



## Angel Tree 2025 for Kennedy Elementary Teachers

St. Stephen's has a lovely relationship with Kennedy Elementary School in Norman. Kennedy is a high risk school in the Norman School District. Our goal is to support the teachers with the resources they need to be effective in their work and to show them how much we appreciate everything they do for children.

Our Angel Tree will be located in the loggia starting Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Just pick an apple from the

tree! Each apple will have the teacher's name, grade/subject they teach and a number on the back. Find the number on the sign-up sheet that correlates with your apple. Sign your name, email and phone number on the sheet. Take the Wish List for your teacher and shop! It is a list with a \$50 suggested total. Bring back your wrapped, LABELED gifts to Mary Moon's office NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Women in Action for All Meeting on November 10

The WIAA meeting at 6:30 pm on November 10 is open to all interested in Education Justice. The special guest speaker is Erika Wright, founder and former director of Oklahoma Rural Schools Coalition. She is now the Education Justice Community Organizer for Oklahoma Appleseed Center for Law and Justice and Advance Oklahoma's Kids. We've heard many good things about Erika. Come join us in Community Hall!

## Church Events

- Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> -All Saint's Sunday
- Nov 4<sup>th</sup> – Lunch Bunch
- Nov 4<sup>th</sup> – Fiction Club
- Nov 9<sup>th</sup>— Fall Roundtable
- Nov 10<sup>th</sup>—NCRS Board of Directors
- Nov 18<sup>th</sup>—Lunch Bunch
- Nov 23<sup>th</sup>—Acolyte Training
- Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>– Norman Clarinet Choir Concert
- Nov 24<sup>th</sup> – Finance Committee
- Nov 30<sup>th</sup>—Advent Cookies & Crafts

# Youth Shenanigans

The youth Trunk or Treat fundraising event was amazing yet again. Thank you to all who helped by providing candy, cooking chili, decorating trunks and handing out candy, and cleaning up the parking lot once we were finished. Special shout out to Pastor DJ Jinx for the awesome tunes that had us all moving and grooving. We had another great turn out and raised over \$250 for our youth mission trip in

2026. The love and support is so appreciated and I cannot say thank you enough. Grace and Alyssa are lucky to have the students that we have and we are all lucky to have such a loving and supporting congregation. A big congratulations goes to Jackie Shipp for her winning chili. She got the coveted Chili Trophy that she can admire for the next year.

November is going to start out fun for the youth. On November 7th, we will meet at the church at 6pm to enjoy dinner then head out for a fun evening, before coming back and having our annual lock-in. We will be going to Andretti's in OKC to race go karts, play some laser tag, bowl, and so much more. This is an event that I look forward to each year, and it kind of brings us all back together after the mission trip. Grace, Marci, Jinx, Amber, and Alyssa are excited to enjoy some time with our students.

November 12-15 Grace and Alyssa will be attending the

Progressive Youth Ministry Conference in Austin, TX. They are both looking forward to learning more about youth ministry, inclusive practices, and everything else they have to offer them. They are thankful for the opportunity to go and learn then come back and put into practice what they learned. Staff development is something that is so important and we are thankful for those who made it happen for us this year. Sam Stoll will be joining us as well on the trip. Sam volunteers a lot with our youth program and has filled in multiple times recently while Alyssa and Grace had some time off.

# Rhythm of Our Year

*A Message from Pastor Jinx*

There is such a profound beauty in the **rhythm of the year**, both in nature and in the life of our church. As the brilliant greens of summer give way to the warm reds and golds of autumn, we enter a season of introspection, gratitude, and hopeful planning. It's a time when we collectively pause to appreciate the harvest and prepare for the new growth to come.

In the life of St. Stephen's, this time of year naturally turns our attention to **stewardship**—how we use the gifts God has given us to live out our shared mission.

Our stewardship focus begins this Sunday, **November 3rd, with All Saints' Sunday**. It's the perfect kickoff because it reminds us of the *great cloud of witnesses* who have gone before us—the bold, generous souls who built and sustained this church, and those who championed the causes of justice and love in the world. As we remember them, we are compelled to ask: **What big, beautiful shoes do we have to fill?**

Over the next four weeks of November, we will explore what it means to be progressive Christians called to radical generosity and faithful responsibility. We'll

talk about how our **membership vows**—our commitments to God through the church—are tangible expressions of our commitment to God's inclusive, loving kingdom here in Norman and beyond. Specifically, we will focus on how we live out the promises we make to support the church with our:

**Prayers:** Lifting up our church, our community, and the world.

**Presence:** Showing up for worship, fellowship, and mission.

**Service:** Volunteering our

hands and hearts in ministry.

