

**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

5th Sunday of Easter

May 2 & 3, 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

Almighty God, Your Son, Jesus Christ, is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. We bless You for His saving work and for the comfort that He brings to troubled hearts. Help us to be faithful to Him to death and so too receive life eternal. For He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Greeters

May 2nd - Chris, Danyelle & Connor Wyatt

May 3rd 8am- Judy Gurganious

May 3rd 10:30am- Tim & Tonya Boliek

May 9 - Brent & Donna Townsend

May 10th 8am - Sharon Little

May 10th - 10:30am - Phillip & Sarah Starnes

Communion Assistants

May 3 8:00am - David Pingel & Steve Cain

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

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

May 3 - Teresa Ritchie

May 10 - Betsy & Lila Hendrix

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 533 (80, 85, 368) Sunday School - 123

General Fund: \$33,861.60 (Regular Offer. needed each week: \$30,392.22)

Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$14,606.12

School Endowment Fund: \$535.00

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

Church Expansion/Building Fund Account Balance: \$98,344.54

Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$3,300,624.74

Out of The Office

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

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

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

3:00-6:00pm - Pickle Ball

5:00-8:00pm - Jr. & Sr. High Youth - Man Hunt - Youth Modular

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

MONDAY

9:00am - Lifelight - Conference Room

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

10:30am - LWML Ex. Board - Peace House

6:00pm - After the Boxes - Conference Room

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

TUESDAY

1:00pm - Comfort Dog Ministry - Conference Room

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

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

5:30pm - Comfort Dog Handlers - Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

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

6:30pm - Comfort Dog Ministry - Conference Room

WEDNESDAY

9:00am - Quilters - Conference Room

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

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

6:30pm - Mary Circle - Conference Room

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

11:30am - SSLS Early Dismissal

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



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

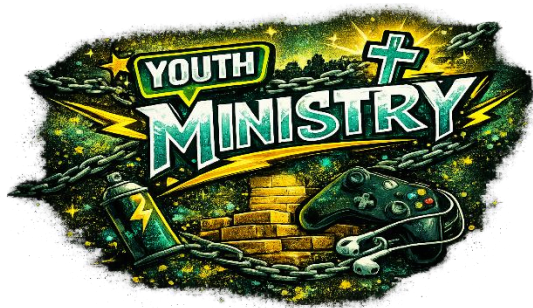
May 28-31 (men & women)

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?”



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

Sunday Morning LifeGroup | 9:15am | Youth House

Mark Your Calendars!



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.



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

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.

PICKLEBALL



LAST DAY OF PICKLEBALL MAY 17
GYM CLOSED MAY 24 - AUG 1

Thank You

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
I just wanted to say thank you for all you do to continue to help me with so many projects around my house. Especially for the many prayers. I could not ask for a better Christian family than all of you. May God bless you and your families, always.

Diane Maynor

Dear Church Family,
On behalf of everyone at The Corner Table, we extend our deepest gratitude for your continued support as the presenting sponsor of our Feed the Flock Gala. Your leadership and commitment pay a vital role of this special event and in advancing our mission. Because of your generosity, we are able to continue to provide vital meals and support individuals and families in our community. We are truly honored to have you as our Presenting Sponsor and are grateful for your dedication to Feed the Flock.

With sincere appreciation,
The Corner Table

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
The Corner Table

Tickets available at
thecornertable.org

QUILTERS

Wednesday,
May 6
9am - 3pm
(come when you can)

Welcome

We will meet in the Conference Room.



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

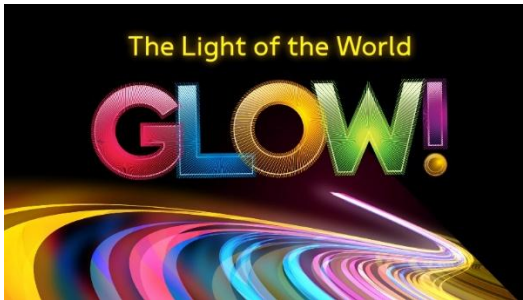
Preschool- 5th Grade

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

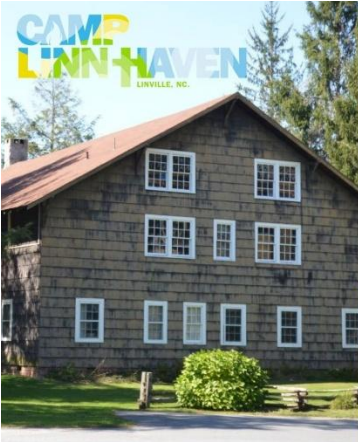
As vicars, we organize a community outreach project, where the church reaches out and serves in the greater community. For my project, we will be doing a day of service on **Saturday, May 23rd**. I am putting together teams who will go out and provide basic lawncare services for people who need them. 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

