

Join us and remember to...

October, 2023

Invite Others!



**Blessing of
the Animals**
(10:00-11:00am)
October 7

- ◆ Wedgewood Park (211 Wedgewood Drive, WBL)
- ◆ Bring your pet leashed or crated
- ◆ Welcome: dogs, cats, bunnies, birds, fish, reptiles, farm animals, and stuffed pet toys



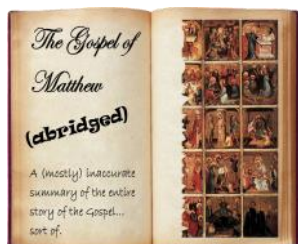
**Music
Festival &
Auction**
(11:00-2:30)
October 14

- ◆ Food for sale (11:00-2:30)
- ◆ Live Music (11:00-12:45)
- ◆ Silent Auction (11:00-1:30)
- ◆ Live Auction begins (1:00)
- ◆ Auction items include: artwork, gift baskets, and donations from local businesses



**Trunk or
Treat**
(1:00-3:00pm)
October 27

- ◆ Sunrise Middle School (2399 Cedar Ave, WBL) parking lot is open for trick-or-treaters!
- ◆ We need your help! *Please contact:*
mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org



**Fools for
Christ Dinner
Theater**
(7:00pm)
October 27 & 28

- ◆ Play: The Gospel of Matthew (abridged)
- ◆ Tickets: \$25 at www.foolsdrama.com
- ◆ Two nights at St. Stephen
- ◆ A multi-course meal by Chef Jodie Millard
- ◆ Details on page 4

FEATURES & SPOTLIGHTS

A Faith Story from Cindy Scott

What is faith? What is a faith story? Faith is trust in something bigger than ourselves. A faith story is an example of that trust based on beliefs or life experiences. We all have faith of different varieties. We sit down in a chair with the faith it will hold us up. That is a simple faith built on past experiences. It's the same with our Christian faith. On our journeys walking with Christ we experience God's grace and blessings in ways that contribute to and strengthen our faith. And because we are not alone on our journey, the faith stories of others in our Christian family walking beside us help us to recognize our own faith. Here is a faith story from Cindy Scott, a member of our Christian family.



My faith story is not exciting in ways that some are, but rather a lifelong story of faith. I was born into a Lutheran family and attended church and all the expected Sunday school and confirmation programs. My faith was totally based on what I had been taught, and I really never had reason to question it. Besides our regular appearance on Sundays, our family never discussed our faith, never read the Bible (although we were sure to each have our pristine copy beside our beds), never prayed out loud except for reciting our table prayer each meal, but there was really no evidence of our faith in our day to day life.

I stopped going to church when I left home for college. As I grew into adulthood, there were a few significant events that made me reconsider my faith and the role of God in my life. The first was when my high school boyfriend committed suicide. There were some who suggested he would not go to heaven because of his choice to take his own life. This was so inconsistent with my understanding of a loving God that cared for us and prepared rooms for us in Heaven. It made me see for the first time how differently Christians interpret and understand their faith and the teachings of Jesus. It made me start questioning what I believed and how Lutherans understand their faith.

Early in my nursing career, I worked as an oncology nurse in a hospital with a small hospice unit. I saw families that totally relied on their faith for comfort in the difficult times, I saw families who turned away from their faith, feeling that God had betrayed them and wasn't answering their prayers, and I saw families with no faith, struggling with despair and hopelessness. Again, this made me consider what I believed and how I would respond in such a situation.

At age 24, I moved to Minnesota to attend graduate school at the University of MN. As part of that relocation, I chose to join Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fridley. I enrolled in a new member's class which included an 8-week "course" on what it means to be a Lutheran. It was taught by the two pastors who were both very down-to-earth, accessible people, open to questions and discussion of difficult issues. We used the Bible as a reference tool and they knew exactly which scriptures spoke to which issues. This was such a revelation to me! I was a "renewed Lutheran" with a clearer and more certain understanding of how God was with me every day. It created a desire in me to worship regularly and to be amongst others who share my faith.

