

Joys and Concerns

12.21.25

We celebrate with...

Barb Drummond shared the continued amazing, positive ministry of Laundry Love and Socks of Love. They served those in need in El Reno and SW Oklahoma City this weekend. They broke a record and served 89 families. Rod & Caroline Murrow will be celebrating their 56th Wedding Anniversary this Saturday. Karla Bonzie shared that her 3 sons will all be coming home for Christmas. Kevin Hochman shared that Brittney and her partner are here visiting. Emma will be here this Tuesday. Marci Corey celebrates the many musical talents of our congregation that performed in both services. Brent Smith celebrates Dee Fink being in 2nd service. Cassidy Culp-Quinnett shared his joy in attending a sleepover and getting a new Lego set! Vickie Wood reports that her daughter Danielle is recovering from her terrible car accident. Her only injury appears to be a broken foot. The Prince family celebrates having lots of family here in 2nd service. Charlie Barnes was very thankful for the Christmas carolers who came and sang to him in the hospital on Saturday. Brenda Wheelock is thankful for all who supported the Food & Shelter family with gifts for Christmas. Cheryl Frech is thankful for all those who contributed to the church staff's Christmas bonuses.

We pray for...

Traveling mercies for Ron & Velma House as they travel to Phoenix for Christmas. Traveling mercies for Evie Sondag as she comes home. Traveling mercies for Terri Sarsycki's son and family who are traveling here. Erin Moore lifts up the children in Gaza who are at risk. Melissa Duncan's 91 year old great uncle passed away. We lift up the over 21 million citizens that are in danger of losing their healthcare. Susan Arn lost a good friend, Kathleen Leshaw, this week. Susan Arn lifts up Jackie Farley's sister, Janet Jackson, and her family, as the one year anniversary of her sister's passing from her battle with breast cancer. Charlie Barnes will be having gallbladder surgery on Tuesday.

The (Weekly) Shield

The Weekly Newsletter

Sunday - December 28, 2025

Lunch Bunch

will meet on

January 6th.

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

Join us throughout
2026 as we prepare
for something new

January Sermon
Series and the Theme
for all of 2026



Needs of the NCRS:

1. Bookkeeper
2. Housing Chair & Housing Assistants
3. Prayers for the NCRS refugee families and volunteers
4. Drivers (dr. appts, etc.)

Contact Brent for more info at
bsmith103@cox.net.

Be Still

- PSALM 46:10 -





2025 Coat JD McCarty Coat Drive

Thank you to all who donated to our coat drive this year. We were able to provide 31 coats to the children and families of the JD McCarty Center. You are so appreciated!

On Saturday January 17th at 4pm The Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church will hold its annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Worship service at Phillips Theological Seminary In Tulsa, OK at 901 N Mingo Road. It is also the site of our conferences Center for Black Faith Leadership and Transformation.

This years theme is **Empowerment Thru Unity.**

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Dear St Stephens Family,

As we gather for this final Sunday of 2025, my heart is incredibly full. Since arriving as your new pastor, I have been deeply moved by your **radical hospitality** and your vibrant, **progressive spirit**. You haven't just welcomed a new leader; you have opened your arms to a partner in ministry, and for that, I am profoundly grateful.

Looking back at 2025, it is clear that God's Spirit is moving through this congregation. Because of your faithfulness, we have accomplished so much together:

- **Financial Stewardship:** We have successfully paid our 2025 apportionments in full.
- **Outreach & Justice:** We expanded our "Little Pantry" and began hosting ESL classes for our Afghan refugee and asylee neighbors. Held CLARA Training and a prayer vigil for immigrants.
- **Radical Connection:** We hosted a beautiful interfaith friendship camp and sent our youth on a transformative mission trip to Detroit.
- **Care for our Home:** We successfully replaced our air conditioning units, ensuring our space remains a comfortable place for all. We have replaced most fluorescent lighting with LEDs as well.

Looking Ahead to 2026

If 2025 was a year of foundation-building, 2026 is shaping up to be a year of incredible growth. We already have several major projects on the horizon to improve our shared home and our ministry:

- **Tech & Space:** We are planning improvements to our sanctuary streaming and the sound system in Community Hall. We are also creating a new storage area, which will allow us to reclaim a much-needed classroom. We will also be working to replace our sanctuary carpeting.
- **Expanded Ministry:** **Sunday Night Live** is moving to a weekly schedule, and we are thrilled to be hiring a **Children's Music Minister** to pour into our youngest disciples.
- **The Platinum Rule:** Mark your calendars for **February 7th and 8th**. We are honored to host **Rebekah Simon Peter**, who will lead us in her transformative "Platinum Rule" class on Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

"Be Still"

I know that looking at this list can feel a bit overwhelming. There is so much "doing" in our future. That is why our theme for January—and all of 2026—is taken from **Psalm 46: "Be still."**

In the midst of the upgrades, the new programs, and the busy schedule, we must remember that our primary work is to be still and know that God is God. All our growth stems from that place of quiet trust. I am so excited to see where this journey takes us.