete the survey at your earliest convenience (and definitely by January 12) to provide your input in this very important work.

You can complete the survey here - [Envisioning Committee Survey](#) Or you can come by the church office and fill out a hard copy of the survey.

If you have any difficulty with the survey, please contact Heather Hartman at 865-803-1817 or drhhartman@gmail.com. Thank you!

Ministry Updates

Ongoing Church Events

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

For more information email james.rousey@aol.com.

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](#)

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](#)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church | 212 N Tulane Ave, Oak Ridge, TN 37830