

**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

School: 828-256-2166
www.sslswarriors.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

Blueprint for Blessing

November 22 & 23, 2025

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-----2 Peter----School Bldg. #108
Adults: Led by Caleb Taylor/Katie Clontz-----Bible Lessons-----Choir Room
Adults-Ladies: Led by Regina Propst--*Thankfulness in the Old Testament*--Parlor
New Member Class-----Conference Room

Stay Connected to St. Stephens Lutheran

SATURDAY

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship & Holy Communion

SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am - Contemporary Worship & Holy Communion

3:00pm - Pickle Ball - Beginners and Families

4:00pm - Pickle Ball - Experienced Pickles

5:00-8:00pm - Youth - Manhunt - Youth House

6:00pm - Lifegroup (Dwight Hollar) - Conference Room

MONDAY

9:00am - Lifelight (Pastor Guelzow) - Conference Room

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

1:00pm - Ruth Circle - Peace House

7:00pm - Men's Bible Study - Youth House

TUESDAY

4:00pm - Lifegroup (Pastor Guelzow) - Parlor

NOON - BULLETIN & SCREENS DEADLINE

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY - NO SCHOOL - OFFICE CLOSED

10:30am - Thanksgiving Eve Worship & Holy Communion

NOON - CHURCH OFFICE CLOSSES

3:00 - 11:00pm - Youth - Operation Christmas Child - Boone

6:30pm - Thanksgiving Eve Worship & Holy Communion

THURSDAY - HAPPY THANKSGIVING

OFFICES CLOSED

FRIDAY

OFFICES CLOSED

5:30pm - Halo Bible Study - Youth House

SATURDAY

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship

SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship & Holy Communion

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am - Contemporary Worship

3:00pm - Pickle Ball - Beginners and Families

4:00pm - Pickle Ball - Experienced Pickles

6:00pm - Lifegroup (Dwight Hollar) - Conference Room

Prayer on Entering

Almighty and Everlasting God, You rule over all creation with justice, mercy, and truth. Throughout the ages, You raised up kings and made covenants pointing to the coming of Your Son, the true King who reigns not by power or politics but by grace and truth. In His first coming, He conquered sin and death; at His return, He will make all things new. Until that day, teach us to live as faithful citizens of His kingdom—trusting Your promises, following Your will, and proclaiming the hope of His reign and return; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Greeters

November 22nd – Brenda Little & Cathy Drum

November 23rd – 8am – Pat Wilson

November 23rd - 10:30am – Eric & Nikki Fisher

November 29th – Brent & Donna Townsend

November 30th – 8am – Gregg & Vickie Fletcher

November 30th - 10:30am – Michael & Katie Vaughn

Communion Assistants

November 23 10:30am – David Propst, Jon Guelzow, Tony Cook

November 30 8:00am – Steve Cain & David Pingel

Nursery Volunteers – 10:30 am

November 23 – Amy Crouch

November 30 – Cynthia Hewitt

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance – 577 (96, 114, 367) Sunday School – 147

General Fund: \$24,136.71 (Regular Offerings needed each week: \$28,306.91)

Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$9,822.69

School Endowment Fund: \$100

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

Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$1,947,467.13

Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$1,043,691.17



Thanksgiving Decorations

Altar Guild is in need of the following to decorate the altar for Thanksgiving.

- Home canned goods
- Pumpkins
- Gourds
- Fresh fruits/vegetables

Items should be dropped off to church office by Tuesday, Nov. 25

JOIN US FOR PICKLEBALL SUNDAY

3-4:30 PM
FAMILIES & BEGINNERS

4-6 PM
EXPERIENCED PICKLES



Wanna Go?

Tuesday, Dec. 9
6:30pm

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

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

A deposit of \$25 is required to reserve your seat.
RSVP by Nov. 20 to Kristy at ksmith@sslcms.org

Operation Christmas Elf

This year Operation Elf will bring Comfort and Joy to our community in a couple of ways. Check the bulletin board in the narthex for suggested gift items for the following organizations:

Trinity Village - a wish list of gift ideas for residents

Salvation Army / Corner Table / Cooperative Christian Ministries - we are entering a very cold season and hygiene bags are requested.

Tags will be ready on Wednesday, November 26 at Thanksgiving Eve services and next weekend services

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!

11/23 5-8p Manhunt!!!

