

**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.sslwarriors.org

St. Stephens Staff

David Ziehr, Pastor + Shea Pennington, Pastor
David Guelzow, Visitation Pastor + Tim Rollings, Vicar
Ross Chiles, Principal + Jessica Westby, Assistant 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 After Pentecost August 22 & 23, 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 guests 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:
Forgiving What You Can't Forget by Lysa TerKeurst-----School Bldg. #110

Alaska Mission Meeting

Sunday, August 30 12pm

Mission & Ministry Conference Room

2027 Dates: June 16-26

Interested? Contact: Jadi
(jgurganious@sslcms.org)



**ST. STEPHENS**
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Come and See Ministry Fair

Snacks will be available during the ministry fair

Saturday, Sept. 12
after 5:30pm worship

Sunday, Sept. 13
9:15am-1pm
(Sunday school hour will be a fellowship hour in the gym)

Have you been blessed with musical talent? Maybe you want to get involved with children's or youth ministry? Do you enjoy baking? Are you able to do light construction?

Our congregation has many opportunities for you to be involved.

Get connected with the ministries here at SSLC.



Prayer on Entering

Almighty God, each day You graciously provide for all our needs. By the working of the Holy Spirit within us, enable us to be vessels of Your grace and kindness, that those who see our good works done to Your glory may give thanks to You as the source of all that is good and holy. This we ask through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Greeters

August 22nd- Keith & Sue Binns
August 23rd 8AM- Pat Wilson
August 23rd 10:30- April Bell

August 29th- Judy Buff & Linda McNeely
August 30th 8AM- Gregg & Vickie Fletcher
August 30th 10:30- VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Communion Assistants

August 23 - 10:30am - David Propst, Jon Guelzow & Tony Cook
August 30 - 8:00am - James Fogle & Ralph Mueller

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

August 23 - Shannon Cline August 30 - Amy Crouch

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 631 (89, 111, 431) Sunday School - 167
General Fund: \$25,141.86 (Regular Offer. needed each week: \$30,392.22)
Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$881.08
School Endowment Fund: \$103.39
Church Expansion/Building Fund Funds Needed: \$4.4 Million
Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$3,883,344.40
**We have started drawing on the construction loan as bills come in*

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

12:00-1:30pm - Confirmation Orientation - Sanctuary

5:00-8:00pm - Jr/Sr High Youth - Bible Study/Food/Fun

MONDAY

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

10:00am - With Our Hands Ministry

NO Ruth Circle

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

TUESDAY

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

4:00pm - Lifegroup (Pastor Guelzow) - M & M New Conference Room

5:00pm - Church Council - Church Office Conference Room

6:00pm - Praise Team Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

NOON - BULLETIN & SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE

5:30pm - Let's Have Dinner - Ministry & Mission Fellowship Hall - RSVP

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

5:00-8:00pm - Youth After Hours: Fresh Fruit - Youth Modular



LWML Quarterly Event Saturday, Sept. 12 11:30am

All women are invited to attend.

Rachel & Ruth Circles will host a
brunch in the New Fellowship Hall.

Women in the Military Presenter: Melissa Mace

Grief Support Group

Beginning

Friday, September 18 at 9am
Mission & Ministry Conference Room
(led by Pastor Guelzow)

At Grief Support you will find understanding, guidance,
relief, and a safe place to navigate the challenges of grief.

For more information, contact Kristy at ksmith@sslcms.org

**Ladies! Are you new to the area? Experiencing
a life change? Join us for a Women's Newcomer
Group starting on:**

**Wednesday, September 23
+ 6:00pm +
Mission & Ministry Bldg.**

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



Register by Sept. 15 with Kristy 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!

Mites



How amazing it is to think of the many places in God's creation our offerings go. How amazing it is to think of the many people whose lives are touched physically and spiritually by MITES.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit,

MITES are helping to proclaim the Gospel all over God's creation. The St. Stephtes LWML will send the MITES (coins we each save and donate) to the state and national offices to be distributed where most needed. Place your MITES in the large MITE box in the narthex to the right of the nursery door.

Thank You

We would like to thank Bob Watson, Mike Davis, DuWayne Westby, Cory Westby, James Bradshaw, David Pingel & Bill Beard for changing out filters in the church and school.



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

Sunday Morning LifeGroup | 9:15am | Youth House

Mark Your Calendars!



8/23 | 12:00-1:30 PM Confirmation Orientation
Families with students who are seeking to confirm their baptismal faith or learn more about confirmation are invited to join us after the 10:30 am worship service in the New Fellowship Hall. More details and sign-up at sslcms.org/confirmation.

8/23 | 5:00-8:00 PM After Hours: Fresh Fruit



Join us for an evening of food, games, and an interactive devotion as we dive into the Fruit of the Spirit. We'll laugh, compete, and discover how God grows love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in our lives.

8/30 | 12:00-5:00 PM Service Opportunity



Fuel up at The Youth House, then roll out with us as we serve our church and community through yard work, cleanup, and light home projects. Come make a difference and be the hands and feet of Jesus!

