



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ELCA

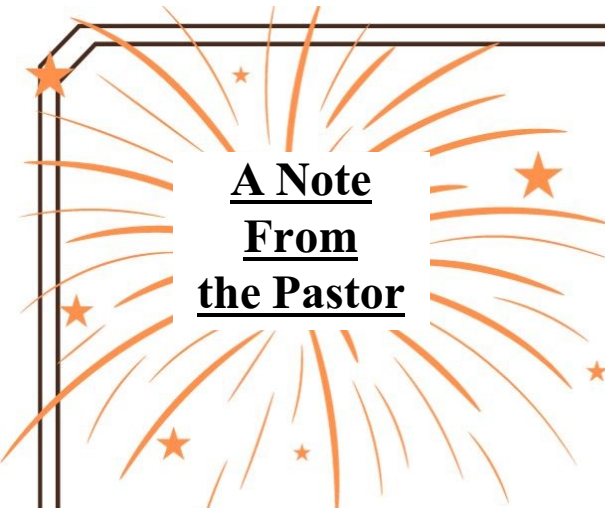
– – The Friendly Visitor – –

2024




JANUARY

***SSELCA: A Family that together prays, teaches, loves, and serves
God and our neighbors.***



A Note
From
the Pastor




²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,
²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;
³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,
³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." (Luke 2:27-31)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Happy New Year St. Stephen's Family!

My hopes and prayers are that all have had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year! And here we go, a new and fresh year to be together and do the work of the Lord! I honestly do not think life cannot be any better for me than to be with you in the life of this congregation and working for God's glory!

We begin the church year in the season of Epiphany, which is the time when the three wise men make it to the stable to see the child, Jesus. All they had to do was to 'see' him and they had an 'epiphany.' They knew from the second they saw him that he was the Messiah sent by God.



In the same way, when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to be presented to the Lord as it was in their custom, a man named, Simeon and a prophet, Anna both laid their eyes on the baby Jesus and had an 'epiphany.' They knew who Jesus was – the Son of God, the Messiah. In fact, Simeon proclaims, "My eyes have seen your salvation! And now you are dismissing your servant in peace." In other words, Simeon knew he had no worries because the Lord had come to save all humanity!

We too, live each day of our lives with the hopes of "seeing" the Lord and having that 'epiphany' – when we know without a 'shadow of a doubt' who Jesus Christ is – our Salvation, our Lord, and our God! No doubt, God shows up in the unexpected places in our lives; however, I believe the more we are intentional about our ministry, the more likely we are to see Jesus and could tell others about Jesus.

Therefore, I wonder if we make our New Year's resolutions to become intentional about who we are as Christians?

Seek time for devotion and prayer.

If you are not a part of a Bible Study at our church, consider joining one.

Become a participant of one of our committees to help grow our church.

Look for ways to serve in our church that fit your passion

Have a voice in the Vision 2035 Team

Invite others to come and worship

Most of all, make God and worship a first priority before anything else!

In the meantime, I pray that all have a wonderful new year and that God continues to bless us and keep us.

+Love, *Pastor Terri*



St. Stephens News

¹³Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. ¹⁶Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. *James 5:13-16*

The world is a broken and hurting place; therefore, we need the healing love of God available to us through Jesus Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit.

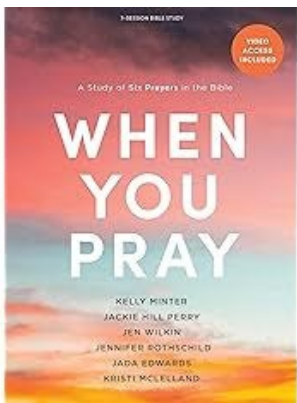
A healing ministry is developed in the life of a congregation through pastoral care, prayer, the laying of hands, anointing with oil, fellowship, and worship.

Join us for our first Healing Service on Wednesday, January 10th @ 12:30 in the Chapel for the laying of Hands and the anointing of oil – prayer, worship, and the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The Healing Service Schedule for the year 2024 in the chapel @ 12:30PM:

*January 10
February 7
March 6
April 3
May 15
June 12*

*July 10
August 7
September 4
October 16
November 13
December 11*



Do you have trouble thinking of words to say to God when you pray? Are you afraid some emotions are too intense to express to God? Do you reach the end of a day only to realize you haven't prayed at all? You're not alone. Prayer is the way we relate to God, but sometimes it's a struggle. Throughout God's Word, we encounter many voices who teach us how to pray.

