



St. Stephen the Martyr
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Encounter, Know, Proclaim

The Family Connection

St. Stephen the Martyr Religious Education
Mary Maguire, Director

www.stephen.org/faith-formation/religious-education/

December 2, 2018

- **Dec. 3/4: First Reconciliation; 7 p.m.**
- **Dec. 8: St. Augustine Angel Tree delivery**
- **Dec. 9: Pancake Breakfast**
- **Dec. 16: Christmas Program; Gym 3:00 pm**
- **Dec. 18/19: Last R.E. and Advent Prayer Services**
- **Jan. 25/26: 7th Grade Retreats**

If your child/children will be absent, please contact the Religious Education Office at 402-896-5683 or email us at RE.attendance@stephen.org.

First Reconciliation

First Reconciliation Services- First Reconciliation will be celebrated at services on Mon., Dec., 3rd and Tues., Dec. 4th at 7 pm. We will have a small reception in honor of our children immediately following Reconciliation in the Dining Room. Parents, please make sure that you and your child complete the 'My First Reconciliation' packet together. Packets should be turned in to the child's teacher or the R.E. Office by Dec. 4th. Please contact the R.E. Office at 402-896-5683 with questions.

Monday, December 3: 7 p.m.

2AT4 N. Shoemaker/J. Lozier
2BT4 R. Turner/B. Skartvedt
2AT5 A. Havranek/C. Meraz
2AW4 A. Rachow
2BW4 L. Baker/K. Hraban
2A Mary Gill

Tuesday, December 4: 7 p.m.

2AW5 D. Timmerman/C. Busskohl
2BW5 Jason & Sherri Castor
2AW7 K. Cameron/S. Parks
2BW7 Carissa & Tim Nath
RCIC Mary Maguire
2B Marlene Roduner
2C Angie Lowry



Reminder:
Students still need to attend their regular Religious Ed. class on December 4/5.

Disciples of Christ



This is an award given to a student when they are caught showing an example of following Jesus's teachings.

The following student earned the Disciple of Christ Award from their Catechist:

Isaac Stoltenberg	Grade 4
Liam Dougherty	Grade 5
Evan Ward	Grade 5
Piper Bavaresco	Grade 2
Kelsey Maulick	Grade 6
Tregan Critser	Grade 6
Emma McGargill	Grade 6
Nolan Martin	Grade 1

Office Hours:

Monday: 9 AM - 3 PM
Tuesday: 9 AM - 6:30 PM
Wednesday: 10 AM - 8 PM
Thursday: 9 AM - 1 PM
Sunday: 9 AM - Noon

You can also call us at 402-896-5683
Fax number: 402-861-4590

- Director: Mary Maguire at 896-5683 m.maguire@stephen.org,
- Admin. Asst.: Eileen Smith at 861-4513 e.smith@stephen.org
- Confirmation: Betsy Carroll at 861-4510 b.carroll@stephen.org
- Sunday School/WBS: Rhonda Richeson at 861-4511 r.richeson@stephen.org
- Youth Ministry: Laura Bogue at 861-4509 l.bogue@stephen.org

Want to add something to the newsletter?
Contact Eileen at: 402-861-4513,
e.smith@stephen.org

Confirmation Candidates

Each Confirmation candidate in grades 7 and 8 must perform a minimum of 10 hours of stewardship service (5 within the parish, 5 in the outside community). The first 5 hours are due December 5, 2018. The remainder of the hours are due May 1, 2019. On-line Stewardship Reflection Forms are available under the Confirmation tab of the parish Sacrament Preparation page at <https://stephen.org/education/sacrament-preparation-for-church/>.

Stewardship Reflections can even be completed on a cell-phone. Please see the above webpage or contact Confirmation Coordinator Betsy Carroll at b.carroll@stephen.org with questions.



Catechists & Volunteer Needed

There is a teacher who would love your help and a class that needs you to share your faith with them!

- ◆ We have an immediate need for a catechist in our Kindergarten class; Wed. at 5:30.
- ◆ We need a childcare Volunteer; Wednesday at 4 p.m.

Several of our classes need a co-catechist to teach with a catechist who is already in place, especially on Tuesdays at 4:15 and 5:30 pm and Wed. at 4 pm. We have many grade levels to choose from. Please consider joining us in this very important teaching ministry. All lesson plans and materials are provided for you and tuition is waived for your children. We even have child care for your younger children. Please call or stop by the Religious Education Office for more information.

