

**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

6th Sunday of Easter

May 9 & 10, 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

Gracious and Triune God, You have written Your truth into the very foundations of all existence. Help us to declare Your works, live by Your wisdom, work for Your glory, and rest in Your grace, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one Triune God, forever and ever. Amen.

Flowers

Flowers on the altar are given by Susan Ledbetter in thanksgiving to God, for Godly mothers, especially honoring my precious mother, Priscilla Crouch and in remembrance of the wonderful mothers who are now in heaven; and in loving celebration of people for who this is a difficult day.

Flowers on the altar given in memory of Audrey Miller and Delores Miller by Paul and Annette Miller.

Greeters

May 9 - Brent & Donna Townsend
May 10th 8am - Sharon Little
May 10th - 10:30am - Phillip & Sarah Starnes

May 16 - Keith & Sue Binns
May 17th 8am - Pat Wilson
May 17th 10:30am - Teri Cain

Communion Assistants

May 10 10:30am - Chris Barringer, Eric Kent, Eddie Warren
May 17 8:00am - James Fogle & Tony Spencer

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

May 10 - Betsy & Lila Hendrix May 17 - Cynthia Hewitt

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 543 (90, 126, 327) Sunday School - 123
General Fund: \$72,746.80 (Regular Offer. needed each week: \$30,392.22)
Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$8,275.33
School Endowment Fund: \$395.00
Church Expansion/Building Fund Funds Needed: \$4.4 Million
Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$105,940.91
Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$3,416,840.87

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

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

MONDAY

9:00am - Lifelight - Conference Room

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

4:30pm - School Board - Science Room

6:00pm - After the Boxes - Conference Room

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

TUESDAY

9:00am - Noon - Quilters - Conference Room

1:00pm - Elizabeth Circle - Conference Room

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

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

5:30pm - Elders - Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

6:00pm - Life Group Leaders Meeting - Youth Modular

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

5:00pm - School Endowment - Conference Room

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

7:30am - LLL Men;s Breakfast

5:30pm - Saturday Evening Worship

SUNDAY

8:00am - Traditional Worship & Holy Communion

9:15am - Family Bible Hour

10:30am - Contemporary Worship

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



Via de Cristo, “The Way of Christ” is a highly structured three-day weekend retreat designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people and bring them to a new awareness of living in God’s grace.

The retreat is intended for lay people from every walk of life, for pastors, for people who live strong and active lives in Christ, and also for those who seek to be renewed and strengthened in their relationship with Christ and the people around them. It is open to married couples as well as single men and women.

A Via de Cristo retreat includes Christian fellowship, worship, and instruction, led by lay people and clergy and concentrates on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. Special focus is placed on the spiritual renewal of the church, family and community.

Please join us on a Via de Cristo retreat for a grace-filled, spiritual renewal through a closer walk with Christ.

This Via de Cristo retreat will be held at Camp Walter Johnson in Denton, NC. Each retreat begins on Thursday evening and ends Sunday afternoon. The cost for first time attendees is \$125.

Upcoming Retreat Date

May 28-31 (men & women)

For additional information please contact:

Jon or Jane Guelzow, Tim or Teri Herman,
Larry or Beth Bowman

or visit our web site at:

www.wncvdc.org and click on “What is Via de Cristo?”



SSLS ROBOTICS CAMP

Be one of the first students to experience Robotics at St. Stephens and help us kickstart our Robotics Program by joining us for our first ever Robotics Summer Camp!

Current K-3rd Grade Students
June 15-19 9am-12pm
OR
July 13-17 1pm-4pm
LIMIT: 12 Students per Session

Current 3rd-6th Grade Students
June 15-19 1pm-4pm
OR
July 13-17 9am-12pm
LIMIT: 10 Students per Session

Registration Fee: \$125
We will be pairing up on our robotics work, so register with a partner, and you will each receive \$10 off your registration fee.

YOU WILL LEARN:

- ✓ Collaborative Problem-Solving
- ✓ Engineering & Design
- ✓ Beginner Robotics
- ✓ Beginner Coding
- ✓ Debugging

Ready to register or have questions?



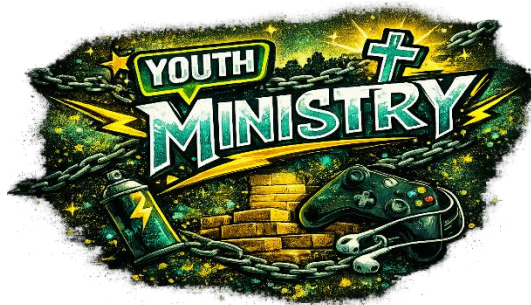
Contact Mrs. Bell
adrake@sslcms.org

Out of The Office

Randall Cline will be on vacation May 5-May 14.