Relax, refuel, and reconnect with food, friends, and faith-filled discussion in The Youth House! We'll dive into our U Matter series- because your life, your faith, and you matter to God. Then get ready to run for glory in an epic night of fun and friendly competition with Manhunt!

11/26 3p-11p Operation Christmas Child

Share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with children around the world by processing shoebox gifts. Sign-up and more information can be found @ www.sslcms.org/youth

12/7 3-9p Shop & Lights

We're heading out for an evening of fun, friends, and festive lights! First stop, Hanes Mall for dinner and holiday shopping. Then we'll make our way to Tanglewood Park to experience the spectacular Festival of Lights. Sign-up and more information can be found @ www.sslcms.org/youth

12/14 12p-1p Confirmation - Unit Check-in

Confirmation students and their families will meet in the sanctuary immediately after the 10:30 am worship service for the Confirmation Unit Check-in.

12/14 Youth Christmas Parties

Get ready for a fun, festive hangout with friends. We'll have Christmas music, games, and a Dirty Santa Gift Exchange (totally optional - \$10 max). Bring your favorite appetizer or dessert.

Middle School Party: 2-5 PM

High School Party: 6-9 PM

Looking to serve or want to learn more about Youth Ministry?
Visit sslcms.org/youth for all the latest.



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

NOV 26-28

THANKSGIVING BREAK
SCHOOL CLOSED

St. Stephens Lutheran School
Preschool and Kindergarten present:

Christmas in the Kitchen

Friday, December 5 - 7:00pm



Order in the Court!

is a mock trial being presented by
SSLS middle School

We are looking for **JURORS** on the
following "court" dates:

Monday, Dec. 15 (2:30-3:10)

Tuesday, Dec. 16 (1:40-3:10)

No law degree required – just a willingness to listen,
observe, and deliver a verdict. Join us in supporting our
students as they bring courtroom drama to life

Reserve your "juror" seat by emailing
kbutler@sslcms.org or call the school office at
256-9865



Cards For Homebound Members

Once again the Elizabeth Circle of LWML will be sending cards from our congregation to our home bound members. Please write the name(s) of the home bound member(s) on the outside of the envelope along with your name on the insides of the cards. You do not need to seal, as this makes the cards too difficult for our members to open. Secure them with a ribbon or rubber band and drop them in the marked bins in the narthex. Please keep them in alphabetical order by last name as it appears on the list. This expedites the sorting process. We will collect them and then deliver them along with a gift at Christmas to these members. This is a special joy for them to receive, and we hear how they keep them all year and do not throw them away. Please involve your children, Sunday School students or Lutheran School students, if possible. They love drawings from children, stickers, etc., even on the outside of the envelopes. The lists will be included in the bulletin or can be found in the welcome center in the narthex. We will begin sorting cards on Tuesday, December 2, and getting gifts ready to be distributed shortly thereafter. The deadline for having them back in will be Monday, December 1. Thank you in advance for your participation in this worthwhile project that will brighten Christmas for our homebound members.

Willine Austin
Allen Bolick
Ervin Bolick
Ann Bowman
Bob & Linda Carney
Ralph Cazire
Ruth Cook
Cassie Deal
Margaret Deal
Carolyn Garren
Phil Gnadt
Amy Hall
Nancy Hicks
Kay Hollar
Pat Hollar

Marie Huffman
Thelma Huffman
Martha Killian
Hazel Lovelace
Rebecca Moffett
Clark & Sherry Norris
Jean Rollins
Garner Settlemyre
Charles Shook
Betty Sigmon
Kay Weaver
Jo Wilhelm
Ruth Willis
Catherine Winkler

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



Children's Christmas Service
Saturday, Dec 20 5:30pm

We have begun preparing! Don't miss out on a chance to be a part of this special worship service.

Opportunities for musicians, singers, readers, & ushers. All ages welcome. Register and receive a worship t-shirt!





The LWML invites the congregation to join in Christmas caroling to our home bound members and those in care facilities. We will meet at 2:30pm on Sunday, December 7, in the Fellowship Hall to divide into groups and plan visitation. All ages are welcome with children 5th grade and

younger being accompanied by their parents. After caroling, we will return to the fellowship hall for cookies and hot chocolate. The choir and praise team members are encouraged to help lead groups in singing. If you would like to join in, please contact Regina Propst or Teresa Ritchie at lwmlpresident@sslcms.org, or Doris Sigmon at djssigmon@charter.net to register. Please join in to brighten Christmas for our special members.