In this 7-session study, join with six beloved Bible teachers who will help you study prayers in the Bible that can inspire your own. You'll learn that God welcomes your praise and lament, your thanksgiving and intercession. You'll see examples of how to pray when you're alone and when you're gathered with others. Above all, you'll notice there's no one right way to pray. As you draw near to God through prayer, you'll find your faith strengthened and your heart united to Christ.

Women's Ministry on the Third Thursday of the Month @ 7:00PM



St. Stephen's Announcements



Thank You!

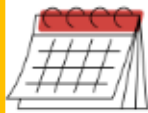
Congratulations to Hayden & Henley, what an achievement you have earned! Thank you for all you do in serving St. Stephens and the community!



"We received our Eagle Scout award on December 17th. Thank you for all of the prayers and support you have given us over the years. We are very blessed to have you all in our lives. - Henley & Hayden Huhn"

HELP NEEDED

Sat, Jan. 6th at 9AM SSELCA will need volunteers to assist in taking down the Christmas décor. If you have any questions please contact the church office. Thank you!



Sunday, Jan. 14th we will have our 2024 Calendar Meeting to help map out and plan for the next 5-6 months. If you are head of a Small Group or Committee please be sure to attend this or let the church office know of the dates and times you would like to plan to meet this coming year. Thank you!



The sign-up sheets for 2024 have all been put out on the bulletin boards by the church office. Please be sure to put your name down on when and how you are serving. Thank you to all who serve!

thank you

A huge thank you to everyone that donated over the last 3 months warm clothes, blankets, and more! What a kind impact for the homeless and in need, in our community.

- ATTENTION -
"2024 Offering Envelopes" are outside the church office and available for you to pick up. Please do not use these until the first Sunday in January.

**INSPIRATION FROM ABOVE
WORSHIP THAT'S DOWN TO EARTH**



St. Stephen's Announcements

2024
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year to all!

Thank you to everyone for the continued support and efforts in our ministries here at St. Stephens! We are elated to see what aid, hope, and love, we can share with our community in 2024!
The church office will be closed
Monday, 1/1/2024.

UPDATE

Handbells & Choir will meet Wednesday, Jan. 3rd in the sanctuary. If you are interested in joining either or both, please let Brent Talley know!

Handbells @ 5:30PM

Choir @ 6:30PM

Friends of Faith will meet Saturday, Jan. 20th at 6PM in the Fellowship Hall for a covered dish meal. If you plan to attend please bring a covered dish to share.

RSVP to Betty Ann Crump by Monday, Jan. 15th.

- Cell - (828)-217-3584

- Email -

crumpfamily@charter.net

**Monday night
Women's
Ministry Circle
Group will meet
Monday, Jan. 8th
at 7PM in the
choir room.**

***The Thursday
night Women's
Ministry will
meet Saturday,
Jan. 13th at Bob
Evans at 9AM.***

**Want to keep up with other events
going on with in St. Stephen's?**

→ Check out our website:
sselca.org

→ Follow us on Facebook!

→ Contact the Church Office if you
would like to receive
our weekly Flocknote!

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, E.L.C.A.

2259 12th Avenue NE Hickory, North Carolina 28601

Telephone #828-322-3211 Fax #828-322-8311

Email: office@sselca.org Website:

www.sselca.org

The Rev. Terri Landers (828) 228-9887 (cell)
pastorterri@sselca.org (email)

Radio Station: 94.3FM

Office Hours:

- Monday-Friday -
8:30AM-1:30PM

Women's Bible Study

9:30AM on Tuesday's at Parkway House

Tuesday, Jan. 2nd

Week 47

- Day 1: Zephaniah 1-3
- Day 2: Haggai 1-2
- Day 3: Zechariah 1-5
- Day 4: Zechariah 6-10
- Day 5: Zechariah 11-14
- Day 6: Malachi 1-4

Tuesday, Jan. 9th

Week 48

- Day 1: Ezra 1-5
- Day 2: Ezra 6-10
- Day 3: Nehemiah 1-3
- Day 4: Nehemiah 4-7
- Day 5: Nehemiah 8-10
- Day 6: Nehemiah 11-13

Tuesday, Jan. 23rd

Week 49

- Day 1: Galatians 1-6
- Day 2: Ephesians 1-6
- Day 3: Philippians 1-4
- Day 4: Colossians 1-4
- Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 1-5
- Day 6: 2 Thessalonians 1-3