Pastor Shea is serving Salem Lutheran Church in Taylorsville on May 10.

Pastor Ziehr and Pastor Shea will be attending the SED All Circuit Visitor Meeting May 11 & May 12 in Virginia.



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

Sunday Morning LifeGroup | 9:15am | Youth House

Mark Your Calendars!



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.



5/17 | 5:00-8:00 PM After Hours: Classified
This isn't your normal night. No full details. No spoilers. Just know this—once you're in, you're in. Expect the unexpected. Games? Maybe. Chaos? Likely. Something meaningful? Always. You don't want to hear about this one later—you want to be there.



5/23 | 9:00-2:00 PM Community Service Day
St Stephens will be providing basic lawn care for those from the community in need—like weeding, trimming, and brush removal. Need help or want to volunteer? Contact Vicar Tristan Jones at tjones@sslcms.org



5/25 | 9:00-7:00 PM Carowinds
Get ready for a day of adrenaline, water park chaos, and nonstop fun at Carowinds! From massive coasters to the lazy river and everything in between—this is the kind of day you'll be talking about all summer. 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.

**Congregational Meeting
and Building Dedication
Sunday, May 17
11:30am**

Election of Officers and Board Members

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):

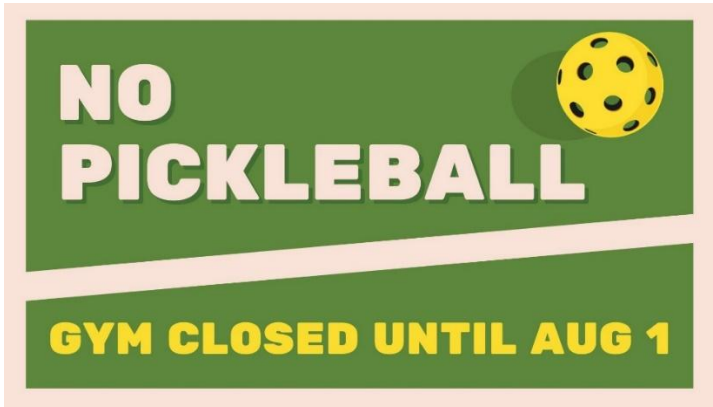
Cheryl Frye

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, Robert Propst, 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.

Comfort Dog Ministry



Lutheran Church Charities will serve in Spartanburg, SC this May for Helene Recovery and Preparedness Day, providing care and support to a community still recovering from the 2024 hurricane. Many families there have received little assistance and are in great need.

Around 300-500 families will receive essential items like food, clothing, and emergency supplies. We strongly encourage members of St. Stephens to support this mission by donating through the Amazon Wish List (scan the QR code below), helping provide items such as fans, heaters, and other critical needs. We're also grateful that our quilters are sharing Christ's love by sending handmade quilts to bless those in need.

Faith Comfort Dog will be attending alongside the Southeast District, Spartanburg Emergency Management, LCC Disaster Response, Hearts of Mercy & Compassion, and fellow Comfort Dogs Seth (Seneca, SC) and Zora (Hilton Head, SC) for this special mission event.

Please continue to keep all those affected in your prayers. Thank you for helping us make a meaningful impact.



Scan the QR code for items list.

You're Invited

Feed The Flock Gala



ST. STEPHENS
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2026

HICKORY METRO CONVENTION CENTER

6 - 10 PM

Cocktail Attire

Benefitting 

Tickets available at
thecornertable.org



Join us for an afternoon at Daniel Stowe
Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in
Belmont, NC

Wanna Go?

Friday, June 5

9:00am - 3:00pm

Cost: \$20

(Ticket, transportation and tour)

*Lunch is on your own or bring a picnic lunch.

Reserve your space by June 2 to Kristy at ksmith@sslcms.org

St. Stephens Lutheran Church & School

SENIOR SESSION

Wednesday, May 20 @ 1:00pm



Tour the Mission & Ministry
building for a behind the scenes
of the day to day operation of this
new facility.

RSVP to Kristy Smith at 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

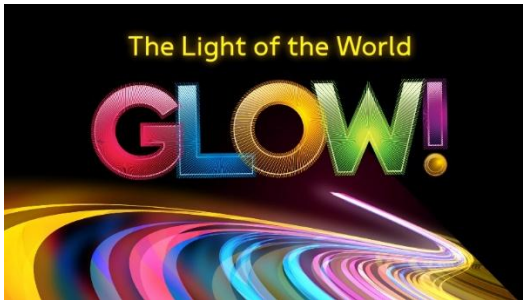
Preschool- 5th Grade

Meet in the choir room during the sermon

Opportunities to serve weekly

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.



