

Mark your Calendars!

December 2018/ January 2019

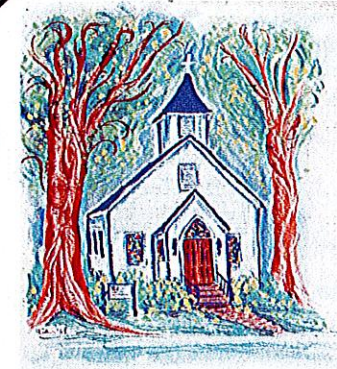
- December 2 9:30 Advent Wreath Making
3:00 ECW Program "Coping with Grief during the Holidays" in Parish Hall
- December 5 4:00 ECW Heart and Home Series (See inside newsletter for more details)
- December 10 1:00 ECW Outreach Project "Twelve Days of Christmas" in Parish hall (see inside newsletter for more details)
- December 11 9:00 Bingo at Indywood. Helpers are Carolyn Cox, Beth Fisher
10:00 Inreach meeting
- December 12 5:30 Foster Children Christmas Party in the Parish hall
- December 13 3:00 Indywood Employee Christmas Party
- December 16 5:00 Children's Christmas Program at St. Stephen's
- December 17 5:00 Vestry meeting
6:15 Parish Wide Christmas Caroling
- December 24 5pm Christmas Eve Worship followed by Reception
- January 13 12:00 noon Annual Meeting
12:30 Vestry meeting
- January 20 Sunday School resumes
- January 25-27 Diocesan Annual Council meeting in Hattiesburg

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 1004
Indianola, MS 38751

St. Stephen's Mission is to be a growing Christian family, led by the Holy Spirit, and united as we love God and love our neighbors.

Our Sunday Schedule:

9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Coffee Hour
 11:00 Worship Service



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

205 East Gresham Street
 P.O. Box 1004
 Indianola, MS 38751
 (662) 887-4365
 ststephensepisc@bellsouth.net
 The Rt. Rev. Brian Seage, Bishop of Mississippi
 The Rev. Giulianna C. Gray, Rector
 Mrs. Jennifer P. Zepponi, Parish Administrator

Vestry

David Fisher, Senior Warden
 Walton Gresham, Junior Warden
 Debbie Allen
 Susan Allen
 Frederick Barrier
 Mary Steele Lawler
 Richard Noble

Dear Friends, the birth of Jesus has inspired such exquisite art and music and poetry. As I am preparing to celebrate these sacred mysteries with you again this year, I am finding myself quite moved by some poetry I have been discovering. I offer a few poems to you. With them come my heartfelt prayer that God who was made flesh will visit you in new and surprising ways this year!
 -Giulianna+

Adult Advent Announcement

O Lord,
 Let Advent begin again
 In us,
 Not merely in commercials;
 For that first Christmas was not
 Simply for children,
 But for the
 Wise and the strong.
 It was
 Crowded around that cradle,
 With kings kneeling.
 Speak to us
 Who seek an adult seat this year.
 Help us to realize,
 As we fill stockings,
 Christmas is mainly
 For the old folks —
 Bent backs
 And tired eyes
 Need relief and light
 A little more.
 No wonder
 It was grown-ups
 Who were the first
 To notice
 Such a star.

David A. Redding, from *If I Could Pray Again* (1965)

Gaudete

"Gaudete," the Latin word for "rejoice," is the name for the Third Sunday in Advent.

Because Christmas is almost here
 Because dancing fits so well with music
 Because inside baby clothes are miracles.

Gaudete

Because some people love you
 Because of chocolate
 Because pain does not last forever
 Because Santa Claus is coming.

Gaudete

Because of laughter
 Because there really are angels
 Because your fingers fit your hands
 Because forgiveness is yours for the asking
 Because of children
 Because of parents.

Gaudete

Because the blind see.
 And the lame walk.

Gaudete

Because lepers are clean
 And the deaf hear.

Gaudete

Because the dead will live again
 And there is good news for the poor.

Gaudete

Because of Christmas
 Because of Jesus
 You rejoice.

-Brad Reynolds

Special Events in December and January

Dec 2 - Advent Wreath Making, 9:30am

Keeping with tradition, we begin our Advent season making wreaths together. Held during the Christian formation hour at 9:30 am, we welcome all to join us for snacks, fellowship, and a holy craft!



Dec 2 - Facing Grief During the Holidays, 3pm

Grief and loss can be especially difficult during the holidays. Our guest speaker, Dr. Cat Vincent, will educate us on the stages of grief and coping strategies. The program will close with a brief prayer vigil. Speak to Rebecca Barrier if you would like to assist with hospitality.

Dec 5 - Heart and Home, 4pm

The Episcopal Church Women will again join our friends from the Presbyterian Church for a program to ready our hearts and homes for Christmas. This year, the event will be held at the Home of Carol Simmons. Guest Speakers are Lanny Kennedy and Jeri Stansel. Contact Fran Davis for details:

Dec 10—The Twelve Days of Christmas, 1pm

See details on "giving" chart about this great outreach.