When Tom and I got married and moved to Vadnais Heights, we tried a variety of local churches, and settled in at St. Stephen in 1994. Marta and Ross Nelson, who we met regularly in the nursery at that time, became our church sponsors. St. Stephen has become a home for us. The people of this church have been the "village" that helped raise our children. They have supported us through some scary health issues, and shared the celebrations of our lives. They have been our Minnesota family when our real families were far away.

I started teaching Sunday school in 1997 when our son Doug was in 1st grade. Teaching our own children and all children about living our faith has been a way for me to grow in my faith. When you're with kids, you have to walk the walk, and demonstrate the concepts you are trying to teach. So it challenges me to live my faith daily, and be a Christian in everything I do. Preparing for my Sunday school lessons was my Bible study and fielding questions from the kids challenged me to explain what I had learned. Sometimes, they stumped me and we needed to ask the pastor, but we all grow this way.

I think it is so important to keep growing in our faith. For me, this sometimes comes from pastors' sermons, sometimes from discussions of books read, and sometimes from lyrics of Christian music. I need to be reminded frequently that God loves me, forgives my sins, and is with me every day. St. Stephen is my frequent reminder!

Share your faith story by sending it to Tami at office@ststephenwbl.org!

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Dave Erickson Memorial (10/1)

Nancy Erickson and the family of Dave Erickson wish to invite their church family at St. Stephen to join them on Sunday, October 1st to remember Dave, who died on March 4th of this year. A visitation will be held in the narthex 2:00pm. The service will be in the sanctuary at 3:00pm. A dinner will be held in the Fellowship Hall at 4:00pm. **Please RSVP by Tuesday, September 26th** for the dinner by contacting Tami in the church office at office@ststephenwbl.org or 651-777-1107.



*ERICKSON, David & Nancy

Bring your pet leashed or crated. Welcome: dogs, cats, bunnies, birds, fish, reptiles, farm animals, and stuffed toys. This event is co-sponsored by St. Stephen and Redeemer Lutheran Churches and is being advertised to the wider community.

Retiree's Breakfast (10/12)

All retirees are invited to join other retirees from church for breakfast (Thurs/9:00-10:00am) at Perkins in Maplewood on County Rd D.



OWL'S EVENT: VFW (10/19)

Older wiser Lutherans are invited to join us for lunch on Thursday, October 19th at the VFW. Please sign up in the narthex.

Food Shelf Donations (10/1, 10/4)



Feel free to take a green bag home and return it on the first Wednesday or Sunday of the month! Food donations go to the White Bear Area Emergency Food Shelf.

Meetings in October

- ◆ 10/5 Worship & Music (Thurs/6:00-7:00pm)
- ◆ 10/5 Mission Exploration Team (Thurs/7:00pm)
- ◆ 10/9 Church Council (Mon/7:00-9:00pm)
- ◆ 10/19 Mission Exploration Team (Thurs/7:00pm)
- ◆ 10/30 Evergreen Team (Mon/7:00pm)

Blessing of the Animals at Wedgewood Park (10/7)

This year's (33rd Annual) Blessing of the Animals will be at Wedgewood Park (211 Wedgewood Drive, next to Walgreens, across from the Dairy Queen and Aldi, just east of 120/East County Line Rd.) on Saturday, October 7th (10:00am).



Children's Event Harvest Festival & Maze (10/19)

Children (grades 1-5) are invited to go to the Twin Cities Harvest Festival and Maze in Brooklyn Park on Thursday, October 19 (9:30am-2:00pm). Drop off 9:30am and pick-up 2:00pm at Redeemer. Cost: \$25 (includes admission, a pumpkin, a snack, and a drink). Bring your own sack lunch. Registration is DUE by October 11. Registration FORMS are located in the narthex or by contacting Paul Schultz, Children & Families Ministry Director at childrenmin@ststephenwbl.org

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES



Youth Event Haunted Forest (10/22)...