All volunteers must be Safe Environment Trained

Youth Group

Laura Bogue at 402-861-4509 or at l.bogue@stephen.org



Edge: It's the same Edge time, but a DIFFERENT Edge channel, Middle Schoolers! Join us in the school library this Tuesday, December 4th from 6:30-8 PM for our regularly scheduled programming.

Life Teen: Who is ready to divide and conquer? Our parish has been abundantly generous with Angel Tree Donations, and now it's time for our annual Sort & Pack Party. This Sunday, December 2nd, we will begin with pizza in the Gonderinger Parish Center at 7 PM, and afterwards will head to the Gathering Space to square away all of the donations. Bring any cardboard boxes, Sharpies, or packing tape you have to spare! Parents (and young'uns!) are welcome to come join in on the fun.

T3 Bible Study: Let the adventure begin! Open to all 8th-12th grade teens, T3 (The Teen Timeline) Bible Study follows in the footsteps of The Great Adventure Bible Study System. So what does that mean? It means it's a great way for teens to not only read the Bible, but to understand it, appreciate it, and enjoy it. Mark "The Bible Geek" Hart is featured in the series of engaging, dynamic videos, and participants are not required to do any homework in between sessions. Beginning Wednesday, November 7th, T3 will meet on Wednesday nights from 7-8:30 PM in the School Library. A suggested donation of \$15 covers the cost of materials, including a student workbook/study kit. Contact Laura Bogue for more information or to sign-up.

Hearts Open Wide: Youth Service Squad: If you enjoy opportunities to give back to the community both inside and outside of our parish, visit our Forms & Events page to find out what's to come! We have several upcoming opportunities to get involved (and earn a stewardship hour or two), from our monthly Sundaes Sunday events at the Country House Residence, to serving dinner at the Stephen Center and setting-up for our Angel Tree Project. Family participation is always welcome and encouraged! On-line volunteer registration is required to participate in each of these events. Please contact Laura at l.bogue@stephen.org with questions.

Christmas Decorating

We will be decorating for the beautiful Christmas Liturgies on Wednesday evening, December 19th at 7:30 p.m. If you want to obtain Confirmation Hours you must sign up with a parent by utilizing the Sign Up Genius below. We would love to see more Adult Men assist with our decorating as well. It takes many hands and strong backs to retrieve all of our decorations from the basement. For further information feel free to contact Karen at k.hardy@stephen.org.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0e4da4a82ea02-christmas2>

Christmas Decoration Removal: We will be removing our Christmas decorations on Sunday Night January 6th following the 6:00 p.m. If you want to obtain Confirmation Hours you must sign up with a parent by utilizing the Sign Up Genius below.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0E4DA4A82EA02-christmas3>



St Stephen the Martyr
Religious Education

First Week of Advent



Traditionally, Advent wreaths are constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which four candles are inserted, representing the four weeks of Advent. Ideally, three candles are purple and one is rose, but white candles can also be used. The purple candles in particular symbolize the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and goods works undertaken at this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas.

The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of his second coming to judge the living and the dead.

Week 1, Hope

Dear Jesus, you are the hope in our messy world. This Advent, help us slow down, listen to your voice, and focus on what's really important. We place our hope in you as we prepare our hearts to celebrate your birth on Christmas. Amen.

Angel Tree Donations Due This Weekend!

From November 3rd-December 2nd, we will again be collecting donated items for several area organizations. Listed below are the different charities and some information about them.

- **Essential Pregnancy Services** All of their services are free and confidential. Every day, their programs provide pregnant women and mothers with the *medical, educational, material, financial and emotional support* they need to become healthy, knowledgeable, and caring parents
- **St. Augustine Indian Mission of Winnebago** St. Augustine Indian Mission has served the Native American people of the Winnebago and Omaha Tribes since 1909. Through the years it has touched the lives of thousands of Native American children and impacted the lives of their families
- **Open Door Mission** The Open Door Mission is a Gospel Rescue Mission providing basic needs and life-changing programs for the homeless and needy
- **St. Stephen the Martyr Parish Pantry** Provides food and essential items to families in need



Help Needed to Deliver Donations-Over the years our parish has been overwhelmingly generous with this project, and for that we thank you! If you are interested in helping to sort, pack, and/or deliver donations to the various locations, contact Laura at 402-861-4509 or l.bogue@stephen.org or [click here](#) for the sign up genius form.

