

**Connecting People with Jesus...  
In Us... Among Us... Through Us**



# **ST. STEPHENS**

**LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL**

2304 Springs Road NE  
Hickory, NC 28601

Church: 828-256-9865  
[www.sslcms.org](http://www.sslcms.org)

School: 828-256-2166  
[www.sslwarriors.org](http://www.sslwarriors.org)

## **St. Stephens Staff**

David Ziehr, Pastor + Shea Pennington, Pastor

David Guelzow, Visitation Pastor + Tristan Jones, Vicar

Ross Chiles, Principal + Randall Cline, Youth Ministry

Donna Lee, Children's Ministry + Brandon Buff, Facilities and Technology

Robert Smith, Traditional Music Director + David Day, Praise Team Director

Jadi Gurganious, Mission Facilitator + Savannah Lee, Communication Coordinator

Sharon Maynor, Administrator + Tashia Fisher, Church Administrative Asst.

Debbi Becker, School Administrative Asst.

Tiffany Sigmon, Receptionist & Visitor Engagement Coordinator

Kristy Smith, New Member Coordinator

**Joining Jesus on His Mission**

**January 24 & 25, 2026**

## Welcome to Worship

We pray you will find the presence of God in our worship. We ask that all of our members and all guest to please print your name in the book passed along the pew before the offering. Guest, we encourage you to fill out a Connect Card also.

**Holy Communion:** We welcome all who have been instructed in the faith, who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and in the true presence of His body and blood in the sacrament. If you are a guest today and would like to participate in the Sacrament, please consult a pastor or elder beforehand with any questions. **We do offer white grape juice and gluten free bread for those who need it.**

**Children are welcome in our worship services.** As an alternative, a nursery for infants through 2 years old is available in Room #101. The nursery is staffed from 8am to 12pm on Sunday mornings. For assistance, please see an usher.

**Children's Worship** (preschool & early elementary) is offered in the choir room during the 10:30am worship. Children will be dismissed before the sermon and return for offering.

**Fire Exits:** In addition to the main entrance, fire exits are located on both sides of the chancel and are opened for quicker exit from the church after worship.

**Broadcast & Photography:** Just a reminder that our services are live streamed on YouTube and may include images of the congregation. St. Stephens Lutheran Church reserves the right to use any photograph/video taken at any service on church grounds or event sponsored by St. Stephens Lutheran Church. A person attending who does not wish to have their image recorded for distribution should make their wishes known to the photographer. By participating in a St. Stephens Lutheran Church service or event or by failing to notify your desire to not have your photograph used, you are agreeing to release and the use of your picture.

## Sunday School - 9:15am - 10:15am

For room location assistance, please see an usher.

Little Lambs /Preschool (3 & 4yrs) & Kinders:--- Ed Wing Riser Room---Martha Propst, Jane Guelzow, Sue Seabock & Cynthia Hewitt  
Kid Connect/ Grades 1 & 2:-----Ed Wing #222----- Andrea Trent  
Kid Connect/ Grades 3-5:-----Ed Wing #220 -----Teresa Ritchie  
Jr. High Life Group: Led by Randall & Shannon Cline-----Youth House  
Sr. High Life Group: Darel Reese & Jon Guelzow-----Youth House  
Young Adult Life Group: Led by Taryn Cline & Dalton Powell-----Peace House  
Adults: Led by Pastor/Vicar-----Scripture----- Fellowship Hall  
Adults-Men's Bible Study: Led by Dwight Hollar----Genesis----School Bldg. #108  
Adults: Led by Caleb Taylor/Katie Clontz-----Bible Lessons-----Choir Room  
Adults-Ladies: Led by Regina Propst-----"Is God Speaking to Me?" -----Parlor  
Adults - Led by Dean Ledbetter-----Eleven Days----- School Bldg. #109

## **Prayer on Entering**

Lord Jesus, You never rush past people in need, and You never overlook the ones the world ignores. Slow us down and help us to recognize divine disruptions. Teach us to open our lives, our schedules, and our tables to others. Reshape our hearts to value presence over productivity and people over programs. Lead us to be Your hands and feet in this world. In Your name we pray.

