

## Helping Each Other at Every Step by The Rev. Kevin LJ Schubert



Dear St. Stephen's Family,

Greetings to you and your family! We are drawing closer to the end of the Advent season, and quickly approaching the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at Christmas. I imagine you are feeling the same strangeness I am as we prepare to celebrate in the midst of a pandemic. None the less, Christ still comes among us, and we continue, even within our current constraints, to glorify God and give thanks for the gift of Christ to the world through the incarnation.

I have been tremendously impressed, and personally moved, by the community of St. Stephen's. This past weekend the efforts of the Santa Ministry was a fantastic success! I am extremely grateful for all of you that participated in the ministry. You have provided a source of hope and the never-ending love of Christ to those in the Wimberley area that do not have adequate resources for their children and family. I have also been thoroughly overjoyed to be able to work alongside such a tremendous church staff. I assure you that your church staff has been working diligently to create a safe and special season of Christmas for our parish. Each staff member has approached these trying times of Christmas during a pandemic with care, compassion, and positive energy.

St. Stephen's has continuously shown me what it means to live into the beloved community of Christ. This past Tuesday at our 9:00 am Morning Prayer service in the courtyard, I was struck by one of the readings from the Gospel of Luke. The story is of Jesus instructing Simon Peter to cast his nets into the sea and subsequently bringing in a literal boat load of fish. Specifically, I was struck by one of the often-overlooked verses in the passage. After Simon Peter had followed Jesus' instructions and brought in the nets, they had caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. The following verse says, "so, they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them." As disciples of Christ, and members of the beloved community of St. Stephen's, we are enriched by the many hands that are called and participate in the bounty of God's grace.

Whether we participate in providing prayers, liturgical ministries, financial resources, comfort and care for the down trodden, Christmas gifts for under privileged children; our efforts are of the utmost importance. I am extremely grateful for all that you do for God's Kingdom. Sometimes we are Simon Peter struggling to carry in the load of a net full of fish, and sometimes we are those partners in the other boat coming to lend a hand. In all these ways we share in the glory of God's grace and love; helping each other at every step of the journey.

I look forward to praising God alongside all of you next week for the coming of Christ at Christmas. And, I am overjoyed to walk alongside each of you on our journey of

spreading God's Kingdom to the far reaches of the world. God bless you this day and always.

Peace,  
*The Rev. Kevin LJ Schubert*

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## Senior Warden News by Nancy Cooke-Jenkins



My wish for each of you this year is a rearview mirror under your Christmas tree so you can experience first hand the end of 2020!! The year that was! Since I will be recalling the year's accomplishments at our annual meeting, I'll not reference them in this newsletter edition.

**HEADS UP: ANNUAL MEETING is scheduled for January 31 .** (See separate article for more details.)

During this blessed time of year, we are often burdened with the sadness of lost love ones and the memories are more poignant than ever. St. Stephen's is so fortunate to have a ministry to address these feelings. *Companions*, the widow support group, is led by Evie Martin and meets each Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. in the courtyard. It will resume its meetings in January. Evie would delight in answering any questions you may have regarding *Companions*. You may reach her at: [evieartin@yahoo.com](mailto:evieartin@yahoo.com).

Our thanks to Susan Behrmann who has just finished her two-year term as Director of Pastoral Care. Judy Holmes, who was her assistant, now takes the reigns as Director and Robin Bitzkie will be her assistant. We thank these ladies for stepping up to the plate in this most rewarding ministry.

Our Santa angels have been busy gathering gifts for good little boys and girls to find under their Christmas trees! Our sincere appreciation for the efforts of: Sharon Krebs, Lexi Jones, Darelle Jordan, Anita McNabb, and Ashley Barrett in organizing and distributing these gifts and meals. It may be our largest Season of Giving to date, thanks to the generosity of parishioners as well as members of greater Wimberley. (See separate article in this issue for more Santa 2020 highlights.)

Kudos to our children, youth, and teens!! The Kingdom Kids (ages 7-9), the Mountain Movers (ages 10-12), and the Teens have been making Christmas cards for delivery to the residents of Deer Creek. Our children are actively learning outreach as part of their daily lives. (For those that would like to add a Christmas card to the batch being delivered to Deer Creek, see separate article in this issue for how to do so.)

Finally, this will be my last letter to you as Senior Warden of St. Stephen's Church and School. It has been my privilege and honor to serve on Vestry for the past three years and as Senior Warden for the past two. Thank you for your continuing support of the Vestry and its efforts to serve you.

*Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a safe and healthy 2021!*  
Nancy

*"With every power for good to stay and guide me,  
Comforted and inspired beyond all fear,  
I'll live these days with you in thought beside me,  
And pass, with you, into the coming year."  
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer from prison, New Year 1945*

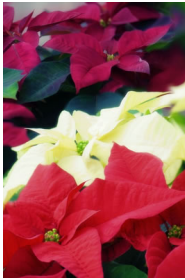
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## NEWS

**ORDER YOUR POINSETTIAS FOR THE ALTAR**



through TODAY, Friday, December 18, 2020



Sign up and pay online to dedicate a poinsettia in celebration, honor, or in memory of your loved ones. Orders need to be in by TODAY, Friday, December 18. Cost of poinsettias is \$15.

[ORDER POINSETTIAS ONLINE](#)

[PAY FOR POINSETTIAS ONLINE](#)

If you are paying online, please remember to type "poinsettias" in the memo field. If you are paying by check, please remember to add "poinsettias" in the check's memo line and mail to: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 6000-A FM 3237, Wimberley, TX 78676. Checks should be made out to: St. Stephen's Church.

Dedications will appear in the Christmas Eve order of worship.

For more information, contact: Jeannetta Watson, [jwatson@ststeve.org](mailto:jwatson@ststeve.org).

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# CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE RESERVATIONS

MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE RESERVATION ONLINE

[ststeve.org/christmas-eve](https://ststeve.org/christmas-eve)

Plans are going forward to offer three in-building, in-person **Christmas Eve services** at 4:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., and 9:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24. Holy Eucharist will be offered at all three services. Both services at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary and 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel will also be live-streamed.

The children's pageant will be held at the 4:00 p.m. service in the sanctuary. Reservations for the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service will be capped at 100 people. A candlelight service will be held at the 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. in the Chapel with a cap of 30 people for the 7:00 p.m. and 30 people for the 9:00 p.m. A sermon will be given at the 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Seating will be limited for all services, therefore, everyone will need to make a reservation online. RSVP is required and will be used for any necessary contact tracing. *Please note that the 7:00 p.m. service is now full. We are still accepting reservations for the 4:00 p.m. and the 9:00 p.m.*

Remember to wear your mask and social distance while on the church property.

[ststeve.org/christmas-eve](https://ststeve.org/christmas-eve)

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# CHRISTMAS EVE CAROLING

**Thursday, December 24, 5:00 p.m.**

Music Director Anne Jones and Allen Hennig have a merry lineup of Christmas Hymns lined up for us to enjoy as we are caroling together in the courtyard. All are invited at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2020. No reservations are needed for courtyard caroling. Remember to dress in layers if it is chilly, wear your mask, and social distance.

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## MERRY CHRISTMAS!

**from Fr. Kevin & the Church Staff**

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ALL DAY**

Wednesday, December 23

Thursday, December 24

Friday, December 25

Thursday, December 31 (closes at 12 noon)

Friday, January 1

The church office will re-open for regular hours on Monday, January 4 at 8:30 a.m.

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### **LAST DAY TO TURN IN YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2020 by 12 noon**

Jeannetta Watson will be in the church office until 12 noon on Thursday, December 31 to receive any final year-end contributions that you wish to hand deliver.





If you prefer dropping your year-end contribution in the mail, remember to have it postmarked by December 31 in order to be included in your 2020 church statement.

*St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
6000-A FM 3237  
Wimberley, TX 78676*

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## THE REV KAREN MORRIS WILL BE ORDAINED TUES, DEC 29, 6 PM

The Rev. Karen Morris will be ordained to the Priesthood at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Lockhart by the Rt. Rev. David Reed on Tuesday, December 29 at 6:00 p.m. CT.

Her ordination will be with online-only presence. Contact [emmanuellockhardt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:emmanuellockhardt@sbcglobal.net) for a link to attend the live-streamed service, via Zoom.



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## CONGRATULATIONS TO DARELLE JORDAN!

Darelle Jordan, long-time member of St. Stephen's and our beloved Godly Play teacher, is being recognized by Wimberley ISD for her efforts in leading the way in the District's COVID response. This awesome District Nurse will be recognized during the State Football broadcast. We are so in awe of all that she does for our community! If you would like to send your own congratulatory note, you may email her at: [darellejordan@gmail.com](mailto:darellejordan@gmail.com).



