

# *Christ the King - St. Stephen Parish*

**St. Stephen Church**  
1101 Keaveny Court  
Walnut Creek, CA 94597  
925-274-1341  
[saintstephenparish.org](http://saintstephenparish.org)

**Christ the King Church**  
195A Brandon Road  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
925-682-2486  
[ctkph.org](http://ctkph.org)

## **Christ the King Church**

**Daily Mass Times**  
Monday - Saturday 9am

**Every First Friday**  
5pm to 6pm Exposition  
6pm Mass

**Weekend Mass Times**  
**Saturday:** 4pm Vigil  
(4pm Mass is also livestreamed)

**Sunday**  
7:30am, 9am, 10:30am, & 4pm  
(10:30am Mass is also livestreamed)

**Private Confessions**  
Saturday 3pm to 3:30pm

**Office Hours**  
Monday - Friday 9am to 5pm

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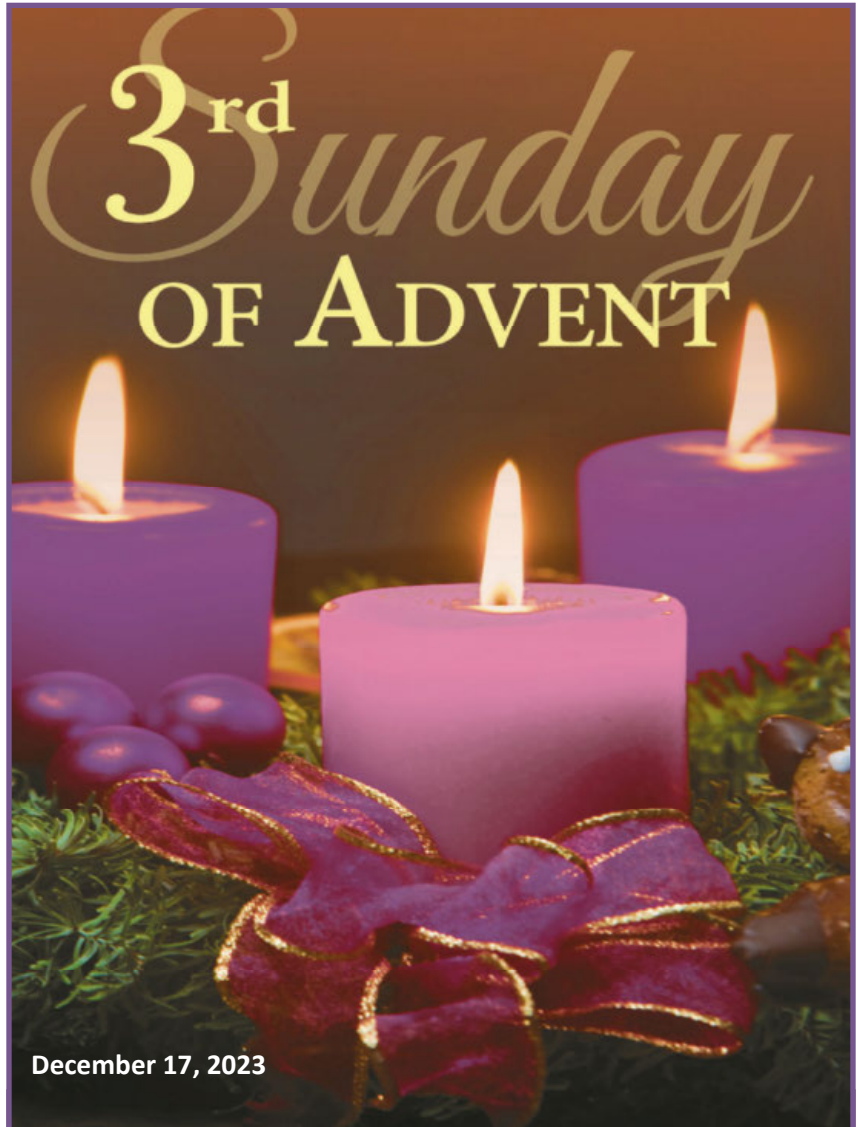
## **St. Stephen Church**