We are preparing camp to open for the season..

Saturday Work Days
May 9, 16

Time: 8:30am-5:00pm

Contact Teirsa to RSVP for lunch on work days.

For more info.
www.camplinnhaven.org

LWML QUARTERLY EVENT



Guest Speaker will be, **Jenna Miller**, with "Live Truly Nourished". Her mission is to simplify wellness because taking care of yourself shouldn't feel like another source of stress. Come to learn something new about living a healthier lifestyle and feeling better.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7 | 3-5PM

Centro Latino volunteers needed

Centro Latino is seeking volunteer conversation partners for the spring session, May 14 - June 25. Partners do not need to speak Spanish. They will visit with English students to practice English speaking skills on Thursday evening from 5-7pm. If you are willing to serve as a conversation partner, contact Jane Guelzow, 828-638-7005.

Today's Readings

Acts 17:16-31

16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. 18 Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. 19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." 21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. 22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,^[a] 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 28 for "In him we live and move and have our being' as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring. 29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

1 Peter 3:13-22

13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. 18 For Christ also suffered[a] once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, 19 in which[b] he went and proclaimed[c] to the spirits in prison, 20 because[d] they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. 21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

John 14:15-21

15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper,[a] to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be[b] in you.

18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN CHURCH LWML & LLL

ST. MATTHEWS - MARION

SHAUN & 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

CHRIS HALLE, waiting for a liver transplant

KATELYN DAY, pregnancy complications, daughter of David Day

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

KEITH PAYNE & FAMILY - Keith's mother, Odessa, was called to glory on May 2

FAMILY OF JODI BLACK - Jodi was called to glory on May 2, friend of Vonda Hodun

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

BOB & LINDA CARNEY

RALPH CAZIRE

RUTH COOK

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

JON HARDMAN & NEIL

NICK & SPENCER OSTERHOUDT FAMILY

BOBBY & FRAN CLARKE

JERRY HUFFMAN

ARLENE DEAL

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

The baptism of **BO PATTEN FLETCHER**, son of Jason & Jaqueline, on May 9, 2026. His sponsors are Tom & Jennifer Gott. Bo is the grandson of Mark & Sharon Radke and the great-grandson of Martha Killian.

HOSPITALIZED

CHRISTIAN CALDWELL, ICU, friend of Randall & Shannon Cline

TABITHA WORLEY, health issues, VA Asheville

UPCOMING SURGERIES

SAVANNAH LEE, hip surgery on May 15

PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

DINKY EDDINS, breast cancer

GIL BRAUCH, cancer

ERVIN BOLICK, cancer

LINDA TILLEY, cancer

DELANEY JESSUP, cancer

KAY WEAVER, health concerns

SHARON JONES

KEVIN CARPENTER, treatments for PTSD

DRUDE CORBET, cancer, neighbor of Eddie & Vanessa Warren

JOYCE, breast cancer, friend of Michele Bamert

RICHARD ELDER, receiving treatment for an infection around the heart, friend of Danny & Miriam Mecimore.

HEATHER FORBES, breast cancer, daughter of Karen Killian

KIM MILLER, cancer, daughter-in-law of Bob & Helen Miller

BRENDA BENFIELD, cancer, friend of David & Andra Pingel

LINDA BOLICK, radiation treatments

MATTHEW JOHNSON, colon cancer, son of Sherry Craig

NASH, cancer, friend of Lori Duncan

ROB MABE, cancer, friend of Tim & Teri Herman

RECOVERING

GARNER SETTLEMYRE, Hickory Falls, Rehab

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

CAROLE HUFFMAN, health issues

CANDAS SEXTON, health issues, sister of Fran Clarke

DAVID HERMAN, recovering from a stroke, neighbor of Dale & Priscilla Crouch

JEANETTE BATTCHER, recovering from a fall, friend of Caren Smith

RANDY CONWELL SR., health issues, father-in-law of Katrina Conwell

JEANETTE WATTS, stroke, sister of Helen Miller

RUBY HALL, recovering from shoulder surgery

RALPH CAUSBY, health issues, Jeremy Dula's grandfather

KATRINA CONWELL, health issues

TOBY LAWS, recovering from broken arm

DAVID DRUM, health issues

DIANE SLIVENSKY, recovering at home

PAUL MILLER, recovering at home

LINDA LAIL, rehab at Trinity Village

KATHY BOLCH, eye issues, sister of Sherry Craig

CHARLES, health issues, friend of Linda & Rae Fritz

EVELYN COGDELL, fractured pelvis, friend of Carolyn Watson

GINNY QUINLAN, knee replacement complications

VICKIE LAY, recovering from shoulder surgery