



**St. Stephen's**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# the shield

## This Week in Worship

August 17, 2025

"How can we be so blind?"  
Luke 12:49-56

Rev. Jinx Barber

## BridgeKids Update!

BridgeKids is in full swing for the 2025-2026 school year! This month we are learning about the letters A, B, and Z. Our color is red and our shape is square. We will have fun learning all about apples. The number 2 and the concept of pairs will round out our month of skills. To record our year, we are excited to have Fall Picture Day in September. As school starts back, we are also excited to begin weekly chapel time with Pastor Jinx.

If you or someone you know is in need of a part-time early childhood program, we still have some spots available. We serve children ages 1-4. Please consult the St. Stephen's website for enrollment information.

Here's to another great year!

## WHO ARE YOU?

Rev. Jinx started on Sunday, July 6.

LET'S CONTINUE WEAR-

ING OUR NAME TAGS so it becomes a habit

again!! If you need a new name tag, there is a

sign up sheet in the loggia. We'll print them

up and have them ready for you next week.



## Candlelight Vigil for Immigrants—Date change

An Immigrant Vigil will be held Tuesday, September 9, 7:30-8:00 pm in the sanctuary. The vigil is for the St. Stephen's community to grieve together for all immigrants, and especially for our refugee families. Immigration policies dramatically changed this year to be harsh and unwelcoming. Most disturbing is explaining to the refugee youth why they need to know what a red card is (explanation of immigrant rights) and why, as teens, they or their parent may not come home tonight due to an ICE encounter. NCRS volunteers came to know our families very well. The immigrant families and our volunteers thought that they were safe. While the message of concern is softer for those with green cards (Afghans), the message is most direct for our Hispanic families. Volunteers shared their love, their calling, and built trust among the NCRS families that they were safe and that the American society is built in part on trust and that someday those parents, those children could join us and become U.S. citizens and trust in a government that stood by its protections. Now they see attempts to exclude them. We are heartbroken and grieve individually. We feel a tug to grieve together. We are an immigrant nation and it's important to remember those roots.

The NCRS has developed a preparedness plan for our families with guidance and limited protections, but that plan is only good until it's not and detention occurs without due process.

We want to take a moment, in humility to pause, to hold a vigil, and quietly acknowledge the potentially dire situation of our immigrants in this troubled time. To honor the dignity, the humanity, and the love of God for all immigrants. We want to sense the immigrant fear, feel God's cry, feel God lament with us, together, in one sacred place, and grieve for our immigrants.

Please join us for an Immigrant Vigil on September 9th in the Sanctuary.

*Life Happenings*  
*August 10, 2025*

**We celebrate:**

Andy and Mary Peters were visiting. Rob and Courtney Hopkins and family were also visiting. Rick Sondag is back in service after knee replacement surgery. Rick Sondag's friend, Steve Brownfield's son, is starting medical school in Grenada and quickly got married so his bride can go with him. They are both former students of Rick's. Don MacGorman's surgery went well, and he returned to service. Sally Mellon is excited to be going to New Jersey for a Folk Music Festival. Rod Morrow will be celebrating his 76<sup>th</sup> birthday on Tuesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>! Katie Campbell shared that Annie turned 21, Kipling starts Pre-K at Kennedy and Katie starts a new position at Kennedy. She will be a math interventionist. Mary Moon reported on the 1<sup>st</sup> Dinner & Discussion event last week. There were 31 folks in attendance! Mary Gann and Debbie Boatman are headed north for an exciting 6 week adventure. Nanci Barthel is so thankful to everyone for their generosity in supporting our cottage family through Food & Shelter. Over \$1,100 was donated to help the kids get new school clothes and shoes. Casey Collins thanks everyone for supporting her Diaper Shower. There were over 142 lbs. of diapers, wipes, formula, etc. that were donated to The Infant Crisis Center. Venita is very thankful to everyone who helped with transport, meals and prayers for Don. Melissa and Tim Duncan celebrated their 35<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary! Mary Lee is so joyful to have the Peter's here visiting. She holds them in the highest esteem as foundational members of St. Stephens. Barb Drummond reports that Laundry Love served 35 families and fed 80. Barbara Holtzclaw has moved to Sooner Station, had a successful Estate Sale and is so glad to be back in church. Erin Moore starts her new school journey this week.