Youth (grades 6-12) are invited to go to the Haunted Forest in Bethel, Minnesota on Sunday, October 22nd. Drop off at 4pm and pick-up 8pm at Redeemer. Cost: \$5. Registration is DUE by October 18. Registration FORMS are located in the narthex or by contacting Melissa Whitman, Youth & Families Ministry Director at mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org

Trunk or Treat (10/27) at Sunrise Park Middle School Parking Lot

Set-up (12:00-1:00pm)

Event (1:00-3:00pm)

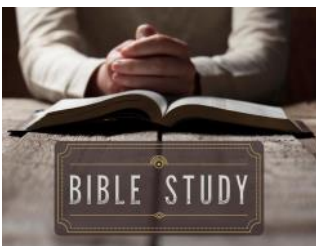
Clean-up (3:00-4:00pm)

This year, the Trunk or Treat event will be held in the parking lot of Sunrise Park Middle School (2399 Cedar Ave, White Bear Lake) on **FRIDAY**, October 27th and open to the wider community for a safe place for trick-or-treaters. Please consider signing up to help... decorate your trunk, provide treats, and invite others! Contact: mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org



Wednesday Bible Study

Led by Interim Pastor S. Kelly on Wednesdays (11:00-11:45am) in the library. Please note the time change. We are studying the Gospel of Mark.



Fools for Christ Fall Dinner Theater (10/27 & 10/28)

Title of the Play: The Gospel of Matthew (abridged). **Brief Storyline:** It's a (mostly) inaccurate retelling of the Gospel of Matthew... sort of. **Ticket Price:** \$25. **Ticket Price Includes:** A multi-course meal and the show in three acts. **Menu:** Appetizer course, Soup Course, Main course featuring chicken breast with smoked gouda sauce over wild rice blend, honey orange carrots, squash, and bread basket, Dessert course. **Meal Prepared by:** Our fabulous "Cookie" Jodie Millard! **Tickets at:** www.foolsdrama.com.

Reformation Sunday & Rite of Confirmation (10/29)

Join us as we celebrate Reformation Sunday which honors Martin Luther's bold action on October 31, 1517.

Today, we also honor our Confirmands during the Rite of Confirmation and with a reception immediately following worship.



*Your life is the answer
to someone's prayers.*

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (10/31)

Please feel free to join our group for lunch on the last Tuesday of each month (11:30am). RSVP (required) on Sunday before event by contacting Judee Bramscher at 651-269-6122. On October 31st, we will be gathering at the Blacksmith Lounge & Broaster (17205 Forest Blvd N, Hugo, MN 55038) – RSVP by 10/29.



82% of unchurched people will likely attend church if invited.

2% of church people offer invitations.

Grace & Praise Worship & Community Meal

Each Wednesday, join us (*and invite others*) to attend our casual Grace & Praise (GAP) worship service (6:00-6:45pm) in the sanctuary and Community Meal (5:15-6:00pm) in the Fellowship Hall.

Cooks Needed for Wednesday Meals

We are in need of volunteers to prepare, cook, and serve (FOR 25 PEOPLE) Wednesday evening community meals. Get reimbursed for up to \$50. Mealtime is 5:15-6:00pm before our Grace & Praise (GAP) Worship Service. Choose one or as many Wednesdays as you like (September through May of 2024). Please contact Tami in the church office office@ststephenwbl.org or 651-777-1107 to get onto the schedule.

Fellowship Group

All are invited to gather in the narthex on Wednesdays (10:30am) to share news, lift each other up with encouragement, and simply just visit! This is an informal group and all are welcome. Contact Judee Bramscher (651-269-6122) if you have questions.



Crafts Needed for the Holly Boutique

Please remember the Holly Boutique will be November 11th and it's not too early to start making items to be sold. We are accepting hand-made crafts and hope you would consider donating for our sale.



Living Nativity (One Saturday ONLY) December 16, 2023

This year marks the 32nd Anniversary of the Living Nativity here at St. Stephen. Again this year, we are holding this event for one evening only. Please gather your friends and family to volunteer for at least one 30-minute shift. This important volunteer opportunity is a meaningful outreach to the wider community that associates St. Stephen with this neighborhood tradition. No previous experience is necessary – simply sign up to assume the role of Mary, Joseph, the angel, a wise king, or a shepherd. Watch for sign-up sheets in the narthex or contact Tami in the office: 651-777-1107 or office@ststephenwbl.org

HAPPENINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Auction Donations & Volunteers Needed!