**Gifts:** Faithfully and generously supporting our mission financially.

**Witness:** Sharing the good news of Christ's love and working for justice.

You can turn these completed pledge forms in anytime before November 23rd.

Your faithful living of these vows makes our Sunday School, our social justice work, our vibrant music ministry, and our welcoming radical hospitality possible for the coming year.

# Be A Peacemaker

*The Lost Art of Civil Conversation*

*Potluck Dinner & Presentation, Nov. 9, 4:30 pm*

Would you rather do just about ANYTHING to avoid difficult conversations?

There are many hot button issues in our world that call for speaking truth while showing understanding as opposed to avoidance which implies agreement.

Have you ever been in this kind of situation and wanted to speak your

truth; however, fear of losing a friend or fear of having inferior communication skills kept you silent and thus you regretted it later?

Did you give your opinion and it turned into a heated argument which you also regretted later?

Or are you a person who just wants to convince

your conversation partner that you are right and s/he is wrong?

The Nov. 9 Roundtable, presented by Fran Roberson and Mary Lee, will introduce skills that peace teams all over the world use to prevent or de-escalate contentious conversations by showing you how to improve your listening behaviors, illustrating how you can develop a sense of rapport, and teaching a "recipe" for responding in a peaceful/respectful manner while stating your opposing feelings and viewpoints.

PEACEMAKING IS A VERB  
**Jesus never said:  
Blessed are the  
peacelovers; or blessed  
are the peacekeepers.  
Jesus told his disciples  
that God's blessings are  
reserved for the  
peacemakers, those  
who work to overcome  
conflict . . . he was calling  
his followers to an active  
pursuit of peace.**

**Jim Wallis, The False  
White Gospel**

# Music Ministry

*Join us in making music!*

I am so excited to announce that we are hiring a part-time Children's Music Director! In January we will be expanding Sunday Night Live to a weekly program meeting each Sunday from 4 - 6 pm. With the expansion, our children get to experience fun, educational discovery activities with Miss Jenn and friends AND they'll get children's music programming as well! Do you know someone who might be just right for the position? Applications can be submitted online at [indeed.com](https://indeed.com) - search "Children's Music Director"

in Norman, OK and you'll find the listing.

Looking just a little further ahead - a couple important music ministry dates to keep in mind include:

- Bell and Instrumental Concert - 7 pm, December 7th
- ⇒ (I'm looking for instrumental solos and ensembles for this fun concert!)
- Lessons and Carols Service - both morning services on December 14th

- Christmas Caroling (a collaboration between Music and Care Ministries) in the afternoon on December 14th

As always - YOU are invited to join our wonderful choir or either of our awesome bell choirs! For more information you can email Marci at [music@ststephensnorman.org](mailto:music@ststephensnorman.org) or catch Marci or Julie (or any member of the choir!) at the church on Sunday!



# Shine Kids

Hello everyone!

I want to first say thank you to our kids and families for their hard work for Children's Sabbath. The service was lovely and I was so proud of our kids who overcame a bit of stage fright and did their thing!

Advent Season is right around the corner and

we have lots of things going on in November. Ms. Leslie and Ms. Carol will be teaching Sunday School and have fun activities planned

Make sure you mark your calendars and join us for the fun:

- November 2, 4-6 PM Sunday Night Live

- November 16, 4-6 PM Sunday Night Live
- November 23, immediately after 2nd service we will have acolyte training. This is for all current acolytes and any 3rd-5th graders who have not been trained.
- November 30 we will begin decorating the Children's Hallway for Christmas at 8:30 AM. Please drop by and help

during the service you do not attend! Have a great month and I look forward to seeing you!

Ms. Jenn

## Children's Sabbath





# CROP Walk

Thank you to everyone who supported the Cleveland County CROP Walk on Sunday, October 19 as a walker, volunteer and donor. So far, St. Stephen's team has raised more than \$9,100 online to help support the hunger fighting work of Food and Shelter in Norman and Church World Service. If you still have CROP Walk contributions, you can drop them by the church office or donate online.





# Trunk or Treat & Chili Cookoff Pictures!