9/7 | 2:00-8:00 PM County Fair



We're heading to the 113th Annual Hickory Fair for a night of rides, games, food, and hanging out with friends! There's plenty to see and do, so come join us and bring a friend. More details and sign-up 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.



**CAREGIVER
MENTAL
WELLNESS, INC.**

Senior Session

Wednesday, August 26
1:00pm
Mission & Ministry Building

Attention: Caregivers, Supportive friends and Adult children
Prioritizing Well-being Without Guilt + Choosing Peace Daily and
Minimizing Worry + Finding Purpose and Meaning in Every Season of
Life + Practical Stress Relief Techniques You Can Use Anytime

Presenter: Carolyn Dowdy, founder of Caregiver Mental Wellness
www.caregivermentalwellness.com

RSVP by August 21 to Kristy Smith ksmith@sslcms.org

PICKLEBALL RESUMES

SUNDAYS

3-6 PM

ALL PICKLES WELCOME



LWML Rada Knives

LWML Fundraiser
is selling

**RADA
CUTLERY**
online

SHOP NOW at
sslcms.org/lwml
or scan QR code

NEW

MEMBERS CLASS

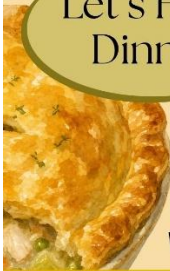
Beginning Sunday, August 23 at 9:15am in
the Mission & Ministry Conference Room.

RSVP to Tiffany at Tsigmon@sslcms.org or call the
church office.

Women's *Wednesday Bible Study*

Starting August 26
10:00am in Youth House

RSVP: Sonni Thornton - 919-749-5881



Let's Have
Dinner

Are you eating alone?
Tired of the same old same old?
Just don't want to cook?

Let's have dinner together on
Thursday, August 27th at 5:30pm
in the Mission and Ministry Center.

Enjoy a meal (chicken pot pie) and fellowship
with others. No charge, but a freewill is accepted.

To plan accordingly, please RSVP to Kristy at ksmith@sslcms.org

School is to be a time of excitement and fun. School starts back this month we want to make a difference in a child's education by collecting school supplies and distributing them to local schools.

While out shopping, please consider picking up several of the items listed below and return them to the mission box in the church narthex. Thank you for supporting this important mission.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES LIST

- Spiral notebooks (wide & college rule)
- Loose-leaf notebook paper (wide & college rule)
- Composition notebooks (wide & college rule)
- #2 Pencils
- Mechanical Pencils
- Highlighters (assorted colors)
- Block erasers
- Pencil pouch
- 24 ct. Crayola crayons
- Crayola Colored pencils
- Rulers
- Scissors (blunt tip)
- Paper Towels
- Kleenex
- Ziploc Bags
- BandAids

Online shopper?
Scan the QR code and select your purchase.
Purchases will be
shipped to St. Stephens Lutheran Church.



Join A Lifegroup Today

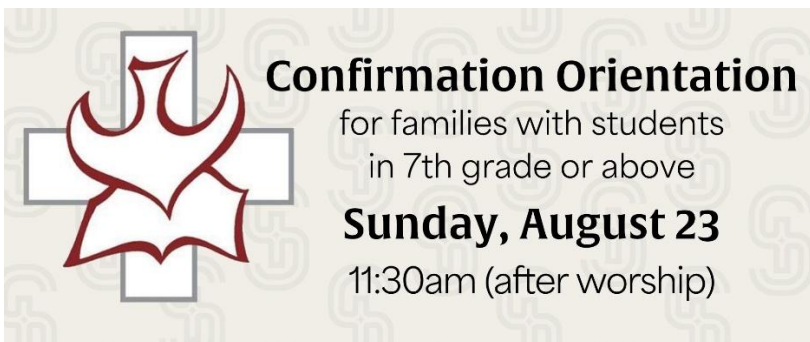
Are you looking for a small group to Nurture Faith, Build Relationships, and Serve Neighbors? Become part of a LifeGroup!

God has created us to live in a relationship with one another and we believe that life always happens in the context of relationships. So if you are looking for a community to help you grow in your faith? A place to be real? A group to belong? Then LifeGroups is it; it's where friends become family!



Kickoff Lifegroup Fellowship Meal

As we kick off LifeGroups this fall, all LifeGroup participants are invited to the fellowship hall on **Tuesday, September 1, at 6:00 PM** for food and fellowship. The church will be providing the drinks and main dish (Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q). Please bring side dishes and desserts. To help us know how many to set up for, please RSVP by calling the church office or signing up on the website/app: (sslcms.org/LGmeal).



Families with students in 7th grade or above **seeking to confirm their baptismal faith** or who **would like more information about what confirmation is** are encouraged to attend our Confirmation Orientation at St. Stephens Lutheran Church & School.

During this meeting, we will review the confirmation plan, which includes both the **one-year Bible Instruction** and **Catechism Instruction**.

Before the meeting:

- Review the Confirmation Plan, Slides, and Covenant (available at sslcms.org/confirmation)
- Bring a signed Confirmation Covenant
- Sign up online if you haven't already

Mentors Needed:

We are seeking adults willing to serve as mentors for our confirmation students. Mentors will meet with students during Unit Check-Ins, help answer any questions that may arise, and commit to praying for and with them throughout their journey.