32nd Annual Music Festival & Auction

Saturday, October 14 (11:00am-2:30pm)

MUSIC: "Original Standard Deviation" & "Old Guys"
with Randy Amborn, Tom Church, Sweet Betsy Clark,
Brent Clark, Mike Dignin, and Jeff Moe (11:00am)

SILENT AUCTION: (11:00am-1:30pm)

LIVE AUCTION: (1:00pm)

**Start thinking now about that "special" item you would like to donate.
Then drop it off! It's that simple.**

Ideas for Auction Donations:

- ♦ Sporting event tickets
- ♦ Weekend (or longer) retreat at your cabin
- ♦ New or gently used items (NO clothing)
- ♦ Your services to someone in need or to promote your business (examples: website creation, computer work, auto work, raking leaves, washing windows, snow plowing, lawn mowing, yard work, electrical work, carpentry, painting, house cleaning, plumbing, etc.)
- ♦ Home-made items (such as arts & crafts items, edible items, you name it!)
- ♦ Donate your hobby time to create something with that lucky winner (make jelly, sew, quilt, photography, bake, give singing or instrument lessons, etc.)
- ♦ Provide themed dinner in your home for a group of lucky winners
- ♦ Make soup or dessert every month for 6 or 12 months (you pick the number of months)
- ♦ Themed Gift Baskets

DROP OFF DEADLINE FOR AUCTION ITEMS:

Sunday, October 8

Donation Instructions:

- ♦ **You may begin dropping off items AT ANY TIME STARTING NOW!**
- ♦ Stop by the auction display in the narthex and fill out an Auction Donation Form.
- ♦ Leave items in the church office and mark "Auction" on them, along with the form.
- ♦ Have some extra baskets? Please donate them to be used for our gift baskets.
- ♦ **FIRM deadline for dropping off items: Sunday, October 8.**

Volunteer Needs:

- ♦ Solicit items or services from local businesses (please talk with Betsy Clark)
- ♦ Making desserts to sell day of event, set-up of tables and auction items, volunteer shifts the day of the event, clean-up, and more.
- ♦ If you have volunteered in the past to assist with the auction, you may be contacted in September.

**Please contact Betsy Clark at 612-554-3925 or at
eaclark001@comcast.net if you have any questions, and thank you!**

APPRECIATION

VBS... Thank you to all who participated in this year's Vacation Bible School! We had a great time and a meaningful experience for the kids!



APPRECIATION



Our deepest gratitude to those who helped and attended... making this day a wonderful start to the new church year!



Furniture Movers... Thank you to those who moved furniture before and after carpet cleaning September!

Office Helpers... Thank you to the volunteers for their commitment of helping in the office!

Office Chair... Thank you for the office chair donation!

Shrubs at Main Entrance... Thank you to the planters of the shrubs at the main entrance and to those who water them. They look great!

Note from Gretchen & Mike Trendera... *We would like to express our thanks and gratitude to everyone at St. Stephen. Your thoughts and prayers have given us the strength to navigate these difficult times as we cope with the loss of Scott. May God bless each and every one of you.*

School Supply Donations... Thank you to all who donated school supplies that benefited Matoska International Elementary School. Items were given out to those in need during their open house a couple days before school resumed.



PRAYERS

Jesus said "My Father's House shall be a House of Prayer."



Help Keep Us Informed

Please help keep us informed of any concerns that you would like our congregation to be praying about, including those serving in the military and any deaths among family members, by contacting the church office at 651-777-1107 or office@ststephenwbl.org

2023 FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE

2023 Proposed St. Stephen Adult Faith Formation Schedule		
Date	Presenter/s	Subject
10:45 -11:45 a.m. <u>Sunday Oct. 1</u>	Mission Exploration Team (ME Team)	Cottage Meeting Summary
10:45-11:45 a.m. <u>Sunday Oct. 8</u>	Scott Zieman, Chemistry Professor, Century College Inver Grove Heights, MN	Faith, Science, and Technology There is no inherent conflict between scientific findings and the understanding of God as creator, redeemer and sanctifier." (ELCA statement on "Genetics, Faith and Responsibility," page 4.)
10:45-12 p.m. <u>Sunday October 15</u>	The Rev. Rolf Olson, Pastor, Visitation Pastor at Roseville Lutheran	What is Christian Nationalism and Why does it matter?
10:45-11:30 p.m. Fools for Christ <u>Oct. 22</u>	Pastor Kelly and available Fools for Christ ministers!	Faith and the Theatre Arts
10:45-11:30 am <u>Sunday Nov. 5</u>	To be announced!	
10:45-11:45 am <u>Sunday Nov. 12</u> Stewardship Sunday, Ministry of Intent	Pastor Kelly and Stewardship Ministry Team	Is stewardship like bee-keeping?
10:45-11:45 <u>Sunday Nov. 19</u>	To be announced	To be announced
Sunday, Nov. 26 No Sunday Faith Formation		
2023 December to be determined		
2024 January to be determined		

