

**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

3rd Sunday of Easter

April 18 & 19, 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-----School Bldg. #110

Prayer on Entering

Risen Lord, to You be all glory, honor and praise. We pray that Your message of salvation is joyfully proclaimed throughout the world and that the Easter Victory won for us is celebrated around the globe; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Flowers

The flowers at the altar are give to the glory of God in loving memory of Marsha Watson by Bob and family.

Greeters

April 18th - Linda McNeely & Judy Buff
April 19th 8am - Pat Wilson
April 19th 10:30am - Michael & Katie Vaughn

April 25th- Brent & Donna Townsend
April 26th 8am- Jason & Faye Honeycutt
April 26th 10:30am- Tim & Tonya Boliek

Communion Assistants

April 19 8:00am - Dwight Hollar & Tony Spencer
April 26 10:30am - Chris Barringer, Eric Kent, Eddie Warren

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

April 19 - Sheila Poovey April 26 - Shannon Cline

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 485 (81, 90, 314) Sunday School - 132
General Fund: \$21,604.08 (Regular Offer. needed each week: \$30,392.22)
Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$3,161.73
School Endowment Fund: \$195.00
Church Expansion/Building Fund Funds Needed: \$4.4 Million
Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$106,262.60
Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$3,272,675.62

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

3:00-6:00pm - Pickle Ball

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

MONDAY

9:00am - Lifelight - Conference Room

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

1:00pm - Esther Circle - Conference Room

6:00pm - After the Boxes - Conference Room

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

TUESDAY

1:00pm - Elizabeth Circle - Conference Room

4:00pm - Life Group (Pastor Guelzow) - Conference Room

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

5:15pm - Finance Board - Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY

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

6:00pm - Life Group (Paul Miller) Youth Modular

THURSDAY

10:30am - Life Group (Larry Bowman) - Conference Room

NOON - BULLETIN & SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE

5:45pm - Handbell Team - Sanctuary

7:00pm - Life Group (Richard Starnes) Youth Modular

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

FRIDAY

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

2:00pm - Life Group - David Rittenhouse's

5:30pm - Halo Bible Study - Youth Modular

SATURDAY

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship

SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship & Holy Communion

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am - Contemporary Worship

3:00-6:00pm - Pickle Ball

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

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who helped make the LWML Salad Luncheon and Bazaar a success! Thank you for making salads, helping us to decorate, serving, and cleaning up. Most of all, thank you for coming to enjoy the day with us. All proceeds help us support missions in our church, community, and beyond.

A Special Thank you to Pastor Shea Pennington, Pastor David Ziehr, Randall Cline, Brandon Buff, Vicar Tristan Jones, Gary Coble, Eric Kent, Danny Mecimore & Tony Cook for assisting with relocation of office cabinets to the Creative Arts Room. I am very grateful for the support and sweat equity that you invested in upgrading our church & school space. - Donna Lee

 **SSLS
BETA CLUB**

**CAN
DRIVE**

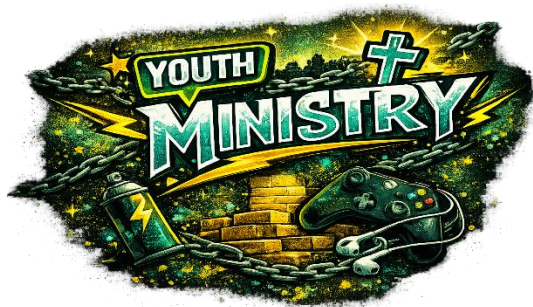


**GOAL:
800!**

**CANNED VEGGIES, SOUP, FRUITS, MEATS, ETC.
ALSO, YOU MAY BRING IN ANY
NON-PERISHABLE FOOD**

Items can be dropped off in the designated bins in the Narthex by **May 1**.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE CORNER TABLE - BACKPACK PROGRAM



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

Sunday Morning LifeGroup | 9:15am | Youth House

Mark Your Calendars!



4/24-4/26 **SED Middle School Youth Gathering**
Please keep our middle school students and leaders in your prayers as they prepare for their upcoming trip. Pray for safe travel, strong friendships, and growth in faith.



5/3 | **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 their learning so far, ask questions, and stay connected as we continue this journey of faith together.



5/3 | **5:00-8:00 PM ManHunt!!! - The Wise Survive**
Life isn't just about speed—it's about wisdom. The ones who pause, think, and choose wisely are the ones who make it. Join us for a night where strategy beats instinct and wisdom makes the difference... Then step into the game: MANHUNT!!! Will you survive?



5/15 | **5:00-10:00 PM The Corner Table Gala Fundraiser**
Be part of The Corner Table Gala fundraiser supporting their mission to feed those in need in our community. Students will help serve drinks, run game stations, and make the night awesome! Interested? Contact me for more details.

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.