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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR SSEC ANNUAL MEETING SUN, JAN 31, 11:45 AM, ZOOM

As you start getting out those new 2021 calendars, be sure to mark down the St. Stephen's Annual Meeting,

# ANNUAL MEETING

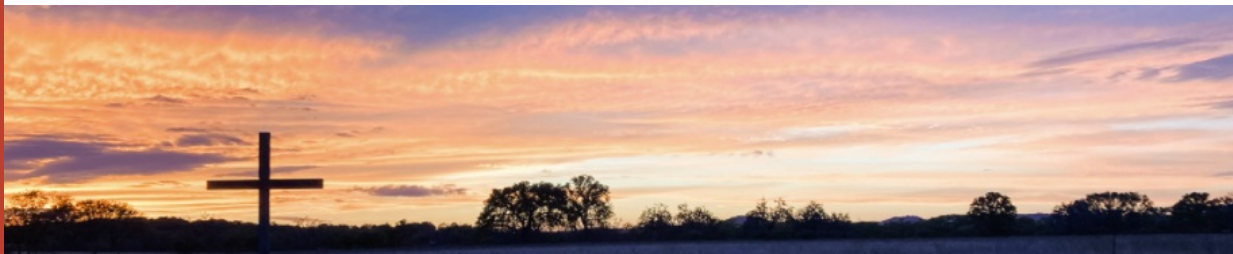
scheduled for Sunday, January 31 at 11:45 a.m. This year we will hold the meeting 100% virtual on Zoom. All ages are invited to attend. We will be sharing highlights from 2020, recognizing the outgoing Vestry, welcoming the new Vestry, voting, and watching never seen before video clips. Although we won't be gathered around our round tables in McArthur Hall this year, we will still be able to share stories, fun, and fellowship. Watch your January 8 eNEWS edition for more details.

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## THANK YOU FROM OPERATION GOOD SHEPHERD

St. Stephen's  
Thank you for your donation  
to OGS. Your donation is so  
very generous and comes at a  
time when so many community  
members are in need.  
We are so thankful for  
you! K Sowell

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## CAMP SUNDAY 2021 HAPPENS FEBRUARY 7, 2021

Who is in need of some celebrating, on the near horizon, in some very serene natural environments? DWTX recognizes that after losing the 2020 camp season and the widespread social isolation brought on by the pandemic, the connections, adventures, and joy provided at camp, are needed now more than ever.

**SAVE THE DATE FOR CAMP SUNDAY: FEBRUARY 7, 2021**



Parishes will all be signing up parishioners for camp on Camp Sunday and taking a special collection for camp scholarships. Fr. Kevin and Family & Youth Minister Elisa Webster are excited to join St. Stephen's at one or more of the offered camps this summer. Stay tuned for more details, if you would like to plan on joining them.

If you are eager to get a taste of the 2021 camp lineup in the meantime, visit:  
[dwtx.org/camps](http://dwtx.org/camps)



## TO ANNOUNCE BIRTHDAYS & WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES, COMPLETE ONLINE FORM



If your special day, birthday or wedding anniversary, is coming up and you would like the announcement displayed in the online Sunday Bulletin, remember to complete the online form.

We announce these special days, **with your permission**, in monthly blocks. Please complete the form two weeks in advance so we have time to make sure it is displayed during the month you indicate.

[Online Birthday Announcement Form](#)

[Online Wedding Anniversary Announcement Form](#)

## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES



### *Daily Meditations* *December 21 - 26, 2020*

#### MEDITATION WRITER PREPARES CHRISTMAS SONNETS FOR US

Be sure to read your week's worth of "Daily Meditations" that will be arriving in your email's inbox around 12 noon today. This week's meditation writer has created original Christmas sonnets and a Feast of Saint Stephen sonnet especially for our reading enjoyment and contemplation.

If you missed any of the prior meditations, these can be found on the church website,  
<https://www.ststeve.org/daily-meditations>.

For more information on the "Daily Meditations" or to inquire about joining the Meditation Writers team, contact, ministry leader, Carroll Wilson, [wilsoncwarm@gmail.com](mailto:wilsoncwarm@gmail.com).





## **SANTA PROGRAM PROVIDED FOR 25 FAMILIES & 77 KIDS!**

Sharon Krebs would like to share joyous news! This past Sunday, December 13, the Santa Ministry handed out more than \$10,200 in gifts and food for families in the Wimberley community.