December 12 – Foster Children's Party, 5:30 pm

Help provide a hospitable and safe environment for foster children to celebrate Christmas together. See details on "giving" chart.

Dec 13—Honoring Caregivers at Indywood, 3pm

Help celebrate the caregivers at the Indywood Care Home. See details on "giving" chart.

Dec 16 — St. Stephen's Christmas Program— 5pm

The youth will lead us in a presentation of the story of the birth of Jesus. A light supper will follow. All are encouraged to attend!

Dec 17—Parish Wide Christmas Caroling— 6:15pm

All are invited to gather at 6:15 pm in the Parish Hall for Christmas Caroling! Speak to our rector if you know of individuals we should be sure to visit.

Dec 24 Christmas Worship— 5pm

O Come All Ye Faithful!

A festive Holy Eucharist with special music will be held at 5pm in the church. A reception will follow in the parish hall.

January 13- Annual Meeting Sunday

All are encouraged to attend Holy Eucharist at 11am and the luncheon meeting that will follow. The annual parish meeting is an opportunity to review the past year and make plans for the year to come. Details related to the life of the church will be discussed, the 2019 budget finalized, and new vestry members elected.

January 25-27— The 192nd Annual Council

This year's Diocesan Council will be in Hattiesburg. Your St. Stephen's delegation includes Jack and Debbie Allen, David and Beth Fisher, and Susan Lee. To attend Council as a guest, speak to Rev. Giuliana



Parishioners asking for Prayer & Urgent Needs:

Martha Sue Gardner, Mary Anne Allen, Charlotte Buchanan, Ferne Hutcherson, Lowell Jones, Andrea Polasini, Linda Tankersley, Bobby Randall, David Abernathy, Bobbie Sue Bowen, Steve Castillaw, Mary Gee, Logan Lambert, Blann Lutken, Leila McCarty, Matt McGregor Jr, Mac Neal, Alinda Sledge, Felecia Suddoth, Allison Tyler, Matthew McCaskill



Ongoing Prayer list: those with mental illness and addiction and their families, Armed forces and those that are deployed, especially Jason Lee and Beau MacNealy, Leland Acker, Ann Belk, Lana Bell, Donald Durst, Katy Houseman, Antonio Jones, Harlon Malone, Joyce Mize, Edward Pope, Ron Schlatter, Doug Simmons.

Preparing for Holy Matrimony: Henry Lawler and Sarah Collins

So many way to give to those in need this December

Title	Date & Time	Location	Bring	Purpose
W Outreach Project "12 Days of Christmas"	Monday, December 10th at 1:00 pm	Parish Hall	12 small gifts wrapped with removable labels as to the contents on gift. Items can be for men and/or women, useful in everyday life to fit in a small gift bag.	Help spread Christmas love and cheer to our friends. Tags and bags will be provided. Please have in mind who would benefit from receiving a bag and a visit from you.
Foster Children Christmas Party	Wednesday, December 12th 5:30 pm	Parish Hall	We need a couple of volunteers to bring two dozen cookies or cupcakes.	Provide a safe, warm environment where local children in foster care can celebrate the holiday together. Contact Pam Woo for more information at [REDACTED]
Adopt a Child for Christmas	Gift Drop off by Friday, December 14th. (Contact Lynn Baker)	Wrapped gifts should be delivered to Welfare office	You will purchase and wrap gifts for your selected child/children. Bring gifts wrapped and in one big bag with child's name on the outside bag to the Dept. of Human Services. Note *\$100 will be given from Outreach budget to help offset the cost for you.	Provide Christmas gifts for children who otherwise would not have them. See Lynn Baker at church or call her at [REDACTED] if you would like to help with this ministry.
Indywood Employee Christmas Party	Thursday, December 13th 3-4 pm	Indywood assisted living	Pick up snacks needed and any small gifts.	Expressing gratitude to the hard working staff at Indywood. Contact Lynn Baker (662) 297-8875 if you can to help.

Adult Formation News

Each Sunday in December, we are using a new curriculum that the Episcopal Church made available entitled "Journeying the Way of Love: Practices for Jesus-Centered Life." This course includes bible studies from the Gospel according to Luke as well as daily challenges for us related to the themes listed here. You will find a daily calendar in the narthex for your own use and encouragement each Sunday at 9:30am!

THE WAY OF LOVE
Practices for Jesus-Centered Life

- TURN** Pause, listen, and choose to follow Jesus
- LEARN** Reflect on Scripture each day, especially Jesus' life and teachings
- PRAY** Dwell intentionally with God each day
- WORSHIP** Gather in community weekly to thank, praise, and draw near God
- BLESS** Share faith and unselfishly give and serve
- GO** Cross boundaries, listen deeply, and live like Jesus
- REST** Receive the gift of God's grace, peace, and restoration