Tuesday, Jan. 16th

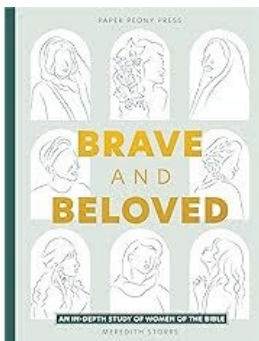
Week 50

- Day 1: 1 Timothy 1-6
- Day 2: 2 Timothy 1-4
- Day 3: Titus 1-3
- Day 4: Philemon 1
- Day 5: 1 Peter 1-5
- Day 6: 2 Peter 1-3

Tuesday, Jan. 30th

Week 51

- Day 1: Hebrews 1-7
- Day 2: Hebrews 8-13
- Day 3: James 1-5
- Day 4: 1 John 1-5
- Day 5: 2 John 1, 3 John 1
- Day 6: Jude 1



Brave and Beloved is a beautiful 20-lesson Bible study surveying 30 key women in the bible, from the more widely known Eve and Ruth to the less often studied Deborah and Jael. This fresh bible study truly illuminates how God's design for womanhood welcomes women from all walks of life. Readers are equipped with trustworthy study tools and insightful cultural context. The modern, eye-catching workbook includes the full biblical text used in the study for deep reading and notation, plus thoughtful questions, prayer prompts, and portrait illustrations of the women. Readers will be inspired to dig deeper into God's word and see His heart for women and their role in his amazing plans for redemption in a brand new light.

Order from Amazon for \$17.99

The study begins Tuesday, February 13, 2024
and meets at the Parkway House @ 9:30AM



Pastor's Bible Study

10:30AM on Wednesday's at SSELCA

Wednesday, Jan. 3rd

Readings

- Genesis 1:1-5
- Psalm 29
- Acts 19:1-7
- Mark 1:4-11

Wednesday, Jan. 10th

Readings

- 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
- Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
- 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
- John 1:43-51

Wednesday, Jan. 17th

Readings

- Jonah 3:1-5, 10
- Psalm 62:5-12
- 1 Corinthians 7:29-31
- Mark 1:14-20

Wednesday, Jan. 24th

Readings

- Deuteronomy 18:15-20
- Psalm 111
- 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
- Mark 1:21-28

Wednesday, Jan. 31st

Readings

- Isaiah 40:21-31
- Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
- 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
- Mark 1:29-39

Everyone is welcome to come and join in any of the St. Stephens Bible Study Classes, and note that if you are unable to participate in the weekday morning ones there are also 2 Bible Study Groups that meet at 9AM each Sunday.

*-The Wired Word &
-The Vertie Eckard Class*

 St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ELCA



Mission & Outreach



Thank you to everyone for donating to the Pickle Jar. We raised \$422! This was used to get a family in need groceries, clothing for a little girl and her younger brother, along with a gas card for the mother.

Our Downtown Hickory Ministry Meal served 110 homeless in December!



The Food Pantry fed over 62 families and individuals in December, please note that the Food Pantry was closed the last Wednesday on the month.

Over 110 men, women, and children received nourishment from our Holiday December Community Soup Kitchen Meal!



Thank you for continuously supporting these ministries and making an impact on our community for those that are in need!



St. Stephens ELCA

November Council Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2023

Meeting called to order by President Vickie Eckard.

Attendance–Vickie Eckard, Cathy Baker, Pastor Terri Landers, Donna Specht, Sandra Barton, Hayden Huhn, Barry Sullivan, Deborah Pruitt, Kathy Smith, Robert Ollis, Phil Barton, Regina Reece and Donald Bumgarner

Devotions by Cathy Baker

Motion to approve October Council Meeting minutes made by Barry Sullivan, seconded by Robert Ollis. Approved.

Treasurer's Report– Report for October

Pastor's report– Report for October

Ministry Team Reports

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Christian Education | Report on file |
| Congregational Life | Report on file |
| Evangelism | Report on file |
| Property | Report on file |
| Social Ministry | Report on file |
| Stewardship– Finance | No Meeting |
| Worship & Music | Report on file |
| Youth | No Meeting |

Old Business

Security issues are ongoing.

Camera has been installed in kitchen.

Vickie is working on contacting families about bequests money.