Linus Blankets Needed

Hello wonderful Linus Blanketeers! **Our blankets are low as we start to fill the requests that we have received for the Holiday Season.** We would love it if you would consider making some blankets for us before the Holidays. It is a great family activity or an opportunity to get your co-workers together and do something great for our local kids in need. (Please follow the directions below to ensure that we can send them right out and not have to spend time fixing them.)

Please start with 1 and 1/2 yards or 2 yards of fleece with a printed top and a matching bottom. Below is a wonderful tutorial on how to cut off the salvages and make the blanket look extra nice. Also, if you would please double check the blankets to make sure that the knots are securely tied and won't come apart when the blankets are laundered by the children's families.

<https://www.agirlandaglugun.com/2015/10/everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about-making-fleece-blankets.html>

Please drop off your completed blankets at the Country Sampler Quilt Shop at 120th and Center Street. We will pick them up from there. God bless you and your wonderful helpers doing such great deeds this holiday season.

Ginny
Omaha Project Linus



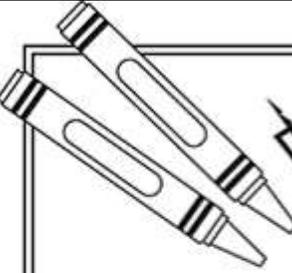
A Merry Balance

In Luke 10:38-42, Martha gets a bad rap. After all, we need Marthas to get things done and to show hospitality. (Note that Martha is the one who opens up her home to Jesus in the first place!)

Marthas are needed in December, but holiday preparations shouldn't shift our focus from the reason for the season. When we become "worried and distracted" as Martha did (v. 41), we're tempted to trade God's "one thing" (v. 42) for the world's many worthless things. Yet if we're only like Mary, we may forget to let the world know who we're celebrating!

So this Christmas, keep a proper balance between your inner Mary and your inner Martha. Take time to "be Mary," kneeling at the manger, so that all the merry things you do as Martha have meaning and serve the newborn king.



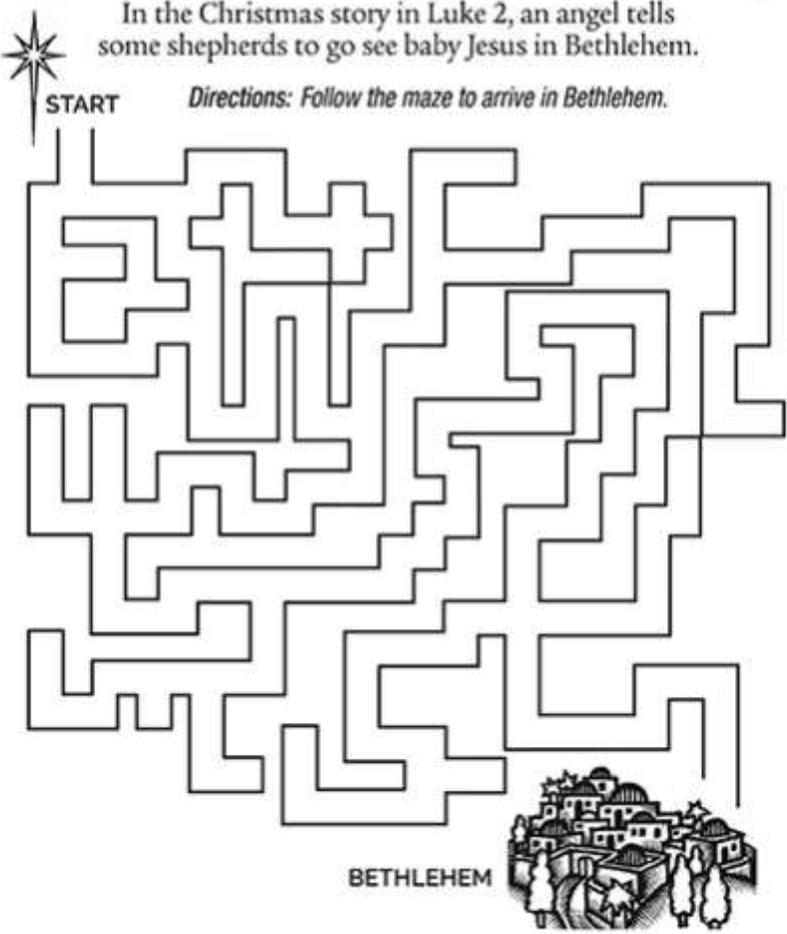


PUZZLE

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

In the Christmas story in Luke 2, an angel tells some shepherds to go see baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

★ **START** *Directions: Follow the maze to arrive in Bethlehem.*



BETHLEHEM

Fair Trade Sale

**NEXT SUNDAY
DECEMBER 9**

The sale will be held from 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM. **WE WILL HAVE COFFEE, CRAFTS, TEA, SPICES, AND EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE – CHOCOLATE. GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS!!**

Come shop with us and help others at the same time.