**Daily Mass Times**  
Monday - Friday 8am

**Weekend Mass Times**  
Saturday: 5pm Vigil  
Sunday: 9:30am

**Private Confessions**  
Saturday Before the 5pm Mass

**Office Hours**  
Monday & Wednesday 11am to 2pm



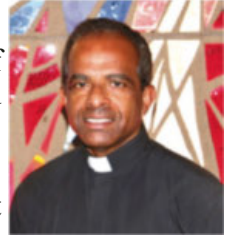
December 17, 2023

**TO LIVE AND TO LOVE IN CHRIST  
TO HEAR THE GOSPEL AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE**



Dear Friends,

The Third Sunday in Advent shifts from a tone of expectation of Christ's coming to one of rejoicing at the arrival of God's kingdom with the coming of Jesus. The theme for the Third Sunday of Advent is Joy.



**On the Third Sunday of Advent, we light the candle that represents JOY** – Joy that comes through Jesus's arrival and through the salvation he has gifted us. The rose candle has its roots in something known as Gaudete Sunday. The word “*gaudete*” is derived from the Latin words “*gaudium*,” joy, and “*gaudeo*,” to rejoice or be glad. *Gaudete* Sunday occurs eight to thirteen days before Christmas, and the nearness of the feast is reason for great joy.



**The Term “*Gaudete*.”** *Gaudete* is taken from the Entrance Antiphon: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near” (paraphrase, Phil 4:4-5). Advent is a time of joyful expectation and eager preparation for the Solemnity of Christmas.

But perhaps some of you don't feel like rejoicing. Perhaps your own mood is more like the rest of Advent, darker, more anxious, somewhat unsettled, for any number of reasons, not least of which might be the state of the world.

The news of the world is always a distressed word, a word full of sadness and anger, a word tinged with fear and heavy with regret. Perhaps that is why the darker mood of the Advent season speaks to us at times more authentically than its more joyous mood.

**Whether we recognize it or not we come to church to hear a counter-Word.** We come burdened by our occupations and pre-occupations, weighed down by both the demands of daily living and the larger societal and global worries that clamor for our attention. We often think we have things pretty much figured out, but there are nagging areas of uncertainty about our fate and future.

To the ears of the world the Good News often sounds like too-good-to-be-true news. And a weekly hour's religious interlude away from the world's worries may not be enough to get us ready for rejoicing. Nevertheless, on this Third Sunday in Advent we are admonished to rejoice. And you can only find that in the Savior of the world. If you are unable to set your heart on this Good News, who is JESUS, then the world will always remain dark, and your lives will always be nagged by an unsettling anxiety about what you have and what you don't have, and a desire for more.

The Christian story is above all a love story. It is not about something called religion, but it is all about the love God has for us. God wants us for himself. He wants us as lovers. This is the God who heals and saves, the God who gives meaning and hope to the downcast and new life to the dead. This is God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, the God worth waiting for, and working for, and praying to and rejoicing with.

*Advent is the Church's way of observing and remembering, of marking the truth we believe that **God is love, and we are called to love. Let us remember to love!***

**LOVE is patient, LOVE is kind and envies no one. LOVE is never boastful or conceited, rude or selfish. LOVE is not quick to take offense, it keeps no records of wrongs, it does not gloat over other people's troubles, but rejoices in the right, the good, and the true. There is nothing that LOVE cannot face, there is no limit to its faith, to its hope, to its endurance. LOVE never ends.**

~ Fr. Paulson



## UPCOMING CTK MASS INTENTIONS

Dec. 18	Mon.	9:00am	Clyde Miles †
Dec. 19	Tues.	9:00am	Therese Crespi †
Dec. 20	Weds.	9:00am	Lutter Family† Manny Millena Spencer Swann
Dec. 21	Thurs.	9:00am	Taylor Faith Almeida † Harold & Esther Donlin †
Dec. 22	Fri.	9:00am	Roberto Donlin † Claro & Kay Tagle Family Renato Alfonso
Dec. 23	Sat.	9:00am	Leopoldo Lejano, Sr. † Christian C. Anicoche
Dec. 23	Sat.	4:00pm	Lois Maderious † Alonzo B. Posada † Luzviminda Jordan †