Motion made by Kathy Smith and seconded by Hayden Huhn to disburse outside Endowment money as follows: \$500 Habitat for Humanity, \$500 Family Care Center, \$500 Salvation Army, \$500 Safe Harbor, \$500 Children's Advocacy & Protection Agency, \$1000 Open Door Ministry, \$456.54 Pastor's Discretionary Fund for a total of \$3,956.54. Approved.

New Business

Motion to approve Bloodmobile dates of Jan 22, Apr 8, July 15, Oct 21 from 1–7 pm made by Barry Sullivan and seconded by Robert Ollis. Approved.

Property Committee submitted a Contract for Gym Usage. Motion to accept made by Sandy Barton, seconded by Barry Sullivan. Approved.

Motion to approve the use of the gym by a Latino Men's Group on Wednesdays from 6–8 pm made by Barry Sullivan and seconded by Cathy Baker. Approved.

Hayden Huhn reported that the Youth will conduct the service on Dec 10.

ABC Florist has gone out of business. Lanez Florist has offered to take our business for \$37.45 a vase. Approved.

Election results: Dee Fry, Kim Frankel, and Corky Miller for Council. Nancy Bumgarner, Cathy Ollis, Sharon Miller, Pat Patton, Robert Ollis and Vickie Eckard for Nominating committee.

Motion to adjourn by Robert Ollis and seconded by Barry Sullivan.

Closed with Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting December 10th at 6:00 pm. Regina Reese has devotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Eckard, President
Sandra Barton, Secretary

Remember in Prayer



Nursing Homes:

Brookdale Lenoir – Angie Asherbraner– #39

Rock Barn– Frank & Pat Hedrick – #207

Trinity Village–(Springs Road)–Mary Alice Punch # 504, Inez Gilbert – #508, Lois Stine – #219, Harold Eckard– #209, Ruth Dietz – #109

Trinity Ridge– (Mountain View) Tammy Falcone – #714

At Home: Betty Eckard, Jenny Eckard, Sylvia Hoke, Leon & Ramona Baker

Family and Friends: Janet Stinson, Susan Hoke Lee, Loyd Hoke, Aidan Cox, Dylan Godfrey, Ben Godfrey, Phyllis Gilbert, Eric Deitz, Heather Brooks, David Crump, June Yount, Joyce Travis, Linda Zarou, Shari Dezern, Kay and Bill Barton, Kim Ramsey and the Ramsey Family, Kadence Yount, Paul Talbert, Gene Crump, Michael Yount, Jo Lang, Norris Tessnar, Toby & Kim Hemphill, Ronald Harris, Melinda Chapman, Dawn Good, Teddy Hefner, Rhonda Guy, Michelle Roll, Carolyn Henson, Amber Reese, Guy Miller, Ted Chandler, Tim Hollar, Dennis Knapp, Kay Spencer, David Pruett, Lanie McGee, Kate Marler, Kathy Smith, Randy Eckard, Kay Hatch, Audra Bolick, Ken & Linda Abernathy, Chad Hemphill, Billie Roth, Ashley Bridges, Grace Priest, J.R. Yelton, James McGee and Family, Ken Eckard, Ingrid & Eric Peake, Gerald Williams, Jamie Mace, Simon Denova & Family, Ruth Dietz, Danielle Scott, Mia Sexton, Carl Baker, Ellen Cook, Dennis Morgan, Paul Kale, Ken & Janice Eckard, Nancy Alexander, and Lois Stein.

Bereavement: The Family of Bill Little, The Family of Mickey Miller Family, The Family of Kevin Hooton, The Family of Bob Wright, The Family of Tom Bradshaw, The Family of Pebbles Stone Isenhour, and The Family of Rick Kirby, The Family of Pauline Moretz, The Family of Linda Sigmon, The Chandler Family, The Family of Julia Ann Aliberti, The Family of Pat Waters, The Family of Lindsay Goolsby, The Family of Louise Brannock, and The Family of Joe Hedrick.

Others: First responders and health care workers who take care of us. All who are hungry. All who are homeless. All those affected by storms. All those affected by the violence in our country and abroad. The People of Ukraine and Russia. The People of Turkey and Syria. The People affected by the wildfires in Maui. The earthquake victims of Morocco.

Armed Forces:

U.S. Navy: E5 Logan Miller; IS2 Chris Powell;

U.S. Marines: Maj. John Teague; Staff Sgt. Justin Curl

U.S Army: Maj. Matthew Helton Ft Bragg, NC

Please contact the church office to make changes to this list.



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