



# St. Stephen's Parish

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## November 30, 2025 First Sunday of Advent

Winter is fast approaching, and the hours of darkness we experience each day are increasing. But in the midst of the dark, a great Light is about to dawn. The season of Advent has begun, and the Church is filled with joyful expectation, for the coming of our Savior, the Light of the World, is near. Let us prepare our hearts and homes for His arrival by sweeping away the darkness of our sins, lighting the candles of the Advent wreath, and opening ourselves to the light of His truth.



- Saturday, November 29 (5:00 pm)**  
Allyn & Doris Turck by The Family
- Sunday, November 30 (8:30 am)**  
Bev Moore by Paul Buckingham
- Monday, December 1 (No Mass)**
- Tuesday, December 2 (8:15 am)**  
Clifford Mattis by Kevin & Vicki Meyer
- Wednesday, December 3 (10:30 am)**  
**FUNERAL MASS FOR DUANE SCHWENDY**
- Thursday, December 4 (8:15 am)**  
Dianne Evelyn Rachon by Don & Cindy Sauer
- Friday, December 5 (12 Noon at St. Francis Solanus)**  
**FUNERAL MASS FOR IRENE MANCHESTER**
- Saturday, December 6 (5:00 pm)**  
Deceased Members of the John & Christine Turck Family by The Family
- Sunday, December 7 (8:30 am)**  
Theresa Woodhouse by Mark & Cookie Woodhouse

### Pray for the Sick

Mary Knight, Bruce Tabolt, Bruce Chapman, Peter VerSchneider, Bill Gracey, Caitlin Taylor, Corbin Pominville, Priscilla Boliver, Kristi Lehman Marques, Deb Hartshorn, Alice Moore, Julie Fuller, Venetha Houppert, Tom Pate, Casey Kloster, John Lashbrooks, and all ill at home, in the hospital, or nursing homes.

### Your Support for The Parish

Envelopes:	\$ 2,800.00
Plate:	\$ 685.00
Campaign for Human Development:	\$ 956.00

### Meetings

Secular Franciscans: December 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am  
Knights of Columbus: December 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 pm



**The first week of Advent we remember the gift of hope we have in Christ.** The prophets of Israel spoke of the coming of Christ, of how a savior would be born, a king in the line of David. They spoke of how he would rule the world wisely and bless all nations. As followers of Christ, we wait with hope for his return. As we light the candle, we remember that it was from the manger at Bethlehem that he came and gave light to the world. We are reminded to be alert and watch for the light of Christ even in the most unlikely places and people.

### A CHRISTMAS STORY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Please join us at St. Vicent De Paul's Oratory in Belfort on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm for this beautiful Advent service preparing for the birth of our Lord by listening to the Word and joining in song and prayer. Deacon Robert Uttendorfsky will provide the message.

### EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

There will be Eucharistic Adoration Friday, December 5, 2025, at 6:30 pm.

### CHURCH CLEANING

The church cleaners will meet to clean the church on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am.

### ADVENT LITTLE BLUE BOOKS

Books for the Advent season are located at the church entrance.

### ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GRADES 6-12

Movie Night Sunday, December 14, 6:00- 8:00 pm in the church hall featuring the film "King of Kings"! Wear your pajamas if you like, bring a pillow and invite friends! Popcorn and Snacks will be provided!

### WELCOME TO OUR PARISH FAMILY

St. Stephen's community welcomes Samuel Christopher Johnson and Keairra Diane Miller who received the Sacrament of Baptism last weekend. May the grace given through that Sacrament continue to bring blessings to them and their families!

### COFFEE HOUR

The next coffee hour is Sunday, December 7 after the 8:30 am Mass. Hosted by the Secular Franciscans.



### Christmas 2025

*"While they were there, the time came for her to have her child,  
And she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped  
Him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger,  
Because **there was no room for them in the inn.**" (Luke 2:6-7)*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

At our Christmas Vigil Mass, we will hear St. Luke tell us that God was born in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior this year, the conditions of today's world beg us to reflect on the question: **Is there room for God in my heart? Is there room in my heart for the sacred migrant, the unborn child, the terrified Ukrainian?**

Today, it seems that the list is endless: those suffering from mental illness, the elderly, the addicted, the lonely, the imprisoned, indigenous peoples, the abused, the terror-stricken refugee. So many women, men and children are hurting. They are members of our families.

We enter this Advent Season, preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus, grateful for blessings received, but also keenly aware of our Christian duty to be the hands and tender heart of Christ to those who currently warrant scarce attention from us. Pope Leo XIV, in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Dilexi Te*, reminds us that "contact with those who are lowly and powerless is a fundamental way of encountering the Lord of history. This Christmas, let us resolve, inspired by our own time spent with Jesus, to see His Face in our sisters and brothers who we too often neglect. We yearn to make room in our hearts for the hurting. Their human dignity demands it. Our Christian dignity impels us.

We pray that the beautiful acts of generosity that characterize the Christmas Season will be transformed from seasonal gestures of charity to lifelong acts of justice and mercy. Such personal transformation will give tangible evidence that we are *Christ-led, Christ-fed, and Hope-filled*. We can do great things in Christ Jesus, the Savior whose birth we celebrate with such joy and gratitude. Our God's unconditional love and boundless mercy became flesh and bones in the Person of Jesus Christ so that we might extend God's compassion and love.

May the Christ Child bring you and your loved ones the Gift of Love, the Blessing of Hope and the Promise of Peace. A blessed Christmas and joy-filled New Year!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley