

**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

Season of Lent

March 14 & 15, 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 - Led by Dean Ledbetter-----Eleven Days----- School Bldg. #109
Adults-Ladies Led by Regina Propst & Cindy Brinn:
In His Image by Jen Wilkin-----Parlor

Prayer on Entering

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Greeters

Flowers placed at the altar are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Michael Bolick by Linda Bolick & family

Greeters

March 14th - Cathy Drum & Linda McNeely
March 15th 8am - Jason & Faye Honeycutt
March 16^h 10:30am - April Drake

March 21st- Brent & Donna Townsend
March 22nd 8am- Gregg & Vickie Fletcher
March 22nd 10:30am- Eric & Nikki Fisher

Communion Assistants

March 15 8:00am - James Fogle & Tony Spencer
March 22 10:30am - David Propst, Jon Guelzow, Tony Cook

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

March 15 - Shannon Cline March 22 - Sheila Poovey

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 513 (73, 91, 349) Sunday School - 125
General Fund: \$33,491.65 (Regular Offerings needed each week: \$30,392.22)
Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$89,985.68
School Endowment Fund: \$205.00
Church Expansion/Building Fund Funds Needed: \$4.4 Million
Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$349,700.49
Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$2,831,143.80

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

12:00-4:00pm - Jr/Sr High Youth - Corner Table

3:00-6:00pm - Pickle Ball

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

MONDAY - NO SCHOOL

9:00am - Lighthouse - Pastor Guelzow - Conference Room

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

11:30am - Building Committee Meeting - Conference Room

1:00pm - Esther Circle - Conference Room

6:00pm - After the Boxes - Conference Room

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

TUESDAY

4:00pm - Lifegroup - Pastor Guelzow - Parlor

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

5:15pm - Finance - Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY

10:30am - Mid-Week Lenten Service

6:30pm - Mid-Week Lenten Service

THURSDAY

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

NOON - BULLETIN & SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE

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

SATURDAY

7:30am - LLL Men's Club Breakfast & Meeting - Fellowship Hall

10:00am - Mystery Theater Set Up - gym

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 Check In

NO Pickle Ball

4:00pm - Mystery Theater - Gym

LCMS Foundation

We live in an “I can do it myself” culture. The truth is that with creating a Christian estate plan, we need an entire team, to assist us to make sure that our plan is well grounded. Being tax-wise is essential in an estate plan so that you are caring for the family you love and ministries you care about. This can require that you talk with your accountant/tax preparer, to advise you, based on your current tax realities, and what impact a charitable gift today or in the future will have. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can get you started thinking about this topic, helping you to know what questions to ask your tax advisor. Contact our Southeastern District Gift Planning Counselor, Pastor John Denninger at John.Denninger@LFND.org.

Thank You - Chili Cook Off

A huge thank you to everyone who entered chili, donated desserts, volunteered, and participated in the auction. It was a great time of food, fellowship, and fun for our church family.

We had 10 chili entries and 24 desserts auctioned, and together we raised \$3,900 to support upcoming youth retreats and mission opportunities. Your generosity helps make these faith-building experiences possible for our students.

Thank you for continuing to support the Youth Ministry here at St. Stephens.

Randall Cline
Director of Youth Ministries

Chili Cook-Off Winners:

- 🔥 Spiciest: Eddie Warren - *Ghostly Gumbo*
- 🍕 Most Creative: Teri Cain - *Pizza Chili*
- 🏆 Best Overall: Randall Cline - *Ale Yeah Beef Chili*
- 🍴 People's Choice: Amy Buff - *Sweet Heat*

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!

3/15 | 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!

3/22 | 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.

3/22 | 3:00-7:00 PM Mystery & Dinner Theater

The Alaska Mission Team is hosting a Mystery & Dinner Theater, and needs your help to make it a great night! We're looking for student volunteers to help with set-up, serving, and clean-up after the play. Contact Jadi or Randall for more information.

4/24-4/26 SED Middle School Youth Gathering

6th–8th graders, don't miss this gathering! Join us in Williamsburg for an epic weekend of friends, worship, games, and unforgettable moments. This is one you'll be talking about all year. Sign up and more information at: sslcms.org/youth

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 for all the latest.

Ladies! Are you new to the area?