SAVE-THE-DATE

**Congregational Meeting
with Building Dedication**

MAY 17

Candidates for President (Vote for 1):

Eric Kent
Kirk Hymes

Candidates for School Board (Vote for 1):

Garry Butler
Erica Moretz

Candidates for Finance & Facility (Vote for 2):

Jennifer Eckard
John Link
C E Moser

Candidate for School Endowment Fund (Vote for 1):

Cheryl Frye

Candidates for Nominating Committee (Vote for 1):

Diane Maynor
Barbara Underwood

Candidates for Elders (Vote for each individually):

Keith Binns, Tim Boliek, Tony Cook, Coach Mike Davis, David Eckard, Mike Hoke, Mark Kastner, Eric Kent, Andrew McLain, Ralph Mueller, Scott Plassman, Darel Reese, Kevin Sherrill, Tony Spencer, Phillip Starnes, & Bob Vogt



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

Temporary School office is located in the Church Parlor. This is a temporary move for the rest of the school year and summer, until the current school office is complete. This will not change any pickup or drop procedures; the school will continue as it has been all school year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

APRIL 21-24

8TH GRADE DC TRIP

APRIL 28

WAPC WALK-A-THON

APRIL 30

**SSLS SPRING FINE ARTS PROGRAM
1:00PM**

Workdays for Camp Linn Haven

Dates: Saturdays, April. 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16 • 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Description: Volunteer days to prepare camp for the season – cleaning, maintenance, setting up.

Who Can Attend: Adults & student volunteers.

Cost: Free to help with lunch provided.

Forms/Deposit: Contact camp manager for details and to sign up.

Youth & Leaders Travel to Belize

This July, 15 of our youth and leaders will travel to Belize with the LCMS. This trip will help students grow in faith, serve others, and consider how God may be calling them into church work. We'd appreciate your prayers and, if you feel led, your financial support as we prepare and go.

Women's Wednesday Bible Study

It's not too late to join the women's Wednesday morning Bible study on the Book of James, 10:00am in the Youth House. We will spend time in God's Word, encouraging one another and growing in faith. The study will run through May 20.

Please bring a study Bible and a composition notebook.

RSVP: Sonni Thornton - (919)-749-5881

District LWML Convention

Join the LWML for the 70th Biennial District LWML Convention of the Carolinas May 1 - 2 at **St. Peter's Lutheran Church - Conover**. Friday events include registration beginning at 4pm, fellowship, exhibits, worship service with Holy Communion at 7pm, followed by a President's Reception. Saturday's activities begin with registration from 8-9am, Bible study, program, lunch, exhibits, and business with adjournment at 3pm. All women are welcome to attend. Registration is required. How can you register? See Regina Propst or Teresa Ritchie, pickup a form at the welcome center in the narthex or you can visit www.lwmlcarolinas.org.



**70th Biennial
Carolinas District
LWML Convention**

May 1-2, 2026

St. Peters Lutheran Church

Guest Speaker:
Teirsa Lane, Camp Linn Haven Director

Register TODAY! Contact Regina Propst or Teresa Ritchie
or visit www.lwmlcarolinas.org

**JOIN US FOR
PICKLEBALL
SUNDAY**

3-6 PM
ALL PICKLES WELCOME



COMFORT DOG MINISTRY

PLANT SALE



FAITH COMFORT DOG

SATURDAY,
APRIL 25TH
9AM-2PM

GERANIUM PRE-SALE
BEFORE AND AFTER ALL
SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL
FOYER

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



ARE YOU READY FOR PLANTING SEASON?
COME AND CHOOSE FROM A VARIETY OF PLANTS
FOR YOUR VEGETABLE OR FLOWER GARDEN.



ST. STEPHENS
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

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

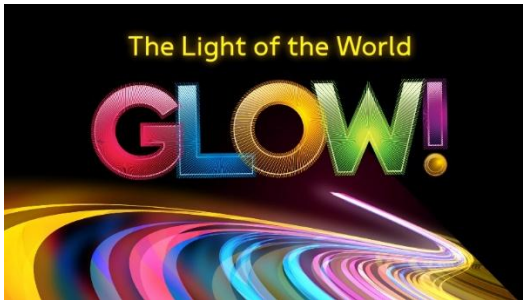
Preschool- 5th Grade

Meet in the choir room during the sermon

Opportunities to serve weekly

JOIN THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM

We are looking for caring leaders and helpers to serve during Sunday Bible Hour, Children's Worship, or Special Events. Help us create a safe, fun space for kids to grow in faith!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

ANNOUNCING 2026 VBS

JUNE 22-25

6:00pm-8:30pm

Elementary (rising K-5th Grades)

Middle School (rising 6th - 8th Grades)