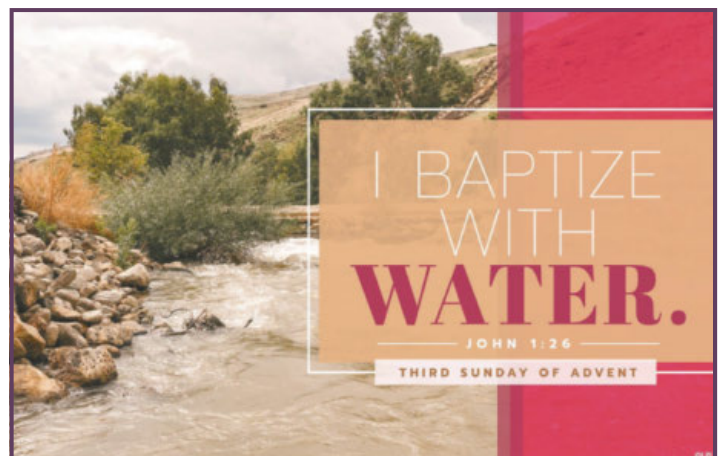
## UPCOMING SS MASS INTENTIONS

Dec. 16	Sat.	5:00pm	CTK-SS Parishioners
Dec. 17	Sun.	9:30am	John Patrick Connolly †
Dec. 23	Sat.	5:00pm	Jim and Jeanie McGraw †
Dec. 24	Sun.	9:30am	CTK-SS Parishioners



### Help needed at St. Stephen Church

Help needed for preparing our church for Christmas. Join us after the St. Stephen 9:30am Mass on Sunday, December 17, as we set up our tree and manger. Then help again after Mass on the 24th as we do our final transformation to Christmas. Many hands needed, especially on the 17th.





# Third Sunday of Advent



## Donate Poinsettias In Memory of a Loved One

We would be very grateful if you would donate some larger poinsettia plants in memory of a loved one for our church decorations.

Please drop them off December 20 to December 23 and bring them to the church.  
You may put the name of your loved one in our Remembrance Book.



## Celebrate The Feast of St. Stephen Tuesday, December 26 5pm Mass followed by a Reception in the Parish Hall At St. Stephen Church!

Celebrate with us on our feast day!  
Mass then a potluck. This gives you a chance to use up your Christmas leftovers.  
We will also have caroling!

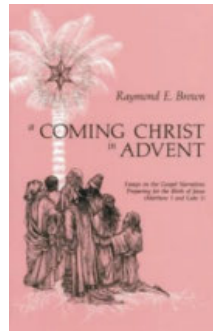
We invite all to come to this special mass and fellowship.



**SIMBANG GABI** -- The Filipino Society of Christ the King/St. Stephen Parish cordially invites you to join in the celebration of "Simbang Gabi", a nine-day novena in preparation for the birth of

Jesus, at Christ the King Church from **December 15th to the 23rd. Mass begins at 6:00 pm. every night, except Dec. 16, 17 and 23 when mass will start at 4:00 pm.**

A celebration of gratitude with entertainment will be held after the last mass on the 23rd in CTK's gym. For additional information, please contact Maritess Baula (925-899-9078) or Imelda Santos (925-623-7340).



## Join us for a discussion of Raymond E. Brown's "A Coming Christ in Advent"

**On Monday, December 18, at  
10:30 am in the Ministry Center  
Chapel at CTK.**

Fr. Brown reflects on the annunciations in Matthew and Luke, on the Magnificat and Benedictus canticles, and on the "origins of Jesus" as given in the first words of the New Testament. For discussion purposes, the book will be divided into two sections: chapters 1-3 and chapters 4-6.