Join us for a Women's Newcomer Group

Monday, March 16

6:00pm

(in St. Stephens Lutheran Church
and School Conference Room)

**Register TODAY with Kristy
at ksmith@sslcms.org**

Do not need to be a member of
the church to attend.



Looking to spend a Sunday serving? 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, March 29

Time: 2pm-3:30pm

Location: 1925 Tate Blvd SE

To help with planning, please RSVP to Jodi in the church office by 3/27 if you plan to attend

**JOIN US FOR
PICKLEBALL
SUNDAY**

3-6 PM
ALL PICKLES WELCOME



NO PICKLE BALL SUNDAY, MARCH 22 DUE TO THE MYSTERY THEATER



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

Up-Coming Events:

March 16 - School Closed - Spring Break

March 19 - Spring Picture Day
Geography Bee - 1pm

March 27 - Muffins With mom - 7:15am
WACP Dress Down Day

St. Stephens Lutheran Church & School
Alaska Mission team presents



Sunday, March 22
4pm

Tickets
Adult - \$25
Students - \$10

Proceeds benefit the
Alaska Mission team

Tickets on sale in the school foyer or in the church office.
Purchase with cash, check, card or Venmo.

Please join us on Sunday, March 22 at 4pm the St. Stephens Lutheran Church & School for a Mystery Theater & Dinner "The Conundrum on the Crackerjack Cruise". The script is family friendly. The cast includes: Rachel Wilson, April Drake, Sheila Poovey, Heather Poovey, Randall & Shannon Cline, Micheal & Katie Vaughn, Bobby Butler, & Wayne Auton

Volunteers Needed
Help us assemble furniture for the
New Building

As we are preparing to move into our new office building, we have an exciting opportunity for you to help! Many of the desks, cabinets, and furnishings for the new space require careful—and sometimes complex—assembly. Because of this, we are specifically looking for individuals who are handy and comfortable assembling furniture and similar items. If you have experience with tools and enjoy putting things together, your help would be a tremendous blessing. We are also trying to determine who may be available during business hours and who might be able to help after hours. If you are interested in serving in this way, please contact Pastor Shea at spennington@sslcms.org or call the church office. Thank you for helping us move into our new Mission & Ministry Center!

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

IMPORTANT

Temporary Change Starting March 23

Starting Monday, March 23, the School Office will be relocated, temporarily, to the Parlor. As part of phase 2 in the construction phase, the School Office will be remodeled. They will start demoing the week of Easter Break.

With that, all Church groups that use the parlor, will be temporarily moved to other locations for the rest of the school year.

Starting the week of March 29th:

- Women's Sunday School class will meet in Class Room #110 of the school
- Pastor Guelzow's Tuesday afternoon Lifegroup will meet in the Conference Room
- Larry Bowman's VDC Group will meet in the Conference Room
- Richard Starnes' Lifegroup will meet in the Conference Room.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience during this next phase of construction.





**Bazaar
9am
to
1pm**

**LWML
Salad Luncheon
Saturday, April 11
11am-1pm**

**Adults - \$12
Children 12 & under - \$5**

Choose from a variety of salads (pasta, meat, vegetable, fruit) all prepared by the ladies of our congregation.

Proceeds from the Salad Luncheon and Bazaar benefit the missions of LWML.



ST. STEPHENS
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

2304 Springs Rd. | Hickory, NC 28601 | www.sslcms.org



**COMFORT DOG MINISTRY
PLANT
SALE**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25TH
9AM-2PM**

GERANIUM PRESALE BEGINS MARCH 28
BEFORE AND AFTER ALL SERVICES

\$9 FOR 6" \$17 FOR 10"



A New Church Plant in West Jefferson

We are excited to share that efforts are underway to plant a new LCMS church in the West Jefferson area. With the support of our Southeastern District and Circuit congregations, this mission seeks to bring the ministry of Word and Sacrament to a growing region with many unchurched people.

Two retired LCMS pastors, Rev. David Hudak and Rev. Fred Hoffman, have graciously offered to assist with this new mission, and several Lutheran families already living in the area are eager to help establish this congregation. The church plant hopes to serve communities across Ashe and Alleghany Counties and surrounding areas, including West Jefferson, Jefferson, Lansing, Sparta, Creston, Grassy Creek, and even some nearby towns in Tennessee and Virginia.

