

St. Stephen's  
Episcopal Church

# FYI 2026

1820 E. County Rd. 540A  
Lakeland, FL 33813  
863-646-6115  
Office Hrs. M-Th10am-3pm

January 4, 2026 Vol 26 Issue 1  
2nd Sunday in Christmas



**Life Line Screening** will be at **St. Stephen's** on **Friday, January 16, 2026.**

We've offered this important health service for the past several years, and each time the response has been overwhelming—so Life Line Screening is back again by popular demand!

To register, please call **877-792-8479.**

I also have **three certificates for a FREE screening** available. If you're interested, please call me at **863-646-6115.**



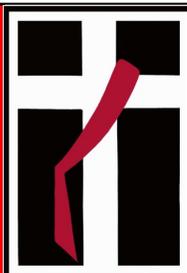
## Feast of Epiphany is January 6th

On January 6th western Christians celebrate the feast of Epiphany, which takes its name from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, meaning disclosure, manifestation, unveiling or appearance. At the simplest level, on Epiphany Christians commemorate the "appearance" of the *magi* from the east.

The wise men, whose visit to Jesus is recorded in Matthew, were most likely three members of the priestly caste of Zoroastrianism, noted for their study of the stars as part of their religion. The Western Christian Church has assigned them the names Melchior (Babylonian scholar), Caspar (Persian scholar), and Balthazar (an Arab scholar). Their gifts are ordinary gifts one would offer to a king: gold has great value; frankincense is a perfume; and myrrh is a common anointing oil. The gifts have symbolic significance in light of the identity of the baby to whom they are given. Gold is a symbol of kingship on earth, frankincense (used for incense) is a symbol of deity, and myrrh (an embalming oil) is a symbol of death.

## VESTRY NOMINATIONS

Our annual meeting is just a little over a month away and we need to be considering our new vestry members for the next three years. If you are interested in being part of the decision making body of St. Stephen's please let Father David or Karen Spiller know and they can explain the duties to you. God Bless.



**St. Stephen's ...  
To Love and Serve  
God and Neighbor**

2025-Nancy Wenham, Major Kight, Liz Barham  
2026-Betty Pratt, Juliana Walker, Karen Spiller-Sr. Warden  
2027-Joyce Brock, Stephen Gaydosh-Jr. Warden, Jack Vonesh  
Bookkeeper: Cathy Zielinski Secretary: Karen Beasley



## Save Your REAL Christmas Trees for our Bonfire

When you take down your Christmas decorations, please bring your **real Christmas trees** to the **field behind the Worship Center** for our **Epiphany Bonfire on Sunday, January 11.**

***The Bonfire is Tentative due to the Polk County Burn Ban. The dinner is still on and we will reschedule the Bonfire if necessary.***

If you need help transporting your tree, **Gonzalo has graciously offered to pick up trees** and bring them to the church. Please **call the church office** to make arrangements.

## 12th Night Celebration & Potluck Dinner

Our **potluck dinner and 12th Night festivities** will begin at **5:00 PM**, followed by the Epiphany Bonfire.

As we have done in years past, we will enjoy:

- A **potluck dinner**
- **King Cake**, with a surprise for the person who finds the **baby Jesus**

Chicken and Rolls will be provided. We ask that you bring dishes based on your last name

- **A-I Starch**
- **J-R Vegetable or salad**
- **S-Z Dessert**

The hospitality people can always use extra hands for this event so please speak to one of them if you can help.

## Catfish Country Bartow, Florida



Our next Lunch Bunch will be at Catfish Country on January 15, 2026 at 11:30am. This one was packed last time we went so make sure to let Debbie know if you are interested in attending. Hope to see you there on the 15th!

Debbie Bradford, 305-304-2548

Office 863-646-6115



- 01/04/26**      **2nd Sunday of Christmas**
- 01/11/26**      **Epiphany Covered Dish Dinner & Christmas tree Bonfire.**
- 01/15/26**      **Lunch Bunch 11:30am at Catfish Country**
- 01/18/26**      **Vestry Nominations into Father David or Karen Spiller**
- 01/23/26**      **57th Diocesan Convention**
- 02/08/26**      **Annual Meeting**



## Dog Treats

The Dog Treat Crew is getting together again to bake homemade treats for our furry friends at the Bully Project! If you're able to help, please bring your donations to church and place them in the collection bins. We're so grateful for your continued support.

### Needed items:

- Old-fashioned oats
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Unsalted peanuts
- Pumpkin purée



# Welcome to our Church

### Christmas 2025 Attendance

Worship Center	7:00pm	42
Sanctuary	10:30pm	69
Garden Chapel	10:00am	26
<b>December 28th</b>		
Sanctuary	9:00am	47
Worship Center	11:00am	42
<b>Total</b>		<b>89</b>

Look for the bright yellow BUCK\$ 4 BUILDING envelopes to donate toward our out of budget building and grounds maintenance expenses.