5th Sunday Mite Box Collection

Our little Mite Boxes containing pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters provide funds for many mission projects. Our LWML emphasizes our giving each 5th weekend. As you drop coins in your Mite box, pray for those who will benefit. These gifts are tokens of our many blessings. The large Mite Box is always in the church narthex awaiting our contributions anytime.

Out of the Office

Pastor Shea will be out of the office November 20-23 performing a wedding in Florida and then will be on vacation November 24-29.

Rachel Circle

Rachel circle will not be meeting this month due to Thanksgiving preparations. Our Christmas party will be held on 12/10 following advent services. Please contact Sonni Thornton (919) 749-5881 for more information. Our 4th Wednesday schedule will resume on 1/28/26 at 10 am in the Youth House.

Wednesday Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible study is gearing up for a new series beginning 1/7/26. We meet weekly at 10:00 am at the Youth House. We would love to have you join us! Please contact Sonni Thornton at (919) 749-5881 for more information.

Today's Readings

Psalm 84:1-4; 10-12

84 How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! 2 My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. 3 Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. 4 Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise! Selah

10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly. 12 O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!

Revelation 21:1-6

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

Mark 1:1-15

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, 3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" 4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." 9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." 12 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. 13 And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him. 14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER
ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL
LWML & LLL
SHAUEN & KRISTA TRUMP, Missionaries in Africa
TRINITY HMONG LUTHERAN CHURCH & PASTOR ZANG YANG
OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH in Hickory, NC
OUR COMMUNITY, COUNTY, STATE, NATION, AND THE WORLD
FIRST RESPONDERS & CIVIL SERVANTS
FIRE FIGHTERS & POLICE

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

CAROLYN GARREN
PHIL GNADT
AMY HALL

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

VONDA HODUN FAMILY
MIKE & LEEANNE HOKE FAMILY
DENNIS & RHONDA HULL FAMILY
BIRDIE & ELAINE KENT
JOSH & AMBER KILLIAN FAMILY

PRAYER OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

WAYNE & JANIE KIRBY, who celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on November 24.

MARK & DEB KASTNER, who celebrate their 48th wedding anniversary on November 26.

The marriage of **HOLLY BARRINGER** to **KEVIN MARKHAM** on November 22nd.

The birth of **OAKELY MAE HINSON** on November 17 to Keaton & Leah. Proud great-grandmother is Harolene Setzer.

HOSPICE CARE

CONNIE ZIEHR, Pastor Dave's mother

HOSPITALIZED

RUBY HALL, High Point Medical, recovering from surgery

TIMOTHY MARTIN, Baptist, recovering from bypass surgery

PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

DINKY EDDINS, breast cancer

GIL BRAUCH, cancer

ROBYN DRUM BOLEMAN, acute leukemia

ERVIN BOLICK, cancer & recovering from a fall/compression fracture in spine

LINDA TILLEY, cancer

DELANEY JESSUP, cancer

SHERRY NORRIS, breast cancer

KAY WEAVER, Squamous Cell (Skin) Cancer

SHARON JONES

SALLY RADER, treatment for mold/autoimmune illness

JIM SETZER, cancer, friend of Bob & Marsha Watson

DEBBIE, cancer, awaiting test, friend of Coach Mike Davis

PATSY BURGESS, pancreatic cancer, friend of Ronda Reid

MANDY FREELAND, breast cancer, neighbor/friend of the VonDohlens

RECOVERING

KEN & KATHY MORETZ

DIANE DAVIS, eye issues

SHARON RADKE, home recovering from shoulder surgery

BOBBY HOLLAR, eye issues

MATT HAMBY, health issues

ALLEN LIPPARD, recovering from a stroke, father of Shannon Cline

CHERYL FRYE, health issues

BARBARA POPE, health issues, sister of Linda Carney

J P NELSON, kidney transplant

DEAN LEDBETTER, kidney donor

ANDREW SHELL, Trinity Village, father of Devon Payne

KENNETH VESPER, rehab, St. Louis, brother-in-law of David Pingel

DOROTHY WILLIS, broken hip, grandmother of Eric Moretz

SHERRY CRAIG, health issues

JOE BURNS, health issues/upcoming surgery in January on veins in his arms, grandson of Helen Suttlemyre