## **Greeters**

January 24th- Linda McNeely & Judy Buff

January 25th 8AM- Judy Gurganious

January 25th 10:30am - Tim & Tonya Boliek

January 31<sup>st</sup> - Cathy Drum & Brenda Little

February 1st 8am- Sharon Little

February 1st 10:30am- Micheal & Katie Vaughn

## **Communion Assistants**

January 25 10:30am - David Propst, Jon Guelzow, Tony Cook

February 1 8:00am - David Rittenhouse & Tony Spencer

## **Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am**

January 25 - Teresa Ritchie

February 1 - Shannon Cline

## **Our Response to God Last Week**

Last Sunday's Attendance - 537 (76, 109, 352) Sunday School - 150

General Fund: \$30,001.44 (Regular Offerings needed each week: \$30,392.22)

Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$4,048.27

School Endowment Fund: \$195.00

Church Expansion/Building Fund Funds Needed: \$4.4 Million

Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$1,061,421.81

Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$2,088,238.64

## Stay Connected to St. Stephens Lutheran

### SATURDAY

10:30am - Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion

### SUNDAY - NO EVENTS

### MONDAY - NO EVENTS

### TUESDAY

4:00pm - Lifegroup - Pastor Guelzow - Parlor

### **4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE**

5:00pm - Church Council - Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

### WEDNESDAY

10:00am - Women's Bible Study (Sonni Thornton) Youth House

10:30am - Rachel Circle - Youth House

1:00pm - Sr. Session - Conference Room

6:00pm Lifegroup (Paul Miller) - Youth House

### THURSDAY

10:30am - Lifegroup - (Larry Bowman) - Conference Room

### **NOON - BULLETIN & SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE**

1:30pm - SSLS Spelling Bee - Sanctuary

5:45pm - Handbell Choir - Sanctuary

7:00pm - Parish Choir - Sanctuary/Choir Room

7:00pm - Lifegroup - (Richard Starnes) - Parlor

### FRIDAY

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry - Youth House

2:00pm - Lifegroup - David Rittenhouse's

5:30pm - Halo Bible Study - Youth House

6:30pm - SSLS Winter Dance - Gym

### SATURDAY

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship

### SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship & Holy Communion

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am-Contemporary Worship

12:00 - 1:00pm - Confirmation Unit Check-In - Sanctuary

NO Pickle Ball

5:00-8:00pm - Jr. & Sr. High Hangtime - Youth House

6:00pm - Life Group (Dwight Hollar) - Conference Room



## **NO PICKLE BALL SUNDAY**

### **January 25 and FEBRUARY 1**



Starting this month, we will be using a new florist for our altar flowers. We are changing to Thistle Dew Nicely, located on Union Square. The phone number is 828-322-3242. The gentlemen's name is Leroy Kennedy.

## Youth News

*Building relationships in Christ to develop and strengthen faithful followers for life.*

### **Sunday Morning Bible Study (9:15 am):**

- Middle School (The Youth House side “B”)
- High School (The Youth House side “A”)

### **Mark Your Calendars!**

**1/25 NO Winter Jam 2026**

**2/1 | 5:00-8:00 PM Middle & High School Hang Time**

We continue our **You Live It** devotional series with another evening of food, connection, and faith-filled discussion in the Youth House. Each week builds on the last, helping students see how faith is lived out daily.

**2/8 | 12:00-4:00 PM Corner Table Backpack Program**

Hang out in the Youth House, grab some lunch, and then jump in to help pack food bags for local kids through the Backpack Program. It's an easy, hands-on way to serve others, have fun together, and make a real difference in our community!

**2/15 | 5:00-8:00 PM Middle & High School Hang Time**

We continue our **You Live It** devotional series with another evening of food, connection, and faith-filled discussion in the Youth House. Each week builds on the last, helping students see how faith is lived out daily.

**2/22 | 12:00-1:00 PM Confirmation - Unit Check-in**

Confirmation students and their families will meet in the sanctuary immediately following the 10:30 AM worship service. This is a chance to reflect on learning so far, ask questions, and stay connected as we continue this faith journey together.

### **Want to Get Connected?**

Parents and families are always encouraged to reach out with questions or to learn how to partner in their student's faith journey. Visit **[sslcms.org/youth](http://sslcms.org/youth)** for all the latest.