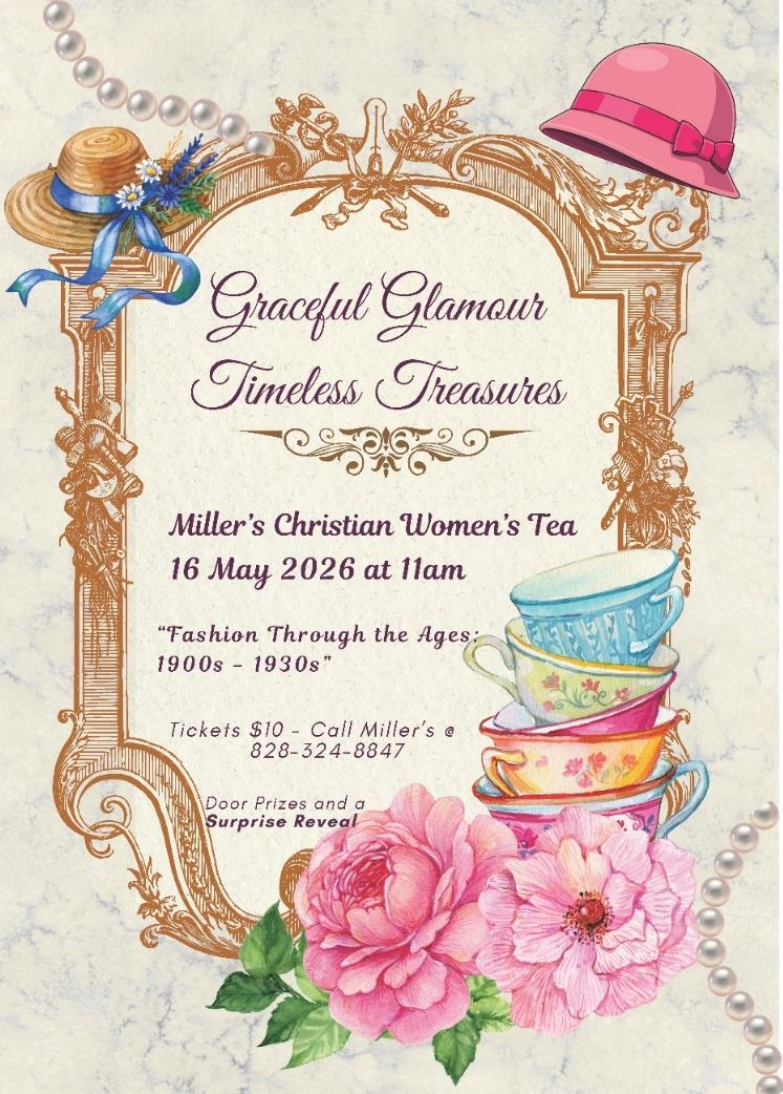


Guest Speaker will be, **Jenna Miller**, with "Live Truly Nourished". Her mission is to simplify wellness because taking care of yourself shouldn't feel like another source of stress. Come to learn something new about living a healthier lifestyle and feeling better.

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.



*Graceful Glamour
Timeless Treasures*

**Miller's Christian Women's Tea
16 May 2026 at 11am**

**"Fashion Through the Ages:
1900s - 1930s"**

**Tickets \$10 - Call Miller's @
828-324-8847**

**Door Prizes and a
Surprise Reveal**

Today's Readings

Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a, 51-60

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists^[a] arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.² And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables."³ Therefore, brothers,^[b] pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."⁵ And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.⁶ These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.⁷ And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.⁸ And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.⁹ Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen.

And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,

⁵¹"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered,⁵³ you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."⁵⁴ Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him.⁵⁵ But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.⁵⁶ And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together^[a] at him.⁵⁸ Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.⁵⁹ And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."⁶⁰ And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

1 Peter 2:2-10

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.⁴As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”⁸and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

John 14: 1-14

Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God;^[a] believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?^[b] ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to where I am going.^[c] ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you had known me, you would have known my Father also.^[d] From now on you do know him and have seen him.” ⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. ¹²“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask me^[e] anything in my name, I will do it.

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 YOUNG ADULTS

SALEM 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

CHRIS HALLE, waiting for a liver transplant

KATELYN DAY, pregnancy complications, daughter of David Day

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

DAVID KILLIAN FAMILY. His brother, Steve Killian, was called to glory on April 25.

DAVID GOOD FAMILY, David was called to glory on April 27. David is brother-in-law to Arlys Rullman and Frances Rullman, neighbor to John & Amity Enci

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

WILLINE AUSTIN

ALLEN BOLICK

ANN BOWMAN

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

JORDAN & BRANDON DUNCAN FAMILY

KATHARINE CRAWLEY

CASSIE DEAL

BENNY & DONNA BARGER

AMY HALL

PRAYERS OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

The birth of **BAKER WIT TEEGARDEN**, grandson of Tom & Kristy Smith, was born on April 25.

The baptism of **ETHAN ALEXANDER CHESTER** and **ELI NIKOLAS CHESTER** on May 3.

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, 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

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

DEANIE HILTON, recovering at home from knee surgery

RUTH WILLIS, home recovering from surgery

CAROLE HUFFMAN, health issues

LINDA BOLICK, recovering at home from surgery

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, recovering at home, heart issues