



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ELCA


-- The Friendly Visitor --

2024



MARCH

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



A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

“Alleluia. Let us sing to the Lord, who has triumphed gloriously; our strength and our might, who has become our salvation.
Alleluia. (Exodus 15:1-2)

Hello St. Stephen's!

Spring is coming! I have so much to tell you that I hardly know where to begin!

Before you know it, Lent will be over, but don't miss out on what there is left of the time we have together. It's never too late to jump in! Join us for the *Radical Bible Study* on Monday evenings at 6:30PM and the *Lenten Services* on Sundays at 4:30PM. I also want to emphasize the *Healing service* on Wednesday, March 6th at 12:30PM, which is an opportunity for prayer, the laying of hands, and anointing. The healing service is a short service of about 20-25 minutes that will renew your spirit and strengthen your heart for the journey to the cross.

Holy Week begins on Thursday, March 28th at 7:00PM with the Washing of the Feet and the Stripping of the Altar. Good Friday will be on March 29th at 7:00PM. On Easter morning, we will have a Sunrise Service at 7:00AM and a traditional Service at 10:30AM with an Easter breakfast to begin at 8:30AM. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

On *Sunday, March 24th*, our church will be hosting a *Community Easter Egg Hunt* from 2:00-4:00PM. Tell your friends, neighbors, and grandchildren! We are planning a big event with not only egg hunting, but also games, crafts, and fun for the whole family! If you would like to help us, please let Tiffany Bolick or Carol Talley know and we will get you plugged in!

Also, please mark your calendars for other community events such as on April 26th, we will have a *Community Bingo Night* with Food Trucks from 6:30-8:30PM. On Friday, May 31st, we will offer a *Community Movie Night* with Hot dogs, chips, and popcorn from 7:00-9:00PM. And then on Friday, June 14th, another evening of *Community Bingo* with Food Trucks.

Beginning on Wednesdays in June, we want to start a new program called, *Fam-Jam*. Our goal is to have a Wednesday evening ministry program from 5:30-7:30 that is multi-generational that mimics the attributes of Vacation Bible School. For example, we will provide a light meal, fun songs with motions, Scripture, an easy craft and/or a game. If you would like to help with this new and exciting ministry, please let Emily in the office know and we will hook you up!

We also hope that you have noticed our new sign in front of the church and our updated coffee bar when you walk in! We want everyone to feel at home when they come to our church and always feel free to make yourself a cup of coffee or hot chocolate when you come to church!

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Also, for adults on Sunday mornings, grab a cup of coffee and join us for one of our two amazing Sunday classes that are in the rooms off the gym. One Sunday class is led by Marge and Ted Chandler and the other is The Wired Word, a current event and how it relates to scripture today. We also offer a class for children that Tiffany is working hard to get started. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us and let them know how amazing we are!

And one more thing that I just cannot go without mentioning.

Did you know that our little Food Pantry fed 346 people, 99 households just in the month of January? First, I want to say thank you to those who have worked so hard in the pantry to keep it going. It's not just the manpower in the pantry, but also the shopping, Second Harvest, and the paperwork that is involved. We are a small congregation with an average age of about 70 years old and I find this astronomical - the work that we are doing for Jesus Christ! In fact, it brings me to tears I am so proud of these people of God. This does not even include the people we fed at our community meal and those we fed in downtown Hickory. And, to make it even more amazing—we did not touch one penny of our budget. The Lord provided.

In this time of Lent and as we travel to the cross with our Lord, let us remember who we are - "Dust and dust we shall return." We are nothing with our Lord Jesus Christ and it is Him that we put our trust and hope and our salvation. It is Jesus Christ that we glorify and proclaim to the community and to the world.

"Pick up your cross and follow Him." (Mark 8:34) If you haven't already, jump into Lent and join the journey. And may the peace of Jesus + Christ be with always.


Pastor Terri





WORSHIP NEWS

LENT Services
Sundays
4:30PM



There are still a few Easter lilies that are available to be purchased. They are \$13 each. If you would like one, please fill out a form located by both main entrances and you may give to an Usher, place in offering plate, or turn into church office. Thank you!




