



*Merry Christmas*

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

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

### **This Sunday, December 24:**

Choral Eucharist - 9:00 AM in the Parish Hall  
Nativity Pageant / Holy Eucharist - 4:00 PM in the Nave  
Carol Vigil / Festal Choral Eucharist - 10:00 PM in the Nave

### **Christmas Day, December 25:**

Christmas Day Eucharist - 10:00 AM in the Nave

### **Tuesday, December 26:**

Holy Eucharist Rite I + Healing Service - 11:30 AM in St. Alban's Chapel

### **New Year's Eve, Sunday, Dec 31:**

Christmas I Eucharist - 10:00 AM in the Nave (only one service)

## St. Stephen's Website Links

Download printable copy: [St. Stephen's E-News for December 22, 2023](#)

Download the bulletins for this week's services: [Home](#) | [St. Stephen's](#)

## This Sunday - December 24, 2023

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

### **This Sunday, December 24:**

Choral Eucharist - 9:00 AM in the Parish Hall (Rite I)  
Nativity Pageant / Holy Eucharist (Rite I) - 4:00 PM in the Nave  
Carol Vigil / Festal Choral Eucharist - 10:00 PM in the Nave (Streamed)

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We light the Advent Wreath candles on the four Sundays of Advent. Each candle of the Advent wreath has a meaning. On the last Sunday of Advent, a fourth candle on the Advent Wreath is lit. Traditionally, this purple candle has been called the "Angel Candle" or Candle of Love and represents the peace that Christ's birth brings to earth. All four of the candles around the Advent Wreath are now burning, each at a different height. Only one candle remains: the center, white Christ Candle that is lit on Christmas Eve, representing the pure Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world.

## Sunday, December 24, 2023 - Christmas Pageant

**December 24**



**Christmas Pageant**

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

Please join us in celebrating this St. Stephen's tradition!

## Sunday, December 24, 2023 - Christmas Eve

Please join us for the Christmas Eve Carol Vigil + Festal Choral Eucharist at 10:00 PM in the Nave. The service will begin with a Carol Vigil, followed by the Blessing of the Crèche and the Eucharist. This service will be streamed on our [YouTube channel](#).

## Monday, December 25 - Christmas Day

*His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth (John 1:29).*



Please join us for a Christmas Day Service - Rite II - at 10:00 AM in the Nave. This service will be streamed on our [YouTube channel](#).

All the candles are now lit, including the Fifth Candle, known as the Christ Candle. This white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins.

## Loose Plate Offering

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

## The Celebration of Christmas

Christmas (in old English, *Cristes maesse*) is a festival celebrated on Dec. 25, commemorating the Incarnation of the Word of God in the birth of Jesus Christ. In the BCP it is also called The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the BCP, Christmas Day is one of the seven principal feasts.

You can read and hear more about this at the link below:

[Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Christmas message 2023: 'A sign for you'](#)

## This Week's Outreach Spotlight

► The year 2023 has been an exciting year of transition and growth as we continued our support of ongoing ministries as well as new ministries on both a local and international level. We also transitioned from a designated budget from the Vestry to funding from plate offerings, with much greater involvement by parishioners. As of the middle of December, a total of over \$15,500 has been given in the loose offerings.

You can read more about St. Stephen's Outreach on our website:

[St. Stephen's Outreach ministry](#)

► A BIG "Thank You" to our parish family for your generous outpouring of gifts, gift cards and monetary donations to Compassion Closet! A large and diverse selection of toys was given such as scooters, remote control cars, Lego sets, craft sets, art supplies, baby dolls, wooden toys and books. Necessary supplies, especially diapers and all kinds of clothing were donated, as well as several hundred dollars of gift cards and monetary donations totaling \$600! Madeline Worley, Executive Director of Compassion Closet, was overwhelmed with the generosity of our parish. She is getting requests every day for gifts for foster children put in emergency care and stated that what we gave will brighten many children's Christmas.

► Please keep the Blessing Box needs on your shopping list. This week we are requesting donations of deodorant, shampoo, soap, canned fruit and fruit cups.

## 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 18, 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: \$26,258  
2023 YTD Offering: \$ 503,372  
2023 YTD Budget: \$ 506,423  
Over/Under \$ (3,051)

## Ongoing Church Events

All regular Church events will not be held this week due to the Christmas week.

## 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  
212 N Tulane Ave, Oak Ridge, TN 37830