For more information or to sign up as a student or mentor, visit sslcms.org/confirmation or contact our Youth Director, Randall Cline.



You are invited to help us
shower a place where

little hearts

Grow in God's Grace & Love



Nursery Shower



After 25+ years in a borrowed classroom, we are thrilled to announce that with the completion of our Mission & Ministry Building, St. Stephens now has a dedicated nursery!

Infants and children up to age 3 will now have a beautiful space to learn and play during Sunday morning worship and Sunday School.

We are looking forward to outfitting the room with updated furnishings, toys and supplies. Help us "shower" our nursery and the little hearts that abide there

Scan the QR code or visit sslcms.org/nursery to purchase an item or two that will ship directly to the church and be used in our nursery now and in years to come.

We also welcome loving hearts to help during the 10:30am worship. If you would like to be on a rotation to volunteer, click the link below to contact Jadi.



2 options to shop:

Visit

sslcms.org/nursery

or

SCAN TO SHOP!

Shop the Amazon list
and items will ship to
SSLC



Church Nursery



Merry
MARKET

SATURDAY
November 21 • 9a-2p
St. Stephens Lutheran Church MS

50 VENDORS!
CHRISTMAS
SHOPPING EVENT!

2304 SPRINGS ROAD • HICKORY

Vendor
Registration
will be **ONLINE** (no
in person) at
www.sslcms.org
this year.
Registration
begins at **8:00am**
Tuesday, Sept 8.



St. Stephens Lutheran School News
Excellence in Education since 1943

Rooted in Christ
(Colossians 2:6-7)

School Board Members - Scott Clontz, Chairman, Erica Moretz, David Janisko, Kim Yancey, and Shawn Sigmon



Calling All Passionate People!!



Mentor Fair
Tuesday, August 25, 2026
9:00am-10:00am

Come and share your career, interests,
hobbies and expertise with interested
SSLS 4th-8th graders....

Become a Mentor. Ignite a Passion. Shape Tomorrow.

E-mail or call April Bell to sign-up or find out more!
adrake@sslcms.org (919) 609-6906



Springs Rd.
location



Join SSLS for Spirit Night

Thursday, August 27
4pm - 9pm

Dine in or Take out

You must tell them that you are with
St. Stephens Lutheran



Today's Readings

Isaiah 51:1-6

1“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. 2Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him. 3For the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. 4“Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples. 5My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait. 6Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner; but my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never be dismayed.”

Romans 11:33–12:8

33Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 34“For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” 35“Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” 36For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
1I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. 3For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13-20

13Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” 20Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER
ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL
CONFIRMANDS/PARENTS/MENTORS
ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH
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

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

ADAM WILSON FAMILY. His great-aunt, Linda Bassler, was called to glory on August 15.

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

WILLINE AUSTIN
ALLEN BOLICK
ANN BOWMAN

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

BRENDA LITTLE
HELEN MARTIN
WESLEY & MEAGAN SIMPSON FAMILY
BARRY & GLYNNIS POOVEY
FRANCES REESE

PRAYERS OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

The birth of **GARRETT FRANCIS WESTBY** to Kyle & Jenna Westby on August 15. Proud grandparents are Sandy Westby and DuWayne Westby, and great-grandmother is Peggy Allison.

The birth of **APOLLO REX STARNES D'AGOSTINO FOLMAR** to Tara & Alex on August 17. Proud grandparents are Richard & Dede Starnes, and great-grandparents are Gil & Annie Brauch

HOSPICE CARE

KEITH SMOTHERS, ALS, friend of Brian & Myrna Boman

MATTHEW JOHNSON, son of Linda Bristow

CHESTER BERRY, cancer treatments, friend of Lee London

HOSPITALIZED

CHRIS HALLE, liver transplant complications, nephew-in-law of Betty Flowers

SCOTT CARPENTER, serious health problems with his liver, brother of Kevin

UPCOMING SURGERIES, TESTS, or RESULTS

JEREMY HOWARD, heart surgery in August, son of Joe Howard

TABITHA WORLEY, waiting for test results

BRIAN BOMAN, cataract surgery 8/24 & 9/8

LINDA BOLICK, shoulder replacement 8/25

MYRNA BOMAN, knee replacement 8/26

PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

DINKY EDDINS, breast cancer

GIL BRAUCH, cancer

KEVIN CARPENTER, treatments for PTSD

PAULA SPENCER, cancer treatments, friend of Martha Propst

ZACHARY, cancer, former student of Janet VonDohn

RECOVERING

RICK POOVEY, recovering at home from hip replacement

GINNY QUINLAN, at home recovering from knee surgery/infections

REGGIE CRAIG, health issues

FRAN CLARK, recovering at home from hip replacement surgery

THETTA LAFONE, home recovering, health issues

LARRY BOWMAN, home recovering from back surgery

ROBERT BARNETTE, home recovering, friend of Jerry & Teresa Ritchie

MARC HJERPE, health issues, friend of Coach Mike Davis

LYNN TEETERS, health issues

LINDA TILLEY, recovering from a fall