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CHURCH MATTERS

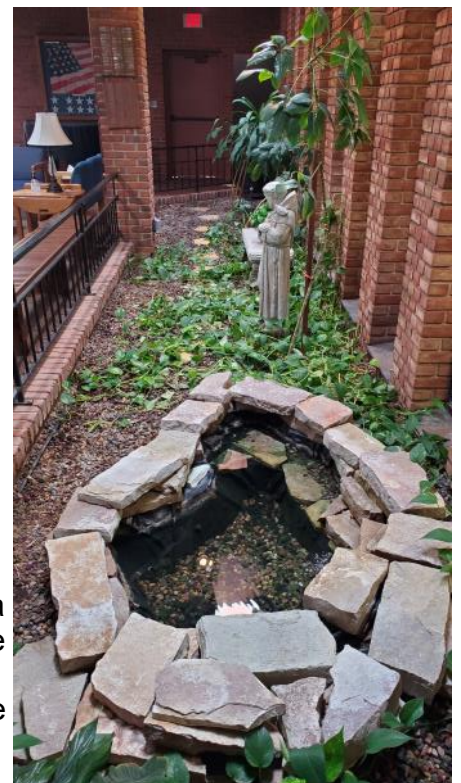
“Church Council Meeting Highlights”

Submitted by Marla Amborn

- ♦ Reviewed our current Mission, Vision, and Values and voted to affirm it is still appropriate for guiding our ministry.
- ♦ Discussed plans for the book discussion to be led by Pat Miles, September 24 at 2 PM on her book "Before All is Said and Done: Practical Advice on Living and Dying Well." We encourage congregation members to attend and bring friends.
- ♦ We had a good response to the Cottage Meetings. There will be a summary of findings provided to the congregation following worship on October 1.
- ♦ The next phase in the pastoral transition will include a congregational survey which will be coming out soon.
- ♦ Discussed the process and timeline for forming the Call Committee and recommended characteristics of Call Committee members, Referred it to Mission Exploration Team to begin working on identifying Call Committee member recommendations.
- ♦ Galilee Lutheran Church has been seeking donations to fund the purchase of property to use to support the local community. St. Stephen had contributed \$500 earlier this year. The Gift Committee recommended giving an additional \$500 from memorial gifts. In addition, Neighbor Helping Neighbor contributed \$1000.

Indoor Garden

The indoor memorial garden (pictured right) is getting a spa treatment! A clean up is in process with older plants replaced, the pond cleaned and some statues removed for refurbishment. **NOTE:** All statues have been moved to the Old Chapel. If you would like any returned to the garden, please inform Tami in the office.



GENERAL INFORMATION

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The Steppingstone Newsletter...

Is distributed monthly. If you have any items for the **November** issue, please send them to office@ststephenwbl.org by Tuesday, Oct. 10.

Newsletters are also available in the narthex information racks or via email.

Please let us know if you have a change of address so that we can update our mailing list.

Staff

Interim Pastor ▪ Sharon Kelly
ipk@ststephenwbl.org

Visitation Pastor ▪ Juli Thompson
julia.a.thompson@gmail.com

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Children & Families Ministry Director ▪ Paul Schultz
childrenmin@ststephenwbl.org

Communication & Administrative Coordinator ▪ Tami Heart
office@ststephenwbl.org

Custodian ▪ Paul Swanson

Digital Ministry Director ▪ Zach VanDyke
zrv10000@gmail.com

Funeral Luncheon Coordinator ▪ Kathy Anderson
kathleen856@q.com

GAP Worship Director ▪ Justin Woodruff
jwoodruff@homfurniture.com

Nursery Caregiver ▪ Lisa Klingbeil

Organist and Senior Choir Accompanist ▪ Cindy Bittner
cynthia.k.bittner@gmail.com