**We pray with concern for:**

The Sondag family as they had to put their dog Luna down. Dan Snell reports on the passing of David Levy. Fran Roberson lifts up all those in Gaza, Ukraine and Israel. Chris Suit reports the passing of Alan Kmetz, John Kmetz's father. Brent Smith reports that one of the Afghanistan family's house has electrical panel issues and they are without power. Sue Beard's nephew, Chase Ayers, is needing surgery on his colon but this entails stopping his cancer treatment for 6 weeks before they can do the surgery. Dale Wares lifts up all students and teachers who are going to be experiencing life without cell phones during school hours. Alyssa Miller lifts up Amber Mathis and her dad, Rod Mathis, as he continues to recover from heart surgery. Brenda Wheelock's sister, Morgan, is having heart surgery to have several different devices implanted. Peggy Risenhoover reports that Neil is recovering from back surgery. Peggy is also very concerned about ICE and she checks daily on her neighbors. Susan Arn's brother, Steve, has been accepted into a new cancer trial. Continued prayers for Jackie Farley's brother, Jerry. Emily Turner will be having back surgery on Thursday, August 14<sup>th</sup>.

***This Week at  
St. Stephen's***

***Thursday, August 14th***

7:00 DBSA—Room 6

***Friday, August 15th***

4:00 Area 9 Handbell Fall Fanfare

6:30 Living Room NA—Room 11

***Saturday, August 16th***

8:00 Area 9 Handbell Fall Fanfare

8:30 Solutions AA—Room 11

***Sunday, August 17th***

8:30 Worship Service—Sanctuary

9:40 Sunday School —Various

10:50 Worship Service—Sanctuary

2:00 Trustees meeting

4:00 Youth—Lyle Hall

***Monday, August 18th***

6:30 Red Dirt Collective—Room 11

6:30 WIAA—Community Hall

***Tuesday, August 19th***

12:00 Lunch Bunch—Loggia

6:30 Living Group NA—Room 11

7:00 Fiction Club—Room 12

***Wednesday, August 20th***

12:30 Adult Ed Meeting—Room 11

1:30 Sacred Journey—Room 12

6:30 Girl Scout Service Unit—  
Community Hall

7:00 Choir—Sanctuary



**Lunch Bunch  
will meet on  
August 19 at  
12:00 pm**

**(It's now on the  
1st and 3rd Tuesdays.)**

## Help Us Furnish a Home at Food & Shelter

As a participant in the Shelter Unit Adoption Program at Food and Shelter, St. Stephen's needs your help to welcome a new family who will be moving into our cottage very soon.

We are using the potluck feature of the online app Meal Train to make it easy for St. Stephen's members to sign up for items online. You can visit our sign-up page at <https://mealtrain.com/gv370e>. We will be collecting items over the next couple weeks and will announce the deadline as soon as it is confirmed by Food and Shelter.

Through the cottage adoption program, we help a family get a fresh start by providing new or gently used furniture and household items for our assigned cottage. Our previous residents moved out this month, and we expect to learn details soon about the new family moving in soon.

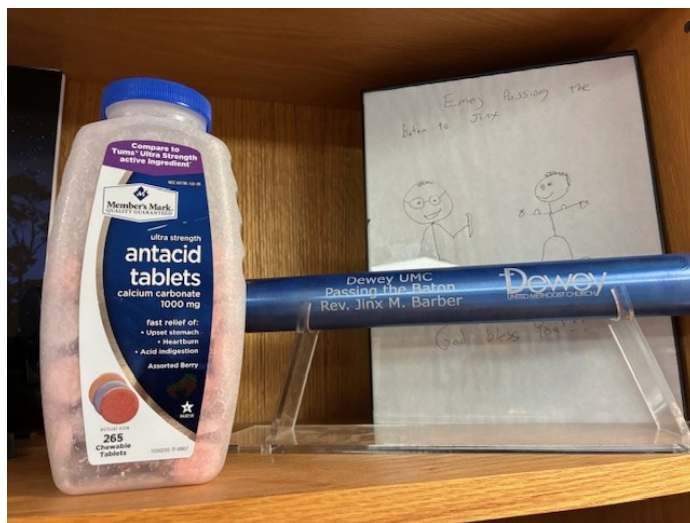
You can help by signing up online to provide one or more items or by making a donation to purchase items. If you choose to make a financial gift, please make checks payable to St. Stephen's and write Food & Shelter Family in the memo line. Or you can donate on the church website and add Food and Shelter Family in the notes section.

**DELIVERY:** Smaller items can be delivered to St. Stephen's Community Hall during church business hours or on Sunday mornings. To arrange for delivery of furniture and larger items, contact Brenda Wheelock (405) 620-1305 or Nanci Barthel at (405) 323-0703. Thank you!

