

**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

Second Sunday of Advent

December 6 & 7, 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-----*The Wonder of Christmas*-----Parlor

Prayer on Entering

O merciful Lord, grant to us the wisdom of Your Spirit and the blessing of faithful voices, that they may call us to prepare for the coming One and so that all who have heard Your Word and have been baptized into Christ may be preserved from evil, be counted worthy in Christ to be delivered into Your eternal kingdom, and be kept to the day of His coming at the end of all things; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and to the end of the ages. Amen.

Flowers

Flowers placed at the altar are given to the glory of God by Tom & Kristy Smith in honor and celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary on December 7.

Flowers on the altar last week were given to the glory of God in honor and celebration of Joye Hollar's birthday on December 3 by Terry Hollar.

Greeters

December 6th - Chris, Danyelle & Connor Wyatt

December 7th - 8am - Sharon Little

December 7th - 10:30am - Tim & Tonya Boliek

December 13th - Keith & Sue Binns

December 14th - 8am - Judy Gurganious

December 14th - 10:30am - Eric & Nikki Fisher

Communion Assistants

December 7 8:00am - James Fogle & Dwight Hollar

December 14 - 10:30am - Chris Barringer, Eric Kent, Eddie Warren

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

December 7 - Betsy & Lila Hendrix

December 14 - Teresa Ritchie

Stay Connected to St. Stephens Lutheran

SATURDAY

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship

SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship & Holy Communion

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am-Contemporary Worship

2:30pm - Cookies and Carols

3:00pm - 6:00pm - Pickle Ball - Open Court

3:00 - 9:00pm - Youth - Shop and Lights

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

MONDAY

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

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

6:00pm - School Board - Science Room

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

TUESDAY

1:00pm - Elizabeth Circle - Conference Room

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

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

5:30pm - Elders - Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY

10:30am - Mid-Week Advent Service

6:30pm - Mid-Week Advent Service

THURSDAY

NOON - BULLETIN & SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE

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

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

7:00pm - SSLS Upper Grade Christmas Program - Gym

SATURDAY

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship & Holy Communion

SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am-Contemporary Worship & Holy Communion

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

2:00-5:00pm - Middle School Youth Party - Youth House

3:00pm - 6:00pm - Pickle Ball - Open Court

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

6:00-9:00pm - High School Youth Party - Youth House



Operation ELF

Help us bring comfort and joy to our community.

Tags are available on the A-frame bulletin board in the narthex . Please return gifts by Dec. 14

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!

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.

JOIN US FOR
PICKLEBALL
SUNDAY

3-6 PM

ALL PICKLES WELCOME



Looking to serve this holiday season? Individuals and families can join us in making a difference.

*Parents must stay, this is not a drop off event.

Who can serve: 4 yr. old and older

When: Sunday, December 14

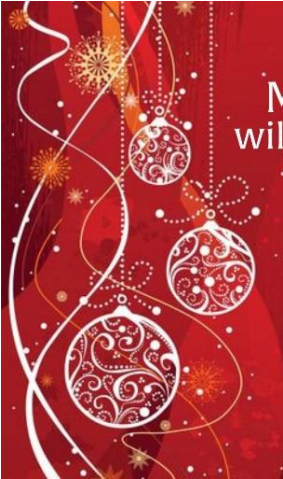
Time: 2pm-3:30pm

Location: 1925 Tate Blvd SE

To help with planning, please RSVP to Jadi in the church office by 12/12 if you plan to attend.

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 507 (77, 101, 329) Sunday School - 142
General Fund: \$21,024.55 (Regular Offerings needed each week: \$28,306.91)
Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$34,251.35
School Endowment Fund: \$195.00
Church Expansion/Building Fund Funds Needed: \$4.4 Million
Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$2,000,975.05
Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$1,043,691.17



Christmas
Memorials or Honorariums
will support the General Fund of St.
Stephens Lutheran Church.

Forms are located on the
welcome desk and can be
turned in there.

Deadline for memorials is Dec. 15



YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS
must be turned in by
DECEMBER 31
or postmarked on
DECEMBER 31.

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,
December 20th
5:30pm**

Cookie reception to
follow service



Thank You

Thank you to Allen Killian, David and Helen Janisko, Vickie Clontz, Barbara Underwood, Savannah Lee and Pat Wilson for your donations and help in decorating the altar for our thanksgiving services. It is deeply appreciated.

Cemetery Updates For 2026

On January 1, 2026 cemetery plots will see an increase in price. The cost of a cemetery plot is for the perpetual care, long term maintenance of the grounds.

Church members - \$400

Non-Members who currently own a plot - \$1,300

Lost and Found

A neckless was found in the church parking lot a couple of weeks ago. If it is yours, please call or come by the church office and describe it to us.

Attention Ladies

Ladies of the church are invited to the women's Sunday school class that meets in the parlor at 9:15 AM each Sunday. We are currently completing an Advent study and will start a new book Is God Speaking to Me? by Lysa Terkeurst in January.