# Senior Session

Wednesday, January 28  
1:00pm  
in Conference Room

RSVP to Kristy Smith [ksmith@sslcms.org](mailto:ksmith@sslcms.org) by Friday, Jan. 23

Providing a focal point for aging resources, as well as opportunities designed to extend independent living and enrich the quality of life for older adults.

Presenter: Vickie Blevins, Executive Director

Have a devotional that you have loved?  
Looking for one to dig into this year?

Join us for a  
**Devotional Exchange**  
with fellowship and refreshments

**Sunday, February 15**  
following the 10:30 service



RSVP by Feb. 12 to Kristy at [ksmith@sslcms.org](mailto:ksmith@sslcms.org)



Join us for an evening at Narroway  
Christian Dinner Theater,  
Fort Mill, SC

**Wanna Go?**  
Sunday, March 29  
5:00pm  
(bus leaves SSLC at 3pm)

A deposit of  
\$25 is  
required to  
reserve your  
seat.

Cost: \$75  
(Ticket, dinner, & transportation)

RSVP by Feb. 28 to Kristy at  
[ksmith@sslcms.org](mailto:ksmith@sslcms.org)

## Children's Ministry

**Sunday Morning Bible Hour - 9:15-10:15am** Ed Wing

Preschool & Kinders: Riser Room

Grades 1 & 2: Ed Wing #222

Grades 3 - 5: Ed Wing #220

CPH Enduring Faith

**Children's Worship**

**10:30AM CONTEMPORARY SERVICE**

Preschool- 5th Grade

Meet in the choir room during the sermon

Opportunities to serve weekly



### **St. Stephens Lutheran School News**

Excellence in Education since 1943

**Make A Joyful Noise**

(Psalm 98:4)

School Board Members - Scott Clontz, Chairman, Erica Moretz, David Janisko, Kim Yancey, and Shawn Sigmon

**JANUARY**

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**ST STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

<b>JAN 26-30</b>	<b>BETA CLUB SNOWBALL FUNDRAISER</b>
<b>JAN 30</b>	<b>SPELLING BEE 1:30 PM SSLS WINTER DANCE 6:30 PM</b>

# NEW MEMBERS CLASS

Beginning Sunday, January 18 at 9:15am  
in the Conference Room.

RSVP to Tiffany at [Tsigmon@sslcms.org](mailto:Tsigmon@sslcms.org) or call the church office.

## Dean Hansen turns 75

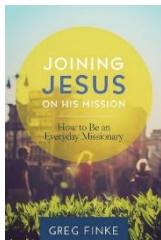
Dean Hansen, former Director of Christian Education (1992-2006) is turning 75 in early February. His daughter, Emily, would like to surprise him with a card shower. If you know Dean and his family, please send him well wishes for his milestone birthday. The cards can be sent to:

Emily Cotter  
Attn.: Dean  
419 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St.  
Freemont, NE 68025

## Mite Boxes

We learn in Galatians 6:10 that “as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” A simple way to do good is to save our coins placing them in LWML’s MITE boxes. These little boxes are always available in the narthex next to the office. Along with our prayers, our coins do a lot of good. Thanks to each of you who participate in this mission effort.

## Joining Jesus On His Mission



As we step into 2026, we embark on a shared journey of everyday mission. This January, we will be using *“Joining Jesus on His Mission: How to Be an Everyday Missionary”* by LCMS pastor Greg Finke. This engaging and practical book (along with video bible studies) will help us discover what it means to join Jesus in the places we already live, learn, work, and play.

Jesus is already at work in the lives of people around us—neighbors, co-workers, classmates, friends, and even strangers. Our calling is not to “add more to our plates,” but to recognize and join the mission He’s already carrying out. This is what it means to live out our **Core Values**:

- **We are Disciple-Makers** – The practice of everyday mission helps us grow in faith and nurture the faith of others.
- **We are Everyday Missionaries** – We believe we are called to connect people with Jesus exactly where we live, learn, work, and play.
- **We are Servant Leaders** – Jesus leads by serving; joining Him means loving and serving our neighbors in practical, real ways.
- **We are Kingdom-Driven** – Jesus is the heart of everything we do. As we follow Him, we seek His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Imagine what God can do as each of us joins Jesus right where we are! Over the coming months, we’ll explore practical ways to recognize His work and participate in it with joy. Whether at the dinner table, on the ball field, in the classroom, or at the office, Jesus is already on mission. He’s inviting you to join Him.