Sunday School Lessons

December 2

Intro: Lesson 12 Getting ready for Jesus

PreK: Lesson 22, We wait for Jesus with Joy

Kind.: Lesson 21, Getting ready for Jesus Prayer-Hail Mary

December 4/5

Kind.: Lesson 22, All creation welcomes Jesus

A FUN, EYE-OPENING
SERVICE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE
WHOLE FAMILY!

Donation Delivery to the St. Augustine Indian Mission

Help is needed to deliver the Angel Tree Donations
to the St. Augustine Indian Mission! Visit
<https://waiver.smartwaiver.com/v/staugustines/>
for more information or to volunteer.

SAT. DEC. 8TH | 8:30 AM-4 PM



This opportunity has been organized through St. Stephen the Martyr
Youth Ministry's Service Squad, Hearts Open Wide.

Questions?

Contact Laura Bogue, Youth Minister, at l.bogue@stephen.org.



Sunday School & Kindergarten Christmas Program Come One, Come All!

Our Christmas Program will be **Sunday, December 16th, at 3:00 p.m.** in the school gym. Come watch our little ones reenact the Christmas Story. Join us in the Dining room afterwards for refreshments. This will be sure to put a smile on your face!!

For Parents of children in the Program:



The rehearsal will be Saturday December, 15th at 10:00 AM.

This rehearsal is very important because it is the only time we have to practice in the gym.

Intro and Pre-K students and teachers should go to their classrooms first on Saturday morning for rehearsal. Kindergarten students will be assigned to either room 118 or 119 to go to before rehearsal and on Sunday. Check the list outside the room. Students and teachers should be in the classroom by 2:15 PM on Sunday to put on costumes and get lined up.

Costumes:

Intro classes will be angels. The children will make wings in class. They will need to wear "Sunday Best" clothes. The children will be standing and sitting, so please make sure they are comfortable.

Pre-K students are sheep. We have sheep hats with ears and pillowcase bodies for them to wear. They will need to wear long sleeve white shirts and dark pants or tights. Any big ribbons or bows in the girls' hair will be uncomfortable under the sheep hat, so simple is best.

Kindergarteners will play all the other parts. We have costumes for everyone. Once again "Sunday Best" is appropriate, but make sure they are comfortable.

There will be a cookie reception in the dining room after the program. We are asking each family to bring one dozen treats to share. Please take your treats to the dining room before the program.

Questions: Contact Rhonda Richeson at 402-861-4511 or r.richeson@stephen.org

7th GRADE RETREAT ASSIGNMENTS 2019

January 25th, 2018 6:00-9:00 PM

7A Mrs. Mabeus
7AT4 Patricia Kolega
7AW4 Julie Riedel
7BW5 Amy Pink & Peggy Millerbernd



January 26th, 2018 8:00-11:00 AM

7B Mr. Hentzen
7BT4 Tina & Taylor Peterson
7AW5 Matthew & Jennifer Hustedt
7AW7 Susan Ward & Brandy Bunjer
MAT5 Betsy Carroll
MBW7 Kate Anderson

January 26th, 2017 1:00-4:00 PM

7C Mrs. Potach
7AT5 Lisa & Alex Schrier
7BW4 Stacia Jarzobski & Tonya Lampe
7CW4 Shellie DuBay & Julie Johnson
7BW7 Terri Maier

Sacramental Preparation Information available at

<https://stephen.org/education/sacrament-preparation-for-church/>

*If you have a conflict on your assigned retreat date, contact Betsy Carroll **ASAP***

402-861-4510 or b.carroll@stephen.org

(There are a limited number of candidates on each retreat)

Confirmation Retreat Day

- Candidates should meet in the Dining Room at St. Stephen's.
- Snack will be provided.
- Students should not bring cell phones or any other electronic devices.
- **NO RETREAT TIME CHANGES WILL BE MADE AFTER January 18th, 2018.**

**PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING TO HELP WITH RETREATS
CONTACT Betsy Carroll at 402-861-4510 or b.carroll@stephen.org**

Please consider this opportunity to volunteer to make the retreat the best it can be for all of our candidates.