



St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Catholic Church

views from the pews

How it all began . . .

St. Stephen's Choir goes Christmas Caroling

Sunday January 6th, 2018

Each year, our St. Stephen's choir heads out on a Sunday afternoon to bring the good news (through the ancient tradition of caroling) of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. This year was no different.

One does not have to be part of the choir, be a great singer or require music lessons to go caroling. All that is required is "a big heart filled with love for others".

This year St. Stephen's choir visited 4 care facilities, one hospital and 4 parishioners' homes. Sometimes parishioners may not have had the opportunity to be present at St. Stephen's church for a while or participate in the Christmas services. One of the medical staff at the hospital praised the choir saying..." Thank-you so very much...we just do not see enough of this and it means the world to our patients. Please come back again next year". As well, a guest who accompanied the choir this year commented..." the spirited singing captures the childlike spirit and inner joy of all who are present." On many occasions, gratitude was expressed with tears from those who expressed their appreciation.

When arriving at the homes of the parishioners (who requested carolers in advance), a "get ready call" is usually made to advise the family that the bus is on route to their home. When the bus arrives, the carolers ring bells and carry the Star of Bethlehem and sing their way up the steps into the front entrance or wherever the family wishes for them to sing. Over the 20-25-minute time frame, carols are sung, verses of the good news of the Christ child are recited and wishes of health and happiness for the New Year are extended to the family. A celebratory toast is sometimes offered by the families and welcomed by the choir...and then off to the next home visit.

When the day is over, the choir usually gathers at one of the choir members' homes and shares a warm meal and reflections of what was captured during the visits. One person shared...

"It was not about us today...it was about all of those individuals who so appreciated having someone to care for them and bring them the message of Christ. That is a part of our music ministry".

If you would like to join us next year, please see Linda in the loft and consider this your special invite.

Happy new year everyone!

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- ❖ Please continue to share your memories as they are important to our parish family.
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