Childcare available for Volunteers

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

Volunteers Needed Vicar's Outreach Project

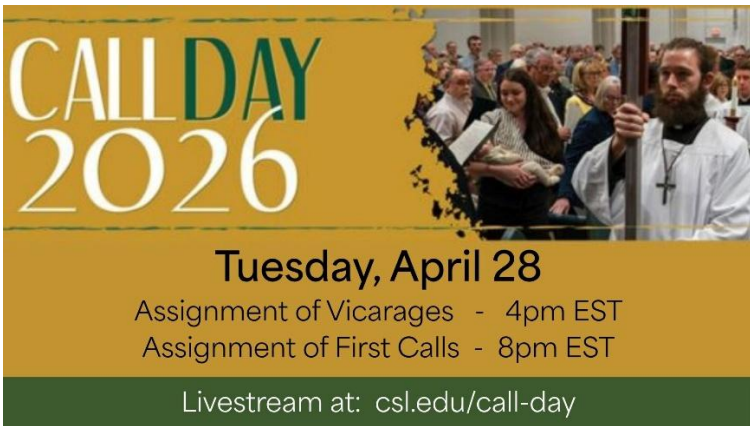
As vicars, we organize a community outreach project, where the church reaches out and serves in the greater community. For my project, we will be doing a day of service on **Saturday, May 23rd**. I am putting together teams who will go out and provide basic lawncare services for people who need them. Pulling weeds, trimming, hauling brush off, spreading mulch, etc. I need your help with two things for the project.

First, I need a list of people for us to serve that day. We are looking for people outside the church. Think about your neighbors. Who do you know of that could use a hand with their yard?

Second, I need volunteers. I am looking for:

- Team leaders - Experienced people who will take point at each service site.
- General volunteers - The hands to do the serving.
- Hospitality volunteers - The goal is not just to provide a service but to use this as an opportunity to build bridges in the community. Hospitality people will focus more on talking with the people we are serving, getting to know them, praying for them, and giving them some information about St. Stephens.

Please contact Vicar Tristan at tjones@sslcms.org to volunteer and/or connect us with people to serve.



CALL DAY
2026

Tuesday, April 28
Assignment of Vicarages - 4pm EST
Assignment of First Calls - 8pm EST

Livestream at: csl.edu/call-day

Tune in on Call Day to see if St. Stephens Lutheran is assigned another Vicar (4pm). Come back at 8pm to see where Josh and Sarah will serve.

Past Vicar, now Pastor: Where are they now?

- Vicar #1 **Eric Stacy**
Grace Lutheran – St. Louis, MO
- Vicar #2 **Sean & Molly Baker (Noah & Lucy)**
Bethany Lutheran – Kansas City, KS
- Vicar #3 **Andrew & Amelia Thompson (Mabel & Della)**
St. John Lutheran Church – Plymouth, WI
- Vicar #4 **Jake & Christina Childers (Shepherd)**
Grace Lutheran – Knoxville, TN
- Vicar #5 **Peter & Laura Frank (Sawyer, Melody, Everett)**
St. Peters Lutheran – Conover, NC
- Vicar #6 **Daniel & Sarah Brummet (Lily)**
Willis, TX - Church plant
- Vicar #7 **Josh & Sarah Marlatt**
- Vicar #8 **Tristan & Carolyn Jones (Micah)**

Today's Readings

Acts 2:14; 36-41

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." 37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

1 Peter 1:17-25

17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 21 who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; 24 for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Luke 24:13-35

13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. 16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. 22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, 29 but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" 33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

CONFIRMANDS, PARTENTS, MENTORS

MOUNTAINSIDE LUTHERAN CHURCH

SHAUEN & KRISTA TRUMP, Missionaries in Africa

TRINITY HMONG LUTHERAN CHURCH & PASTOR ZANG YANG

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

FIRST RESPONDERS/FIRE FIGHTERS

POLICE/CIVIL SERVANTS

JOY ELLIS FAMILY. Loss of home to fire. Cousin of Kristy Smith.

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

JEAN ROLLINS

GARNER SETTLEMYRE

BETTY SIGMON

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

NEIL & ERICA MORETZ FAMILY

RAE FRITZ FAMILY

GARY & ANN PIERCE

NOEL DAVIDSON FAMILY

RODNEY & MARY HOUSTON

HOSPICE CARE

RICK EASTMAN, Washington State, brother of Judy Gurganious

UP-COMING PROCEDURES

LINDA BOLICK, breast cancer surgery 4/20

HOSPITALIZED

JODI BLACK, ICU, lung disease, friend of Vonda Hodun

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

KEVIN CARPENTER, treatments for PTSD

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

KEVIN CLOHESY, ALS, brother of Brian

EARL WYATT, recovering from cancer surgery, uncle of Chris Wyatt

JESS CAPPS, cancer, friend of David & Martha Propst

JAMES CARMICHAEL, malignant brain tumor, friend of Jerry & Teresa Ritchie

DRUDE CORBET, cancer, neighbor of Eddie & Vanessa Warren

JOYCE, breast cancer, friend of Michele Bamert

RECOVERING

LINDA STEELMAN, Trinity Village Rehab, sister of Betty Bostain

CRYSTAL HEDRICK, back issues, daughter of Teresa Phillips

SHARON RADKE, recovering at home from shoulder surgery

DEANIE HILTON, recovering at home from knee surgery

DYLAN MANUEL, recovering from broken wrists, grandson of Coach Miike & Diane Davis

RUTH WILLIS, home recovering from surgery

CAROLE HUFFMAN, health issues

OWEN FRITZ, recovering from an emergency appendectomy, son of Tyler and grandson of Linda