Senior Choir Director ▪ Kari Ballata
ballatahosmer@yahoo.com

Wedding Coordinator ▪ Missy Kneip
mothergoose2954@yahoo.com

Youth & Families Ministry Director ▪ Melissa Whitman
mwhitman@redeemerwhitebear.org

Council & Leadership

President and Staff Relations
Marla Amborn—MarlaAmborn@gmail.com

Vice President, Finance & Stewardship
Ted Field—FieldJackson@msn.com

Previous President and Church Council Secretary
Betsy Clark—eaclark001@comcast.net

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Adult Learning
Scott Ziemann—ziemanscott@outlook.com

Bookkeeper
Cindy Bittner—treasurer@ststephenwbl.org

Children, Youth, & Families
Bethany Zenner—bethanyzenner@hotmail.com

Congregational & Community Care
Phyllis Ballata—pballata@msn.com

Evangelism
EVERYONE

Fellowship
Cheryl Skrypez—cskrypez@gmail.com

Financial Secretary
Brad Wilm—RuthaBradj@gmail.com

Mission and Benevolence
Pastor Sharon Kelly—ipk@ststephenwbl.org

Property
Kathy Stickler—kstickler23@gmail.com

Treasurer
Mary Beth Skunes—treasurer@ststephenwbl.org

Worship & Music
Denise Ashley—deniseashley1@yahoo.com

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9am-3pm; Friday 9am-Noon

St Stephen Lutheran Church
1965 East County Rd E
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

What's Happening

Sundays

Worship (with band, organ, or piano)
& Faith Ed **9:30am IN-PERSON**
(Services are live-streamed and online)

Wednesdays

Grace & Praise Worship (casual)
& Faith Ed **6:00pm IN-PERSON**
(Community Meal at 5:30pm, \$5/pp)

October Calendar Highlights

(this calendar does NOT include weekly events)

- 10/1 Food Shelf Collection (Sun)
- 10/1 Dave Erickson Memorial Service (Sun/3:00pm)
Visitation-2:00pm. Dinner-4:00pm (RSVP by 9/26)
- 10/4 Food Shelf Collection (Wed)
- 10/5 Worship & Music Ministry (Thurs/6:00-7:00pm)
- 10/5 Mission Exploration Team (Thurs/7:00pm)
- 10/7 Blessing of the Animals (Sat/10:00-11:00am)
- 10/8 Auction Items Drop-off Deadline (Sun)
- 10/9 Church Council Meeting (Mon/7:00-9:00pm)
- 10/10 Content deadline for November Steppingstone (Tues)
- 10/12 Retiree's Breakfast (Thurs/9:00-10:00am)
- 10/13 Auction SET-UP (Fri/9:00am-9:00pm)
- 10/14 Music Festival & Auction (Sat/11:00am-2:30pm)
- 10/18 MEA, most Wednesday Faith Ed **ON BREAK**
- 10/19 Steppingstone Distribution Day (Thurs)
- 10/19 Children's Event: Harvest Festival (Thurs/9:30am-2:00pm)
- 10/19 OWL's Event: Lunch at VFW (Thurs/11:30am)
- 10/19 Mission Exploration Team (Thurs/7:00pm)
- 10/22 Youth Event: Haunted Forest (Sat/4:00-8:00pm)
- 10/27 Trunk or Treat SET-UP (Fri/12:00-1:00pm)
- 10/27 Trunk or Treat at Sunrise Middle School (Fri/1:00-3:00pm)
- 10/27 Trunk or Treat CLEAN-UP (Fri/3:00-4:00pm)
- 10/27 Fools for Christ Fall Dinner Theater (Fri/7:00pm)
- 10/28 Fools for Christ Fall Dinner Theater (Sat/7:00pm)
- 10/29 Reformation/Rite of Conformation (Sunday/9:30am)
- 10/29 Confirmation Reception (Sun/10:30am)
- 10/30 Evergreen Team Meeting (Mon/7:00pm)
- 10/31 Christian Singles Lunch Bunch (Tues/11:30am)