



# St. Stephen's E-NEWS

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

November 30, 2018

## Advent Fair

Please join us for this year's one-day only Advent Fair! **December 2, 2018 at 10 am** in the Parish Hall. Design your own Advent calendar, construct your own wreath, and enjoy a cookie or two!

## Lessons & Carols

The parish choir will present a service of Advent Lessons and Carols on **December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3 p.m.** The story of the coming of Christ gradually unfolds through Advent hymns and carols, interspersed around 9 readings of reflection and expectation. This liturgy is centered around spiritual preparation, quiet reflection and joyful expectation. This service of music and readings will gently lead you through the Advent season.

## Christmas Pageant

The St. Stephen's annual Children's Christmas Eve Pageant will be on December 24th at the 4:30 p.m. service. Participants need to arrive at church by 3:30 p.m. the day of the pageant. There will be a short, non-mandatory practice on Saturday, December 22, 2018 at 10 a.m. in the church nave. Please join us in this long-standing tradition recalling the true meaning of Christmas.

## EYF

This week we are playing Family Feud! Lunch is provided. Pick up is at 3 p.m. Contact Caroline Wood youthminister@ststephensor.org.

## Pastoral Care

**JOIN US THIS WEEK AS WE PRAY FOR** Catherine Whitten, Melisha Willis, Jean Winslow, Pat Wykoff  
*Please add these names to your prayer list.*

## Stewardship

The **2019 pledge** drive is still in progress. The Finance Committee is working on the 2019 budget. Pledge data provides >95% of the information of what next year's receipts are expected to be. **If you have not already turned in your pledge card, please do so.**

You can also make pledges electronically; Go to our website <http://ststephensor.org/>, press the pledge button, send the appropriate information, and you are done! This sends an email to our Pledge email box.



## Christmas Gifts for Children

Tags for the children of our food basket families are on the Chrismon Tree in the Parish Hall. This year we have 70 children (a total of 140 tags) who will each receive a clothing gift and a toy gift. Suggested gift maximum is \$50.

**All gifts must be wrapped, with tags securely attached, and returned no later than Sunday, December 9, 2018.**

If you wish to bless these children, please commit early and get your packages in. Please attach a gift tag on the **OUTSIDE** of the wrapped package.

## Food Basket Gifts for Moms

For the past few years we have been giving the moms of our families a small gift. Moms sometimes get overlooked at Santa time! If you have a piece of jewelry, scarf, winter hat, gloves or anything else appropriate, please mark "Mom" and leave in the basket near the food collection.

## Christmas Altar Flowers

If you would like to give Christmas flowers as a Memorial or a Thank Offering, contributions are now being accepted. Names will be listed in the Christmas bulletins. Please mark check "Christmas Flowers." Forms will be in the bulletin or you can email secretary@ststephensor.org Please submit to the church office by Monday, December 17th, 2018



## Sermon

As we enter the Season of Advent, we enter a sacred time of waiting and expectation. Mary and Joseph waited for the baby to come to term. Israel had long waited for the fulfillment of its hopes. The church has learned to wait in hope, as we contemplate its accompanying themes of light, prophecy, and the interplay of light and darkness. The scripture, prayers, and music of the season bear a message of hope for a troubled world, troubled lives, even the challenges of ministry. A colleague in ministry recently shared these words of Barbara Kingsolver in *Animal Dreams*:

*"The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. What I want is so simple. I almost can't say it: elementary kindness, enough to eat, enough to go around. The possibility that kids might one day grow up to be neither the destroyers nor the destroyed."* Will you join me in believing, listening for, and practicing the hope for which we long. ~ Fr. Larry +

## Movie Night

Let's watch a Christmas movie together! **Thursday, Dec. 20, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.**, in the Parish Hall. We'll have finger foods (bring something if you wish) and, of course, a movie!



## Adult Bible Class

On December 9, 16 and 23 we will have a series on the Nativity. The class will include Bible reading, watching a movie, and discussion All are welcome! Room 209 at 10:00 a.m.