"We are a truly blessed community!" gushes Sharon, noting that donations poured in from St. Stephen's parishioners, members from the Church of Christ, the Wimberley Chamber of Commerce, and individuals from within the community. "God is Good!"

Thank you to the entire Santa Team: Sharon Krebs, Alexis Jones, Darelle Jordan, Anita McNabb, and Ashley Barrett and THANK YOU SSEC Youth, including Amelia Jordan home from college, for your energy and help throughout this Santa season.



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## **ROADSIDE ALL TIDY NOW FOR CHRISTMAS**

On Saturday, December 12, our intrepid crew of volunteers, including a neighbor living along our church's assigned highway sections, all donned their orange TXDot vests and tidied up in





time for Christmas.

Co-leader, Becki Smith, even found two golf clubs during the quarterly roadside cleanup. Bill Cline reports that, "perfectly beautiful weather for another super successful cleanup!"

Roadside leaders, Becki and Jon Smith, Mike Marcionetti, and Todd Schmidt, estimate that volunteers removed between 53-83 bags/large pieces of trash in a single morning by 10:30 a.m.

Come 2021, if you would like to make some new friends and do a good deed at the same time, they would love to have you! Next cleanup date will be held in March.



## CHILDREN'S PAGEANT QUICKLY APPROACHING

Family & Youth Minister Elisa Webster has mailed Advent activity packets to the St. Stephen's families of those in Kingdom Kids (ages 7-9), Mountain Movers (ages 10-12), and teens. Due to the surge in Texas COVID cases, children's and family Advent classes were shifted to be done remotely.

***Please note that at this time, we are planning on having the Children's Christmas Pageant in-building, in-person on Thursday, December 24, 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.***

There's still time for all who would like to turn in Christmas cards for the Deer Creek residents. Simply drop off the cards at Church in the Santa mailbox, found by the side of the Chapel. All cards should be in the mailbox by Monday, December 21. Elisa will be delivering these welcome surprises to Deer Creek before Christmas.

We have one more Kingdom Kids & Mountain Movers meeting in 2020. We will continue to meet by Zoom. Class starts at 9:00 a.m. Teachers Donna Hoyland and Elisa Webster look forward to sharing this time with you and answering any questions that families may have about the upcoming Children's Pageant.

[Zoom Link for Sunday, December 20 @ 9:00 a.m.](#)

***We have no children's Zoom classes on Sunday, December 27.***

For more information, contact: Elisa Webster, [elisawebster9@gmail.com](mailto:elisawebster9@gmail.com).



## TAKE 5 ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EPISODES

TAKE 5 Host Allen Hennig continues to share the wealth of captivating Christmas music with us, along with the history behind this music. We hope you will be able to join us for the last two episodes in the Advent series that will be airing this coming Tuesday and Thursday, December 22 and 24, at 10 a.m. CST.

An extra magical edition of TAKE 5, filled with distinctive bell chiming, is planned for release on Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25. And if that weren't enough! Allen has been busy putting the finishing touches on a special music tribute in time for our celebration of St. Stephen's Day. We will be sending you the links to all these wonderful 5 minute music break episodes and more coming your way in 2021.

Allen would love to hear from you with your comment regarding this new TAKE 5 Advent series and/or your suggestions for future episodes. [Drop him an email](#) anytime.

[Click for YouTube Link, December 22, Lullabies of Bethlehem](#)

[Click for Facebook Link, December 22, Lullabies of Bethlehem](#)

## TAKE 5 PLAY LIST

### GODLY PLAY ADVENT SERIES: CONTINUES THROUGH WED DEC 23

Darelle Jordan, with the help of film crew Robert McLemore, has prepared a video series of Godly Play stories so that we may walk together through the season of Advent. These five minute videos are available through YouTube and Facebook. The Godly Play Advent Series can be enjoyed by all ages. If you are on the church email list, you will receive YouTube and Facebook links the morning of each Advent episode. You may also want to share the schedule and links below with your relatives, friends, and family.



Sunday, November 29 @ 10 a.m. CT/Story 1  
Sunday, December 6 @ 10 a.m. CT/Story 2  
Sunday, December 13 @ 10 a.m. CT/Story 3  
Sunday, December 20 @ 10 a.m. CT/Story 4  
Wednesday, December 23 @ 10 a.m. CT/Story 5

[STORY 1 LINK](#)

The Start, the prophets

[STORY 2 LINK](#)

The Holy Family

[STORY 3 LINK](#)

The Shepherd, Sheep, Angel

[STORY 4 LINK](#)

The Magi, Wild Star

[STORY 5 LINK](#)

Celebration, Birth of Jesus

### DEC/JAN SCHEDULE OF MINISTRIES & CLASSES

Several ministries and classes have now concluded for 2020 and will be resuming in January. Please see below for updates.



