

The Shield

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ST. STEPHEN'S | OCTOBER 2025 – VOLUME 82

Happy Souper October!

Happy Souper October! October is a big month for Shine Kids as we will celebrate Children's Sabbath. The theme this year is "Building Beloved Community," and our children will lead worship on October 19th during the 2nd service.

Part of Children's Sabbath is a service project and we will be doing two of those! One is we will be having Sunday Night Live on October 5th at 4 pm and will meet at Sooner Station 2803 24th Ave NW. Kids can wear costumes or we will have funny hats and St. Stephen's shirts to wear while singing pumpkin carols to the residents!

We will also be collecting cans of soup to share with members of our community who use our food pantry! Please drop off donations to Ms. Jen's office or Room 10. October 26th we will participate in Trunk or Treat hosted by our awesome youth kids. 4-6 pm.



Charge Conference on October 19

Come join us and represent St. Stephen's at Charge Conference at New Life United Methodist Church in Moore, OK on Sunday, October 19. Hear what other churches in our region are doing. Wear your St. Stephen's shirts.

Church Events

- Oct 5th – Pastoral Appreciation Celebration
- Oct 19th – Children's Sabbath
- Oct 19th – Charge Conference
- Oct 19th – CROP Walk
- Oct 21st – Lunch Bunch
- Oct 26th – Trunk or Treat & Chili Cookoff
- Oct 27th – Finance Committee

Music Ministry

MUSIC We always have room for more singers, ringers and instrumentalists in the music ministry at St. Stephen's. Email Marci to discuss ways that you can get involved - music@ststephensnorman.org.

I absolutely LOVE this time of year - the Fall months always feel rejuvenating and refreshing to me! And the music ministry is in full swing! The choir had their annual retreat at the end of September to take a deep dive into all of our Advent music and I'm so excited to share that with our congregation. We have some great anthems for October and November and we're especially looking forward to Children's Sabbath on October 19th and All

Saints Sunday on November 2nd. You'll also hear from our two bell choirs in November and again in December. The Youth Praise band did a fantastic job on Youth Sunday and at the Finance Stewardship/Ministry Fair Potluck at the end of the September. You'll be hearing from them again before the end of the year AND we've added a couple more vocalists to the group!

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

Proverbs 22:17
"A merry heart does good like medicine"

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 or catch Marci or Julie (or any member of the choir!) at the church on Sunday!

Das Yootz

Looking ahead at Fall with the youth of St. Stephen's UMC.

Gosh golly, how is it already October? Seems like yesterday we were preparing and leaving for our summer mission. But here we are: October is here, fall is coming, the leaves are going to turn soon and we will enter into a time of spooky gatherings (Trunk or Treat and Chili Cookoff), fun holidays (OU/Texas football) and just all around fun. We will exhale the breath of summer and inhale the air of fall.

September was busy for the youth. We had our Stockholder dinner and Youth Sunday and had a great turnout at both. Always thankful for the volunteers who offer to help, like Amy Prince and her amazing cooking skills for the dinner, and Marci Corey who has put together an amazing youth band who played during our Sunday services, and all the students who participated in these activities whether it was playing

music, giving speeches, being our liturgist, or just being present in love.

October will bring our Trunk or Treat and Chili Cook off event. And our hope is that we will have enough trunks to fill our parking lot and enough treats to give to everyone who comes into our presence. This event has grown over the last few years and I am hoping that this year is the best yet. I invite you to come and join us on Oct.

26th from 4-6pm and try some chili, cook some chili, dress up in a costume, and enjoy some fellowship with each other and our community.

Join St. Stephen's Church

If you would like to join our church, contact Sharon at (405) 321-4988 or office@ststephensnorman.org.

Sacred Journey Hosts New Study

"Marcus Borg, Beyond Belief"

Wednesday, October 1, 1:30 – 3:00 pm in Room 12

Sacred Journey invites you to join them on Wednesday afternoons, beginning October 1, from 1:30 - 3:00, as they explore a 6-week series featuring favorite moments, core teachings, and some never-before seen video material from Progressive Theologian, Marcus Borg. Series host Rev. Marianne Borg writes: "Marcus died in 2015, but I think he has a long shelf life ahead of him. So much

of the understanding and knowledge and scholarship that he brought to us is still news for a lot of people. What you're going to hear in this series is, if you will, the best of Borg. For some of us, it'll be like hearing Marcus again for the first time. For many of us, a lot of this is still going to be new. There is something about Marcus's work that I think will continue to make all things new in a way that we

can look afresh at Christianity in the 21 st century – what it means for the living of our days, what is real, and how should we live."

Each session includes a 20-30 minute recording followed by group discussion. The session themes are 1) Centered in the Spirit, 2) Meeting Jesus Again, 3) Followers of the Way, 4) Reading the Bible, 5) An Emerging Way, and 6) Beyond Belief.

Sacred Journey is a weekly study group that explores questions of faith and life. It is a safe place to learn and think theologically, a place to deconstruct old understandings and grow new ones, a place to listen and discern. This supportive community became a part of St. Stephen's

Psalm 100:1
*"Sing to the Lord,
all the world!"*

Educational Ministries in the early 2000's. Sacred Journey meets in Room 12. For more information, contact Kay Antinoro or Valerie Underwood.