Monetary donations are much appreciated for our beautiful Easter Cross of flowers. This years arrangement is around \$300. If making a donation, please list the description/memo as Easter Flower Cross. Any donation is very much appreciated!

The Church Office will be closed Monday, April 1st. If any assistance is needed please leave a voicemail or send an email. Thank you!



St. Stephen's Egg Hunt!
Hop on over for an EGG-cellent time!
Open to Everyone!
Sunday, March 24th
2:00-4:00PM
Bring the whole Family!
Games, Crafts, & Refreshments



If you are able to donate plastic eggs, wrapped candy, and/or small novelty toys/items - it would be greatly appreciated!! Thank you to all who have already contributed!

MISSION & OUTREACH



ST. STEPHEN'S
LUTHERAN
CHURCH, ELCA

COMMUNITY MEAL



ALL WELCOME!

COME ONE, COME ALL TO DINE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY! WE'RE SERVING UP SCRUMPTIOUS HOT DOGS, LOADED WITH ALL THE TOPPING, ALONG WITH CHIPS, SWEETS, AND REFRESHING BEVERAGES.

WHEN: Sunday, March 3rd from 1PM-2:30PM
WHERE: St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, ELCA - in the Fellowship hall.

- Parking in the back parking lot! -

Church Services are held on Sundays at 10:30AM.

Be sure to come visit us!

(828)322-3211 sselca.org office@sselca.org



This is the last month that your monetary donations to Little Something Extra will be used for Pastor Terri's discretionary fund. We will plan to purchase Wendy's and Sheetz cards for her to have on hand for those needing help that present to the church office. The need is great! Thank you for your donations! - Social Ministry Team

Last month (Feb), 120 hamburgers were cooked and taken to the Homeless in Downtown Hickory.

In February, the Food Pantry supplied 90 households— a total of 313 people in our community with dry food items!

88 men, women, and children were fed during our Community Soup Kitchen Meal in January.

B I N G O



Get Ready! We are kicking spring off with a BINGO Night!

Friday, April 26th from 6:30PM-8:30PM we invite everyone in the community to join us for a fun-filled evening.

More exciting details coming soon!!!

Spring into life.

Give blood.

Our next Blood Drive will be Monday, March 8th from 2-6:30PM.

If you would like to sign up to donate, please visit RedCrossBlood.org or reach out to the church office.

Every pint makes a difference!



American Red Cross

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the selfless volunteers at St. Stephen's. Your generous contributions, whether through monetary donations or volunteering your time, have been instrumental in the success of our ministries. We truly appreciate the unwavering support and growth you have provided to these causes. We thank you!



† NEW RADICAL BIBLE STUDY †

What do you think? We have redefined Christianity. We have given in to the dangerous temptation to take the Jesus of the Bible and twist Him into a version of Jesus we're comfortable with. It's a Jesus who's OK with our materialism, fine with nominal devotion that doesn't require any sacrifice, and pleased with a brand of faith that required attendance on Sunday but no real commitment in day-to-day life.

But wonder if I could help you push through the haze of self-justification and ask a simple question as we study the words of Christ:

What if He was actually Serious?

RADICAL, by David Platt. Join us as we continue this 6-Week Bible Study every Monday from 6:30-8PM. Our last class is Monday, April 1st.

Women, Coffee, & Jesus Bible Study

9:30AM on Tuesday's at Parkway House

Tuesday, Mar. 5th

Lesson 3 - Leah
-Genesis 29:1-35
-Genesis 30:1-24

Tuesday, Mar. 12th

Lesson 4 - Rachel
-Genesis 31:3-55
-Genesis 35:16-20

Tuesday, Mar. 19th

Lesson 5 - Tamar
-Genesis 38:1-30

Tuesday, Mar. 26th

*Lesson 6 - Miram,
Shiphrah & Puah*
-Exodus 1:6-22
-Exodus 2:1-10
-Exodus 15:19-21

Pastor's Bible Study

10:30AM on Wednesday's at SSELCA

Wednesday, Mar. 6th

Readings
-Numbers 21:4-9
-Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
-Ephesians 2:1-10
-**John 3:14-21**

