

**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 + 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 September 12 & 13, 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--M & M Bible Study #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---Ephesians---Creation Room
New Members - Led by the Pastors-----New Conference Room

New Ministry Opportunity

The Elders are seeking lay volunteers from St. Stephens to care for the congregation, helping ensure every member feels known, encouraged, and connected in Christ. Through prayer, listening, personal contact, calls, and/or compassionate follow-up, these lay volunteers share Christ's love in practical and faithful ways. If you would like to learn more or if you are interested in being considered to serve in this way please, please speak with an elder, contact the church office, or email Tony Spencer at Tony.Spencer58@gmail.com.



For over 40 years, Pregnancy Care Center of Hickory has been serving the women of the community and upholding the sanctity of human life through the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. The cost for a woman to complete the program is \$1,200. This year's **Walk for Life** goal is to fund life-affirming services for 40 women. You can help reach this goal by joining Team "WOOF" and walking with us on Saturday, September 26 @ 9:00 am at the Pregnancy Care Center of Hickory. All monies given in support of PCC Hickory will be matched by the Comfort Dog Ministry. See a Comfort Dog representative in the narthex to get more information or click on the QR code to register.

Can't walk? Consider making a donation to benefit our walkers. Let's see how many of those 40 women we can support!

Prayer on Entering

O merciful Lord, in Your goodness You acted with patience toward us sinners and delivered up Your own Son to be our Savior and Redeemer. Grant to us patience with the erring and grace to forgive one another as You have forgiven us, presuming nothing but in all things holding fast to Jesus Christ; through Him who died that we might live and who now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Greeters

September 12 - Chris, Danyelle & Connor Wyatt

September 13 - 8am- Judy Gurganious

September 13 - 10:30am- Eric & Nikki Fisher

September 19 - Cathy Drum & Brenda Little

September 20 - 8AM- Pat Wilson

September 20 - 10:30- April Bell & Teri Cain

Communion Assistants

September 13 - 10:30am - Chris Barringer, Eric Kent, Eddie Warren

September 20 - 8:00am - Todd Little & Ralph Mueller

Nursery Volunteers - 10:30 am

September 13 - Cynthia Hewitt September 20 - Betsy & Lila Hendrix

Our Response to God Last Week

Last Sunday's Attendance - 469 (86, 101, 282) Sunday School - 169

General Fund: \$25,795.22 (Regular Offer. needed each week: \$30,392.22)

Church Expansion Fund/Building Fund: \$3,084.40

School Endowment Fund: \$250.00

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

Church Expansion Bills Paid So Far: \$3,971,031.49

**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

6:30pm – **Ministry Fair - Gym**

SUNDAY

8:00am – Traditional Worship

9:15am – 1:00pm – **Ministry Fair - Gym**

10:30am – Contemporary Worship & Holy Communion

3:00-6:00pm – Pickle Ball - Gym

5:00-8:00pm – Youth Bible Study & Fellowship – Youth Modular

6:00pm – Life Group (Dwight Hollar's) – New Conference Room

MONDAY

9:00am – Lifelight (Pastor Guelzow) – New Conference Room

10:00am – With Our Hands Ministry

10:30am – LWML Executive Board – Creation Room

6:00pm – School Board – New Conference Room

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

TUESDAY

4:00PM - MID-WEEK CONGREGATIONAL NEWS DEADLINE

4:00pm – Lifegroup (Pastor Guelzow) – New Conference Room

5:15pm – Finance – Church Office Conference Room

6:00pm – Praise Team Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY

7:00am – SSLS Back The Blue Breakfast – New Fellowship Hall

10:00am – Women's Bible Study – Creation Room

6:00pm – Young Family Dinner – New Fellowship Hall

6:30pm – Life Group (Paul Miller) Youth Modular

THURSDAY

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

NOON – BULLETIN & SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE

5:45pm – Handbell Choir - Sanctuary

7:00pm – Life Group (Richard Starnes) New Conference Room

7:00pm – Parish Choir – Choir Room/Sanctuary

FRIDAY

10:00am – With Our Hands Ministry

2:00pm – Life Group – David Rittenhouse's home

5:30pm – Halo Bible Study – Youth Modular

SATURDAY

7:30am – Men's Club Breakfast & Meeting

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 – Gym

6:00pm – Life Group (Dwight Hollar's) – New Conference Room



YOUNG FAMILIES GATHERING

Get Connected - Grow your Village

Wednesday, September 16 @ 6pm
(in Mission & Ministry Fellowship Hall)

Families with infants and toddlers up to age 3, join us for a casual meal, fellowship and family centered discussion.

RSVP by Sept. 11 to Kristy Smith 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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need conversational partners to help ESL students improve their English.

Thursdays - 5pm-7pm
Sept. 17 - Nov. 5
at St. Andrew Lutheran

Volunteers do not need to speak Spanish.



For more information contact: Jane Guelzow 828-638-7005



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.



This weekend is your opportunity to come and see and get connected to the many ministries offered through St. Stephens. While worshipping together is central to who we are as a church family, serving is also an important aspect of living like Jesus.

Visit the ministry fair following worship on Saturday, September 12th, or during the Bible hour (9:15 to 10:15 with snacks) and following the 10:30 service on Sunday morning, September 13th to learn more about the people and the purpose behind our many programs and ministries. Ask questions, discover connections and prayerfully consider offering your time and talents.