Fall Roundtable

The Lost Art of Civil Conversation

Presenters: Fran Roberson, Mary Lee.

Join us **November 9 at 5 pm** for The Lost Art of Civil Conversation. The Roundtable will provide training in the core communication tool most used by Peace Teams around the world. You will learn to speak peacefully with others with whom you disagree or who escalate into anger. Fran and Mary will explain the technique, demonstrate it, and give participants an opportunity to

practice the skill. This is an introduction to the Peacemaking Training that is offered by the Norman Peace Team and will also be offered as an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program at OU's Thurman J. White Forum Bldg. on Nov. 5, 12, 19, and 26 at 10:00. OLLI info/catalog at ph. 405-325-6034 or https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/pacs/olli/documents/OLLI_Fall_2025_Catalog.pdf

Spooktacular Fun!

Join us for a spooktacular Trunk or Treat & Chili Cook-Off on Sunday, October 26, from 4-6 pm at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church. Enjoy decorated trunks, safe trick-or-treating, and taste delicious chili. Enter your trunk or chili for prizes! A fun, family-friendly event awaits!

New To Our Family

We are thrilled to announce Randall Bush has joined St. Stephen's United Methodist Church on Sunday, September 28! Please extend a warm welcome to Randall as he becomes part of our church community. We eagerly anticipate the gifts and talents he will share with us!



CROP Walk

Be a Hunger Fighter!

Join us for the Oct. 19 CROP Hunger Walk

You can help fight hunger locally and globally by participating in the 42nd annual Cleveland County CROP Walk to Stop Hunger at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 19, at a new location – the Adult Wellness and Education Center, 602 N. Findlay Ave.

CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) is a fun, family-friendly event to raise awareness and raise funds to fight hunger locally and globally. Proceeds support the local work of Food and Shelter in Norman and the global development, refugee assistance and disaster relief efforts of Church World Service.

You can register to raise funds or donate online at our St. Stephen's team page at <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/st-stephens-norman>.

You can also register or donate using sponsor envelopes at the CROP Walk table in the loggia each Sunday preceding the event.

"Norman's CROP Hunger Walk was started 41 years ago by St. Stephen's and First Christian Church to help address food insecurity in our community and beyond and has expanded to include many faith groups and businesses," said CROP Walk co-chair Brenda Wheelock. "We have set a big goal for our 42nd annual walk to raise \$45,000 to help

This year's 2-mile route will include a stop at Norman's Food and Shelter Inc. and its Share Center, which will host an open house. We will once again offer rocking chairs for participants who want to "CROP Rock" to show their support for the cause. Participants are welcome to bring friendly, leashed pets.

Walkers who raise \$100 or more will receive a free CROP Walk T-shirt. The 2025 T-shirts feature the theme, "Walk With Us."

This year's CROP Walk will feature a free post-walk cookout and "Buskers for CROP Walk" live music along the route. The event will also include children's activity stations hosted by Pioneer Libraries Mobile Maker Lab and FCCLA – Family Career and Community Leaders of America.

"CROP Walk's slogan is, 'We walk because they walk,'" said Brenda, who co-leads St. Stephen's team with Becky LeClair. "By participating in CROP Hunger Walk, we are walking in solidarity with those who must walk miles every day for such basic necessities as food, water or medical care. We appreciate our St. Stephen's family's faithful support each year and hope you will join us again as a walker or sponsor."

For more information, call Brenda at (405) 620-1305 or visit the local walk website at www.clevelandcountycropwalk.org.

**Make a Donation
or
Join The Team!**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Save the Date!
Orders Retreat
Canyon Camp, January 9-11, 2026
Keynote Speaker: Tod Bolsinger
- BridgeKids is planning for our Halloween Party! We need 9 volunteers on Thursday Oct. 30th to come stand behind doors so that kids can trick-or-treat. We ask that volunteers bring some candy and/or small toys (ie bubbles, stickers, bounce ball, etc) to pass out. We need volunteers here at 9:30 to get in place and we should be done around 10:45. This is a super fun and cute event and volunteers are welcome to dress up too. People who want to volunteer need to email us (bridgekids@ststephensnorman.org) so we can be sure we have the right number of people.
- Tintinnabulum Memorial Ribbons
Starting Sunday, October 5th the tintinnabulum will be in the Loggia with ribbons for you to write the names of your loved ones you would like to remember. The tintinnabulum will be processed into the Sanctuary for both services on All Saints Sunday, November 2nd.
- Lunch Bunch
1st & 3rd Tuesday, 12:00 pm
October 7th & October 21st
November 4th & November 18th
December 2nd & December 16th

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, October 19th

Our annual Charge Conference is Sunday, October 19th after second service.

The combined meeting with other churches is at 4 pm at New Life United Methodist Church in Moore. All church members are encouraged to attend both events.

Sunday, October 26th

Our Trunk or Treat & Chili Cook-off Event is on Sunday, October 26 from 4-6 pm at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church. Join us for fun, food and fellowship!