## Today's Readings

### Isaiah 9:1-4

9 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. 3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

### 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. 11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. 12 What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. Christ the Wisdom and Power of God 18 For the word of the cross is folly

to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

### Luke 19:1-10

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. 3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. 4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” 9 And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

# LET US PRAY FOR.....

## SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

CONFIRMANDS/PARENTS/MENTORS

SHAUEN & KRISTA TRUMP, Missionaries in Africa

TRINITY HMONG LUTHERAN CHURCH & PASTOR ZANG YANG

ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH in Marion, NC

OUR COMMUNITY, COUNTY, STATE, NATION, AND THE WORLD

FIRST RESPONDERS/FIRE FIGHTERS

POLICE/CIVIL SERVANTS

## PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

DAVID & SANDRA MCCRARY FAMILY. Their brother-in-law, Dan Kidd, was called to glory.

## PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

MARGARET DEAL

CAROLYN GARREN

PHIL GNADT

ANN BOWMAN, Conover Nursing & Rehab

## FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

DELANY JESSUP

SHARON JONES

JEFF & LORI KUYKENDALL

HOWARD & THETTA LAFFON

KEVIN & ERICA LINGERFELT & FAMILY

## HOSPITALIZED

PAM BENFIELD, fluid around heart, aunt of Randall Cline

DENNIS COMBS, FRMC, heart issues, Bobbie Flowers

## PRAYERS OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

The birth of **WESLEY SCOTT** to Evan Clontz & Karsen Schiffel on Jan. 15.

Grandson of Scott & Katie Clontz, great-grandson of David & Vickie Clontz, and great-great-grandson of Birdie & Elaine Kent.

## UPCOMING PROCEDURES

**LISA DAVIS**, upcoming cancer surgery, friend of Mark & Kim Bolick  
**JERRY RITCHIE**, upcoming hernia surgery, Winston 1/27  
**LEE DIETRICH**, ICU Charlotte, son-in-law of Pat Fredell  
**CYNTHIA HEWITT**, surgery 1/30

## PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

**DINKY EDDINS**, breast cancer  
**GIL BRAUCH**, cancer  
**ERVIN BOLICK**, cancer  
**LINDA TILLEY**, cancer  
**DELANEY JESSUP**, cancer  
**SHERRY NORRIS**, breast cancer  
**KAY WEAVER**, Squamous Cell (Skin) Cancer  
**SHARON JONES**  
**GERRY HOEKZEMA**, cancer, friend of Larry Bowman  
**JA'NEICE DAVIS**, cancer, neighbor of David & Martha Propst  
**EARL WYATT**, liver cancer, uncle of Chris Wyatt  
**MARIE BUFF**, cancer, wife of Jerry, sister-in-law of Rick & Judy  
**JOE MATHIS**, cancer, brother-in-law of Karen Shade  
**DONALD TRAVIS**, cancer, father of Justin Travis  
**LORI MILLS**, cancer, family of Keith Payne  
**JUDY MOSER**, chemo treatments starting next week at Duke, friend of Linda Fritz

## RECOVERING

**J P NELSON**, kidney transplant  
**PAM SIGMON**, health issues  
**JACK ROBERTS**, College Pines rehab/broken hip, husband of Dana  
**ALLEN CROWE**, health issues  
**JERRY FISHER**, health issues  
**MIKE DRUM**, heart issues  
**CINDY BRINN**, home recovering from eye surgery  
**LINDA LAIL**, Trinity Village, Rehab  
**KAGE HEFNER**, broken collar bone, grandson of Ken & Linda Tilley  
**MADISON STARNES**, blood clot in lung, daughter of Phillip & Sarah  
**REGGIE & SHERRY CRAIG**, health issues  
**DARRELL & CINDY RHAME**, health issues  
**MARSHA WATSON**, Trinity Village Rehab  
**KAREN SHADE**, home recovering  
**SPENCER RADKE**, recovering from a motocross accident, Rehab Chicago, son of Mark & Sharon  
**STEVE CAIN**, recovering at home  
**ERNIE HALL**, recovering at home