*Service doesn't end when we say, "Amen!"
Service continues with "Go in peace, and serve the Lord!"
We are called to love and share.*

Come to the Ministry Fair and see who, what and how



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

Sunday Morning LifeGroup | 9:15am | Youth House

Mark Your Calendars!

9/13 | 5:00-8:00 PM Fresh Fruit: Glow & Grow



The Fruit of the Spirit continues! Join us for glow- in-the-dark dodgeball and an interactive devotion as we explore what it means to live out the fruit God grows in us. Come ready to glow, compete, and grow in Christ!

9/18-20 | Family Weekend @ Camp Linn Haven



Come enjoy the beauty of God's creation at Camp Linn-Haven! Slow down, explore the outdoors, make family memories, and celebrate the blessing of being part of God's family in Christ. Want to join us for the weekend or just for the day? Contact Randall!

9/27 | 12:00-1:00 PM | Confirmation Check-in



Confirmation students and their families will meet in the Fellowship Hall immediately following the 10:30 AM worship service. We'll check in, answer any questions, and make sure everyone is on track as we continue through Confirmation together.

9/27 | 12:00-5:00 PM Service Opportunity



Fuel up, grab your gear, and let's get after it! One crew will give The Youth House a fresh coat of paint while the other heads back into the community to finish replacing deck boards. Bring your energy, get your hands dirty, and let's serve together!

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.

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

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, September 24 at 5:30pm
in the Mission and Ministry Center.

Enjoy a meal (lasagna) and fellowship with others.
No charge, but a freewill offerings accepted.

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



Out of The Office

Pastor Guezlow will be on vacation September 13-28

Pastor Shea will be attending an LCMS conference in St. Louis September 16-18

Tashia Fisher will be on vacation September 18-21

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!

LWML Foothills Zone Rally

Oct. 11 - 3-5pm

St. Stephens Lutheran Church - New Fellowship Hall

Speaker: Pastor Peter Frank will share his experiences in Israel

RSVP by Oct. 4 to lwmlpresident@sslcms.org



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

BACK THE



BLUE

All law enforcement are invited join the students, parents and staff of St. Stephens Lutheran School for breakfast on:

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 16
7:30AM-8:10AM

PLEDGE AND PRAYER
8:15AM

Today's Readings

Genesis 50:15-21

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." 16 So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: 17 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'" And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." 19 But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? 20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. 21 So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Romans 14:1-12

14 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. 5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. 10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." 12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. 23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. 28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' 29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. 31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. 35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

LET US PRAY FOR.....

SPECIAL PRAYERS

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION - MISSION & MINISTRY CENTER

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

LWML/LLL

CHRIST 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

BETTY FLOWERS - her house was struck by lightning

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE

ELAYNE LAMBRECHTS FAMILY (mother of Deanna Dickinson) was called to glory on September 4.

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOME MEMBERS

PHIL GNADT

AMY HALL

MARIE HUFFMAN

FIVE FAMILY PRAYER

NANCY BEAN

ALLENE EADS

TERESA PHILLIPS

MIKE & PATSY DAVIS

JUDY GURGANIOUS

PRAYERS OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

THELMA HUFFMAN, who celebrated her 95th birthday on September 11.

The baptism of **COOPER LEE PITTS**, son of Jennifer & Kevin, on September 12. Cooper's sponsors are his grandparents, Brent & Donna Townsend.

The baptism of **LILLIANA NYE**, daughter of John & Cheyenne, on September 13. Lilliana is the great-granddaughter of John Nye.

HOSPICE CARE

KEITH SMOTHERS, ALS, friend of Brian & Myrna Boman

MATTHEW JOHNSON, son of Linda Bristow

JOYCE MCCARTY, grandmother of Adam Wilson

FRANK WELLS, friend of Paul & Annette Miller

GIL BRAUCH

UPCOMING SURGERIES, TESTS, or RESULTS

DIANE SLIVENSKY, upcoming heart surgery 9/23 FRMC

RHYNE MAYNARD, upcoming heart MRI at Duke

MARISA BENEDICT, testing, sister-in-law of Seana Benedict

KELLI BROWN, upcoming shoulder surgery 9/16

PRAYERS FOR ONGOING TREATMENTS

KEVIN CARPENTER, treatments for PTSD

PAULA SPENCER, cancer treatments, friend of Martha Propst

ZACHARY, cancer, former student of Janet VonDohlen

CAROL EWALD, dementia

DAVE KRYDER, stage 4 cancer

JEFF KUYKENDALL, cancer

MARC SIGMON, cancer treatments, friend of David & Jennifer Eckard

TONY BUMGARNER, cancer, brother of Sheila Poovey

PAT SEALE, oral cancer

RECOVERING

GINNY QUINLAN, at home recovering from knee surgery/infections

REGGIE CRAIG, health issues

THETTA LAFONE, home recovering, health issues

MARC HJERPE, health issues, friend of Coach Mike Davis

LYNN TEETERS, health issues

LINDA TILLEY, recovering from a fall

ERIC KILLIAN, health issues, stepson of Karen Killian

TERESA PHILLIPS, recovering from broken shoulder/heart cath

BRIAN BOMAN, recovering from additional cataract surgery

SANDRA WALKER, health issues/rehab, sister-in-law of Betty Flowers

RALPH CASSANO, bladder & bone cancer, family friend of Kristy Smith

KATHY BOLCH, severe eye issues, sister of Sherry Craig