2026 Offering Envelopes

The 2026 offering envelopes are out in the narthex to pick up. They are in numerical order. A list is provided if you do not remember your number. **If you are an online giver, you will not have offering envelopes.** If you have questions about your offering envelopes, please call Tashia at the church office.



COOKIES AND CAROLS

Sunday, December 7



Please be at the church
at 2:30pm so we can
divide and conquer
at 3pm.



We will finish at the church
with cookies, and hot cocoa.

Advent 2025

MIDWEEK SERVICE

10:30 AM

6:30 PM

12/3 • 12/10 • 12/17

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES:

7 PM CONTEMPORARY CANDLELIGHT

10 PM TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE:

10 AM WITH HOLY COMMUNION



CHRISTMAS SPIRIT Weekend

WEAR YOUR FAVORITE OR UGLY SWEATER

DECEMBER 20 / 21

Also, bring in a non-perishable food item for the Backpack Outreach





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



(Viewmont)

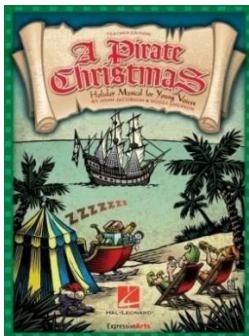


SPIRIT NIGHT

Tuesday, December 9
5 - 8 PM

Dine in, Carry Out or Order online





St. Stephens Lutheran School

1st - 8th grade present

A PIRATE CHRISTMAS

Friday, Dec. 12
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
kbutter@sslcs.org or call the school office at
256-9865

DECEMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

ST STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

DEC 9

**CHICK-FIL-A SPIRIT NIGHT (VIEWMONT)
DINE-IN ONLY 5 PM - 8 PM**

DEC 12

**1ST-8TH GRADE
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 7 PM**

DEC 19

**EARLY DISMISSAL
11:30 AM PICK UP**

DEC 22- 31

**CHRISTMAS BREAK
SCHOOL CLOSED**

*Merry
Christmas*

Today's Readings

Isaiah 11:1-10

11 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 2 And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, 4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. 6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. 9 They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. 10 In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

Romans 15:4-13

4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles 8 For I tell you that Christ

became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name." 10 And again it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." 11 And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him." 12 And again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope." 13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Matthew 3:1-12

3 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" 4 Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. 10 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

PARISH CHOIR & PRAISE TEAM

SHAUN & 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 & CIVIL SERVANTS

FIRE FIGHTERS & POLICE

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

FAMILY OF ROBYN DRUM BOLEMAN. Robyn was called to glory on 11/29.

VICKIE LAY & FAMILY. Danny was called to glory on 11/28.

PASTOR ZIEHR & FAMILY. His mother, Connie, was called to glory on 12/2.

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

MARIE HUFFMAN

THELMA HUFFMAN

MARTHA KILLIAN

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

SADIE FLOWERS

SALLY RADER

SHEA & HOLLY PENNINGTON

COREY & KRISTIN BOLLING FAMILY

ELIZABETH & AARON BACHELDER FAMILY

PRAYER OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

The baptism of **SARAH RUTH BUTLER**, daughter of Garry & Jessica, on 12/ 7.

Her sponsors are Daniel & Lisa Hassler.

BOB & HELEN MILLER, who will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on 12/7

HOSPITALIZED

RUBY HALL, High Point Medical, recovering from surgery

KATHY BOLIEK, Baptist Hospital, recovering from burns on her feet

MICHAEL RINK, health issues, friend of Allen Killian

PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

DINKY EDDINS, breast cancer

GIL BRAUCH, cancer

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

JOANN FOX MOSER, cancer, friend of Pat Hovis

RECOVERING

KEN & KATHY MORETZ

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

J P NELSON, kidney transplant

DEAN LEDBETTER, kidney donor

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

DOROTHY WILLIS, broken hip, grandmother of Erica Moretz

SHERRY CRAIG, health issues

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

RICK HERMAN, recovering from a heart attack, brother-in-law of Dave & Diane Guelzow

TIMOTHY MARTIN, recovering from bypass surgery

DORIS HOLLAR, Trinity Ridge, recovering from a fall

PHIL PRIOLA, failing health, father-in-law of Mrs. Priola, SSLS teacher

PAM SIGMON, health issues

ALAN YANCEY, recovering from sinus surgery

JACK ROBERTS, fall/broken hip, husband of Dana

EUGENE LANDIS, son of Nancy Hicks

STEPHANIE STOVAL, pneumonia, friend of David & Martha Propst and Lynne & Kevin Carpenter

BRANDON JOHNSON, suspicion of a heart attack, son of Cindy & Doug

HARRY MILLER, recovering from a cinder block being thrown off the overpass, family friend of Cindy & Doug Johnson