**COMPANIONS MINISTRY:** resumes Tuesday, January 5 @ 3 PM, Courtyard

**YOGA MINISTRY:** resumes Tuesday, January 5 @ 4 PM, Outside

**MONDAY BIBLE BABES:** resumes Monday, January 11 @ 12 noon

**CHRIST CENTERED PRAYER:** resumes Wednesday, January 6 @ 5 PM

**THURSDAY BIBLE BABES:** resumes Thursday, January 7 @ 5 PM

**SUNDAY ADULT CLASS** (*The Lord and His Prayer*): starts Sunday, January 17 @ 9 AM

### COMMUNITY OF HOPE

*Do you need someone...*

*To listen, without judgment, to what is weighing on your heart?*  
*To recognize your needs and respect your rights to your feelings?*  
*To honor any conversation with complete confidentiality?*  
*To support you as you take steps of change on your journey?*  
*To just walk with you and let you be you?*





Each one of us, at some point or at several points in our lives, could use a "companion" to walk with us during the challenges of our journeys. A Community of Hope Lay Chaplain is someone who cares about you, will not promise miracles, will not decide for you what you should do, will not take steps for you, and will not rescue you. He or she will be available to you, support you, pray for you, and assure you that you are God's beloved. Please, if you are walking alone, invite one to join you on your path.

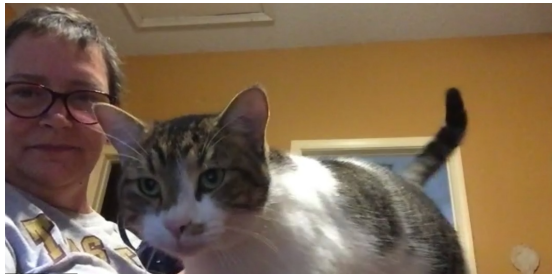
### DECEMBER COMMUNITY OF HOPE CONTACTS

Sharon East, [sharoneast2@gmail.com](mailto:sharoneast2@gmail.com)  
Connie Maverick, [joemaverick@verizon.net](mailto:joemaverick@verizon.net)

## IN THE LIFE OF SSEC

Since we have been holding classes by Zoom, some unexpected but welcome guests have been able to join, including Donna Hoyland's kitty cat.

The St. Stephen's School & Staff want to thank everyone for the extra dose of understanding and support during 2020. They wish us all a very "Merry Christmas."



## SAVE THE DATE

### SUN, DEC 20

*Liturgy of the Word with bread communion*, courtyard, 8:00 a.m.

*Kingdom Kids* (Zoom), 9:00 a.m.

*Mountain Movers* (Zoom), 9:00 a.m.

*Godly Play Advent Series* (YouTube, Facebook), 10:00 a.m.

*Holy Eucharist Sunday Service* (Livestream no in-person), 10:30 a.m.



### TUES, DEC 22

*Morning Prayer*, courtyard, 9:00 a.m.

*TAKE 5* (YouTube, Facebook), 10:00 a.m.

### WED, DEC 23

Church Office Closed all day

*Godly Play Advent Series* (YouTube, Facebook), 10:00 a.m.

### TH, DEC 24

Church Office Closed all day

*TAKE 5* (YouTube, Facebook), 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist & Children's Pageant, Sanctuary, 4:00 p.m.

Caroling, Courtyard, 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist, Chapel, 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist, Chapel 9:00 p.m.

**FRI, DEC 25**

**CHRISTMAS!**

Church Office closed all day

**SUN, DEC 27**

*Liturgy of the Word with bread communion, courtyard, 8:00 a.m.*

*Holy Eucharist Sunday Service & St. Stephen's Day* (Livestream no in-person), 10:30 a.m.

**TUES, DEC 29**

TAKE 5 (YouTube, Facebook), 10:00 a.m.

**TH, DEC 31**

Church Office closes at 12 noon

**FRI, JAN 1**

New Year's Day!

Church office closed all day

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

*(articles, photos, graphics)*

**WEDNESDAYS, 12 NOON**

Jackie McFadden, Communications Director, [eeant@mac.com](mailto:eeant@mac.com)

Visit our Website



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**Church Office open M-TH 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.**