## Thank You!

**THANK YOU** to everyone who provided funds for our family at Food and Shelter. We were able to collect \$1200 to provide new school clothes and shoes for the four children. They have now moved to a new home and are grateful for St. Stephen's generosity and support.

## Links to Jinx—gotta be a story here!



## Dinner & Discussion

Now meets on the 4th Thursday at 6:30 pm

Join us on

Thursday, August 28 at 6:30 pm in Community Hall

Catered by Ray's BBQ. Cost is \$20 a person.



## Youth Shenanigans!

The youth had a wonderful time at our annual

swim party this past week at the Wulfekotte's home. We are so thankful to them for allowing us to take over their pool and kitchen for a few hours of fun and fellowship. It's always fun to be able to welcome our incoming 6th graders with such a great event.

Join us this Sunday at 9:40am and again from 4-6 pm in Lyle Hall as we explore Mini Revolutions and more. August 24th we will have another swimming event from 3-6 pm at Westwood Water Park. We were generously given tickets by our Youth Assistant Grace Valentine's mom to be able to go. We will swim until 5:30pm and then enjoy some pizza and drinks in the picnic area right outside of the park until 6 pm. If your youth student would like to attend, please let Alyssa know.

If you have a student in grades 6-12 who would like to come hang out with the youth and you have any questions, please contact Alyssa ([youth@ststephensnorman.org](mailto:youth@ststephensnorman.org)).



## The Music Box

Choir is back!! It was so great to see so many of you on Wednesday for rehearsal and again on Sunday morning at both services. **BUT WE STILL HAVE ROOM FOR MORE!** We rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm in the sanctuary. And bonus - we'll start working on our Christmas music next month!



## Disciple Bible Study

Disciple Bible Study, a small group, 34-week study of the whole Bible will be offered by St. Stephen's beginning in early September. This study requires 30-45 minutes daily to read a focused selection of scriptures, along with information in the participant Study Manual. After 6 days of personal study, the group meets to discuss the week's scriptures, aided by a video by one of several Biblical scholars to enhance the group's understanding. The goal is to transform disciples through Bible study, not just to provide new knowledge of the Bible. This year, a discussion group plans to meet Sundays at 4-6 pm in room 11. For more information, come to an informational meeting at 4 pm on Sunday August 24 or contact Don MacGorman (phone: 405-820-6762; email: don.macgorman@cox.net).

## Scripture Readers Needed!

We are looking for scripture readers for our first and second services! Please sign up on the sign up sheets found on the table across from the office. Thanks!

## HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WELCOME REV. JINX BY YOUR OUTWARD AND **VISIBLE** SIGN!!!

We are looking for volunteers to paint the Pastor's office!!! If this is in your wheelhouse and you have time available please see Ron House and he will work with you to set up a time.

## The Wesley Kickoff Event

Wednesday, August 20, 7- 10 pm



Please help  
St. Stephen's  
keep our  
little food  
pantry stocked.  
Thank you!

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS! New time!

Did you enjoy last year's pledge kickoff potluck dinner? Then you won't want to miss this year's! Mark your calendar for September 28th at 5:30 pm for delicious food, musical entertainment, and Great Expectations for 2026. Please note the new time is 5:30 pm.

FALL FANFARE IS IN THE SUMMER THIS YEAR!!



August 16, 2025  
8:45 - 2:30

**C** Technique Classes  
**L** Reading Sessions  
**A** Spring Ring Preview  
**S** Summit Preview  
**S** Rookie Ringers Track  
**E** "Ask Me Anything"  
**S** Lunch Included

**F** Before August 1st - \$35  
**E** August 1st and after - \$50  
**E** 6 or more from the same  
**S** organization - \$25 each  
Deadline - 5 p.m. on  
Friday, August 8

### LOCATIONS IN OKLAHOMA AND TEXAS

Norman, OK  
St. Stephen's United Methodist Church  
1801 W Brooks  
Norman, OK 73069

Austin, TX  
First Presbyterian Church  
8001 Mesa Drive  
Austin, TX 78731

visit [area9.handbellmusicians.org](http://area9.handbellmusicians.org) for more information

## Needs of the NCRS:

(Contact Brent Smith for more info at bsmith103@cox.net)

Ongoing Needs:

1. Housing Chair—coordinate housing searches, etc.
2. Drivers—take family member to Dr. appts, etc.
3. Prayers for the Refugee Families



St. Stephen's United Methodist Church  
405-321-4988  
1801 W. Brooks, Norman OK 73069  
[www.ststephensnorman.org](http://www.ststephensnorman.org)  
office@ststephensnorman.org  
Church services Sunday Morning 8:30 am  
and 10:50 am Sunday School at 9:40 am