You can support this new mission in two ways: First, please keep this church plant in your prayers. Second, if you have family or friends who live in or near the area and may be interested in learning more, please share their contact information with Pastor Bryan Chestnutt at: <pastorbryan.mtnsideluth@gmail.com>.

Together, we pray that the Lord will bless this new congregation as it grows, serves for His glory, and spreads the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Fellowship Hall & Gymnasium
All are welcome! Invite friends!
Preschool & Elementary Egg Hunts begin at 11am
RAIN OR SHINE EVENT
(all activities inside if raining)

Volunteers & Donations Needed

Needed: Hospitality Team, Craft/Activity Station Volunteers, & Prep Team (filling eggs before event)

Donations of candy for eggs or prefilled eggs needed.

AMAZON WISH LIST :





HOLY WEEK

Palm Saturday - March 28th

5:30pm - Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion

Palm Sunday - March 29th

8am - Traditional Worship

10:30am - Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday - April 2nd

10:30am - Traditional Worship with Holy Communion

6:30pm - Traditional Worship with Holy Communion

Good Friday - April 3rd

10:30am - Traditional Worship

6:30pm - Traditional Worship

Easter Saturday - April 4th

10am - Eggstravaganza

5:30pm - Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion

Easter Sunday - April 5th

7am - Traditional Worship with Holy Communion

10:30am - Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion

Today's Readings

Isaiah 42:14-21

14 For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. 15 I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn the rivers into islands, and dry up the pools. 16 And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. 17 They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, "You are our gods." 18 Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! 19 Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the Lord? 20 He sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear. 21 The Lord, was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

Ephesians 5:8-14

8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

John 9:1-7; 13-17

9 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth
2 And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud 7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

FINANCE & FACILITY

SHAUEN & KRISTA TRUMP, Missionaries in Africa

TRINITY HMONG LUTHERAN CHURCH & PASTOR ZANG YANG

ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

FIRST RESPONDERS/FIRE FIGHTERS

POLICE/CIVIL SERVANTS

CHRISTIE LORH-SAPP, former Pastor of St. Andrews, now serving with her family in Tel Aviv, Israel

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

BOB WATSON, JEFF WATSON, GENA SMITH & DELANEY JESSUP. Marsha was called to glory on March 9.

RICK & TAMMY BUFF FAMILY. Tammy's mother, Helen Sullivan, passed away on March 11.

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

ANN BOWMAN

RALPH CAZIRE

RUTH COOK

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

ADAM & NICOLE COFFEY FAMILY

KATRINA CONWELL

ROBERT & REGINA PROPST

DAVID & JENNIFER ECKARD FAMILY

NANCY HICKS

HOSPICE CARE

RICK EASTMAN, Washington State, brother of Judy Gurganious

HOSPITALIZED

ODESSA PAYNE, ICU Texas, mother of Keith Payne

UPCOMING PROCEDURES

EARL WYATT, upcoming surgery to remove cancer from his liver on 3/17, uncle of Chris Wyatt

HOSPITALIZED

JAY HYATT, hospitalized in Charlotte, recovering from being hit by a car, brother-in-law of Jimmy LaFrances

LINH HUYNK, brain aneurysm, ICU Baptist, friend of Angela Isenhour

PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

DINKY EDDINS, breast cancer

GIL BRAUCH, cancer

ERVIN BOLICK, cancer

LINDA TILLEY, cancer

DELANEY JESSUP, cancer

KAY WEAVER, Squamous Cell (Skin) Cancer

SHARON JONES

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 at Duke, friend of Linda Fritz

BRANDON MOOSE, diabetic neuropathy in eyes, friend of Sheila Poovey

DARNELL MITCHEL, pancreatic cancer, friend of Kim Cline

JOE STEELE, cancer, friend of J P Nelson

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, son of Teri Cain

RECOVERING

JERRY RITCHIE, home recovering

LEE DIETRICH, son-in-law of Pat Fredell

DAVID CLONINGER, son of Donna Townsend

CAROL HEFNER, recovering from a car wreck, Cedar Hills

BOBBY CLARKE, health issues

ADDIE PARISH, recovering from surgery, granddaughter of Gary & Kim Pruitt

KEVIN CARPENTER, health issues

TODD ROBBINS, health issues, co-worker of Kevin Carpenter

TERESA RITCHIE, recovering from eye surgery