## St. Stephen's Giving Tree

**The St. Stephen St. Vincent de Paul Conference will be sponsoring an Advent Giving Tree for the benefit of Hillcrest Congregational Church Layette Program in Pleasant Hill, CA.** For over 60 years Hillcrest has been providing basic layette supplies to families with a new baby via the Contra Costa Public Health Organizations. This program currently resources 25-30 layettes a month throughout the year and depends entirely on donations from groups, organizations, churches and individuals. Advent is the season in which we watch and wait and then joyfully celebrate the birth

of Jesus, a loving gift from God to our world. Every day of the year parents throughout our country and specifically Contra Costa County await the birth of their baby.

During Advent December 1-23; St. Stephen's will be sponsoring a Giving Tree which will benefit the Layette Program at Hillcrest Congregational Church. The Giving Tree will be in the back of the church at St. Stephen. The Giving Tree has Christmas gift tags, each with a suggestion for a layette item. Please take as many tags as you like and return your gift items wrapped in white tissue and place them under the tree by December 23rd; or you may place the gifts in the boxes placed around the Giving Tree. Your generosity is appreciated and may your Advent Season be filled with Joy and anticipation as we await the birth of our Lord. A list of what items are included in a complete layette is available at the Giving Tree. If you have further questions you may contact Phyllis Smith 954.7393.



## Christmas Season Mass Schedule

Sunday, December 24 morning Masses for the 4th Sunday of Advent: 7:30am & 9am - CTK

St. Stephen - 9:30am Mass

### Sunday, December 24

#### Christmas Eve Masses at CTK

3pm - Outdoors - Children/Family Mass

4:30pm - Indoors/Family Mass

8pm - Indoors & Livestreamed

12 Midnight - Indoors (Carols begin at 11:30pm)

St. Stephen Church - 5:30pm

### Monday, December 25

#### Christmas Day Masses at CTK

7:30am - Indoors

9am - Indoors

10:30am - Indoors & Livestreamed

No 4pm Mass

St. Stephen Church - 9:30am

**The outdoor 3pm Christmas Eve Mass at CTK will take place on the lawn. Please dress warm and bring your own chairs. If it rains we will bring Mass inside the church and gym.**

### Feast of St. Stephen, Tuesday, December 26

St. Stephen Church - Mass Time: 5pm

Followed by a Potluck and Caroling in the Hall.

### Feast of the Holy Family, Sunday, December 31

Mass Times: 7:30am, 9am, 10:30am at CTK

4pm Mass (Followed by Refreshments for New Year's Eve) at CTK

St. Stephen Church - Mass Time: 9:30am

### New Year's Day, Monday January 1

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Mass Time: 9am at CTK

St. Stephen Church - Mass Time: 9:30am



### End of the Year To Do's Required Minimum Distribution

If you have an IRA, SIMPLE IRA, SEP IRA, or retirement plan account and are over the age of 72 (73 if you reached age 72 after Dec. 31, 2022), you are faced with a required minimum distribution (RMD) by the IRS. Your RMD is the minimum amount you must withdraw from your account each year to avoid significant tax penalties. The IRS has a qualified charitable donation rule that allows you to exempt your distribution from taxes. The significant advantage of this is that it lowers your adjusted gross income. The donation must be paid directly from the plan to the charity and the donor must be over 72. If you are in this situation, check with your tax advisor to see if it makes sense for you to apply this IRS rule and **direct your RMD to Christ the King - St. Stephen Parish.**

### CTK STAFF CONTACTS

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**Joann Kurpinsky/Nancy Gizdich**  
925-682-2486  
Bookkeeperspp@gmail.com



### Do you have a car, truck, RV or boat you would like to donate before the end of the year?

Christ the King-St. Stephen and Car Donation Services, located in Martinez have teamed up to provide an easy way to donate a vehicle (running or not). Proceeds from all vehicle donations will go to Christ the King-St. Stephen Parish. It will be a tax donation to you! Call 888-686-4483 or visit their website at: [www.cardonationservices.com](http://www.cardonationservices.com) to start the easy process. CDS takes care of all aspects of your car donations, allowing you peace of mind that the transaction will be completed efficiently and properly.



### Thank you for your donations and generosity throughout the year!



We have an easy way to give! You can scan this QR Code and it will take you to our safe and secure Realm Site where it will lead you to a convenient way to give. Or you can text CTKPH to 73256. Thank you for your generosity!

**Have a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year!**



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