Wednesday, Mar. 13th

Readings
-Jeremiah 31:31-34
-Psalm 51:1-12
-Hebrews 5:5-10
-**John 12:20-33**

Wednesday, Mar. 20th

Readings
- Isaiah 50:4-9a
- Psalm 31:9-16
- Philippians 2:5-11
- **Mark 14:1-15:47**

Wednesday, Mar. 27th

Readings
- Acts 10:34-43
- Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
- **John 20:1-18**

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

Graceview Retirement Home – Guy Miller

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, Linda Zarou, Shari Dezern, Kay and Bill Barton, Kim Ramsey, Robby Patton, Kadence Yount, Paul Talbert, Gene Crump, Michael Yount, Jo Lang, Norris Tessnar, Toby & Kim Hemphill, Ronald Harris, Melinda Chapman, Dawn Good, Martha Killian, Teddy Hefner, Michelle Roll, Amber Reese, Betty Eckard, Guy Miller, Tim Hollar, Dennis Knapp, Kay Spencer, David Pruett, Lanie McGee, Kate Marler, Kay Hatch, Audra Bolick, Pat Waters, Ken & Linda Abernathy, Chad Hemphill, Grace Priest, J.R. Yelton, James McGee and Family, Ingrid & Eric Peake, Gerald Williams, Nancy Alexander, Martha Yoder, Roxanne Duncan, Jo-Ann Stafford, Kyle Huffman, Vicki Stanfield, Jeff Matthews, Jimmy Barber, Wayne Eckard, Betty Schuman, Dennis McGee, Connie Love, Nancy Quinn, Charles Elmore, Sherry Huffman, Loreen Fox, Candy Sexton, Jerry Bolden, Rodney Harrison, Mike Pannell, Steve Hedrick, Mary Sue Barnett, Ruben Sipe, Charles Goble, and Mr & Mrs. Boyd Canipe.

Bereavement: The Family of Boyd Cook, The Family of Paul Wilson, The Family of Judy Carpenter, The Family of Jackie Pruett, The Family of Joyce Travis, The Family of Kisha Keever, The Family of Aaron Winter, The Family of Ansley Robinson, The Family of Robert Lail, The Family of Rick Duckworth, and The Family of Louis Robinson.

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.

St. Stephens ELCA

January Council Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2024

Meeting called to order by President Barry Sullivan.

Attendance– Pastor Terri Landers, Donna Specht, Sandra Barton, Barry Sullivan, Deborah Pruitt, Phil Barton, Regina Reece, Donald Bumgarner, Kim Frankel, Corky Miller, and Dee Fry. Absent: Kathy Smith.

Devotions by Barry Sullivan

Motion to approve December Council Meeting minutes made by Dee Fry, seconded by Kim Frankel. Approved.

Treasurer’s Report– Report for December

Pastor’s report– Report for December

Ministry Team Reports

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

Old Business

- Finance committee is working on contacting families about bequests money.
- High School proposal will not be going forward as presented. Vision Team 2035 is re-searching.
- New phone system will be installed week of Jan. 21st.
- New sign has been delivered. Will be installed when weather is warmer.
- Property replaced downstairs lights and ballasts in classrooms. Ballasts taken to metal recycler.
- Annual reports are to be turned in ASAP.

New Business

- Rules for Gym use have been amended. Motion to approve by Kim Frankel, seconded by Deborah Pruitt. Approved.
- Property presented a motion to purchase panels to cover windows in gym for \$2,615.45. Seconded by Donald Bumgarner. Approved.
- Catawba Valley Community Chorus has asked to use our sanctuary for one of its Spring Concerts. A motion to use April 21st was made by Dee Fry, seconded by Barry Sullivan. Approved.
- The Centro Latino sign will be blocking our new sign. We will be meeting with them about moving it.
- Dates for Council retreat are Feb. 23–24. 6:00 pm on the 23rd. 9:30–2:00 on the 24th. Dinner will be furnished. Installation will be on Jan. 28th.

Motion to adjourn by Donna Specht and seconded by Deborah Pruitt

Closed with Lord’s Prayer

Next Meeting February 23rd at 6:00 pm. Donald Bumgarner has devotions.

Respectfully submitted,
Barry Sullivan, President
Sandra Barton, Secretary