If you are new to St. Stephen's or if you would like to have Fr. David contact you, please fill out a Newcomer Card and place it in the plate and we will see that you are contacted. God Bless.

### Verse of the Week: Ephesians 1:18

**I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people.**



**Flowers on th Altar were Given by Dennis Flynn in memory of Dawn Flynn**

**January Birthdays**

- 3 Erin Wenham**
- 8 Ernest Palmer**  
**Betty Pratt**
- 10 Barbara Anderson**
- 11 Judy Elam**
- 18 Bonnie Rowbotham**
- 20 Lou Alers**
- 23 Mary Lankford**
- 25 Steve Meyer**  
**Yolanda Howes,**
- 28 Katherine Leahy**

**January Anniversaries**

- 10 Charles & Debbie Bradford**

**St. Stephen's Prayer List  
(Parish Members are in Bold)**

**Prayer Needs:** Amy (Fr. Scott's Daughter), Lou Alers, Kim Birmingham (from **Scout Troop 106**), Charlie Bibb (**Season Barham Hodges** Father in Law) Shannon Black (from **Kathy Leahy**), **Louis Bloodworth**, Elizabeth Bradford (**Charlie Bradford's** sister), Bryan Biery (**Judy Elam's** Friend), Rachel Blackwell (**Karen Spiller's** daughter-in-law), **Jim Bowen, Betty Calhoun, Stephen Calhoun, Italo & Janet Casini**, Roz Coleman (**Althea Nye's** friend) **Jim Cross**, Annie Delling, **Roger Doyle**, Laurie Dresser (**David Dresser's** sister), Lily Dresser (**David & Patricia Dresser's** granddaughter, **Stacy Englert**, Laurens Flanagan (**Sally Flanagan's** Daughter in Law), **Morgan Goers**, Ricky Morrison, Becky Sue Morrison (**Stacy & Michael Englert's** Friends), Jeremy Gagne (**Pat Dupont's** nephew) Angela Grilli (**Althea Nye's** friend), **Jim Heal**, Bob & Kay Henry (friends of **Betty Calhoun**) Nicole Herhnkind (**Karen Spiller's** sister), **Kevin Jackimowicz**, Ken & Clair Jones (**Roger Doyle's** friends), Kay Jordan (**Judy Elam's** friend), Father Robert Keller, (**Kathy Leahy's** friend) Karen Kent (**David Dresser's** Relative) David Kight (**Major Kight's** brother) Cynthia Krempel (**Janice Olson's** sister) , **Trudi Lithgow**, Mary & Adrian McAleer (**Liz Barham's** sister & Brother in Law), **Donna McLemore**, Raelyn (daughter of **Sue DeMan's** friend Stephanie), Al & Lucille Pfund, (**Lula Peoples'** co-worker), **Janell & Walter Repsher, Roy Reynolds , Glen Richardi**, Donna Roberts (**David Dresser's** sister) **Art & Bonnie Rowbotham, Shirley Rumpel, Carla Sauve**, Sheryl Short (Tropical Doll Club), Ed Silveira (**David Dresser's** Cousin), **Karen Spiller**, Lynn Staffier (from **Kathy Leahy**), **Carol Starling, Marion Stewart, Gloria Thomason, Helen Vogt, Dailia Walker, Meg & Rhys Wallace, Lindsay Zielinski.**

**Homebound or Skilled Nursing Facility:** Tony Barfield, Susan Cardman, Rick Rahn, Jo Willey, Sandra Mewborn, Pat Dayton. Walter Repsher

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>4</b> 9:00am Sanctuary 11:00am Worship Center	<b>5</b> 8am Online Morning Prayer  8pm Online Compline	<b>6</b> 8am Online Morning Prayer 8pm Online Compline  <b>NO VBS SPAGHETTI DINNER!</b>	<b>7</b> 8:00am Online Morning Prayer 11:00am Holy Eucharist 12:00 Book Study in the Parish Hall  8pm Online Compline	<b>8</b> 8:00am Online Morning Prayer 8pm Online Compline	<b>9</b> <b>Office Closed</b> 8:00am Online Morning Prayer 8pm Online Compline	<b>10</b> <b>Office Closed</b>
<b>11</b> 9:00am Sanctuary 11:00am Worship Center 5:00pm Pot Luck Dinner Epiphany Bonfire	<b>12</b> 8am Online Morning Prayer  8pm Online Compline	<b>13</b> 8am Online Morning Prayer 8pm Online Compline	<b>14</b> 8:00am Online Morning Prayer 11:00am Holy Eucharist 12:00 Book Study in the Parish Hall  8pm Online Compline	<b>15</b> 8:00am Online Morning Prayer 8pm Online Compline	<b>16</b> <b>Office Closed</b> 8:00am Online Morning Prayer 8pm Online Compline	<b>17</b> <b>Office Closed</b>