




St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ELCA

-- The Friendly Visitor --

2024



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



*A Note
From the
Pastor*

I have seen the Lord! (John 20:18)

I have seen the Lord! (John 20:18)

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

Dear Church!

Jesus Christ has risen! He has risen indeed! Everything is new! Nothing will ever be the same! The last will be first; the powerful will be powerless; good will surpass evil, and death will be no more!

From here on out, we have nothing to fear in this world. God has got us, and we are safe and secure in His loving arms. Not only that, but Jesus Christ has also given to each of us the authority to forgive sins and the ability to love one another as he has loved us. Amen. Amen.

And there is one thing that I know for sure...The Holy Spirit is alive and well at St. Stephen's!



We held our first Community Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 24th. Someone said to me that if we had 50 children show up that we would be blessed, and it would be a success. While that is true, it was not the case. We had over 300 children and parents come to St. Stephen's for our egg hunt! Nothing went as planned because I believe, God had a different plan. However, everyone seemed to have a good time and that is what mattered the most! We were grateful and overwhelmed with the response we received from our community!

Our next community event is on Friday, April 26th when we will hold a Community Bingo Night. Everyone is invited to participate! We will have hotdogs and hamburgers, chips and drinks at a minimum cost. Look for more details in the newsletter and our bulletins! We hope that you will come and participate and join in the fun!

Meanwhile, we continue to follow Jesus in our call to feed the homeless and those who are less fortunate in our community. We always need your help with the food pantry, whether it is donating your time, food, or monetary gifts. Our community meal is always the first Sunday of each month and all are invited! On the third Saturday of each month, we head downtown to feed those who are hungry who are on the streets. If you would like to help, please let us know!

I am so overwhelmed with all that the Lord has blessed us with at our church. Every single day I witness God's work in that place. Always know that you are loved deeply. And may the Lord bless you and keep you and hold you tightly in His loving arms.

Love,
+ *Pastor Terri*



Worship News

Thank you 

Dear Church Family,
Thank you so much for your love and caring after my recent heart attack. Your prayers, food cards, and visits were truly appreciated. I am certainly blessed to be part of a wonderful church family. Love to you all. Thanks again and God bless!
Lorene Fox

Thank You

Thank you Church Family

I consider myself very lucky to be a part of this church family. Thank you so much for the calls, food, cards, and especially the prayers during my recent surgery and recovery. I am so blessed and I appreciate all of you so much.

God's Peace & Blessings,
Linda Baker

ATAWBA VALLEY COMMUNITY CHORUS

We cordially invite you to join us here in the Sanctuary for an impressive showcase of exceptional talent that promises to leave a lasting impression.

Sunday, April 21st at 4PM
Reception to follow.



An enormous thank you goes out to all those who contributed to making St. Stephen's Holy Week a truly beautiful and impactful experience. Special thanks to the Ushers, the Youth, the Sound Technicians, the Choir, the Altar Guild, and countless others for their incredible efforts in making each service truly exceptional!



Much gratitude and thanks to all who donated to the Easter Floral Cross and those who decorated it. Your contributions covered the cost for this and the time you took to arrange it made it possible! What a stunningly, elegant, beautiful sight!



We want to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed to our lilies, which truly brightened up Easter Sunday!



Thank you to the Men's Group for fixing an excellent and delicious Easter Breakfast Meal!



We express our sincerest appreciation to Pastor Terri Landers for her inspirational guidance during this Lenten path towards Easter, Brent Talley for the delightful musical compositions he curated, Nathan Brickman for his outstanding organ and piano performances, Phil Barton for his dedicated financial management for the Church, and Bobby Elmore for his consistent upkeep of the Church. Your unwavering dedication and hard work are truly valued!





BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

Women, Coffee, & Jesus Bible Study

9:30AM on Tuesday's at Parkway House

Tuesday, April 2nd

- No Bible Study -

Tuesday, April 9th

Lesson 7: Rahab

-Joshua 2:1-24

-Joshua 6:1-25

Tuesday, April 16th

*Lesson 8: Deborah
& Jael*

-Judges 4

-Judges 5

Tuesday, April 23rd

*Lesson 9: Naomi &
Ruth, Part 1*

-Ruth 1

-Ruth 2

Tuesday, April 30th

*Lesson 10: Naomi
& Ruth, Part 2*

-Ruth 3

-Ruth 4

Pastor's Bible Study

10:30AM on Wednesday's at SSELCA

Wed, April 2nd

- No Bible Study -

Wed, April 10th

Readings

-Acts 3:12-19

-Psalm 4

-1 John 3:1-7

-Luke 24:36b-48

Wed, April 17th

Readings

-Acts 4:5-12

-Psalm 23

-1 John 3:16-24

-John 10:11-18

Wed, April 24th

Readings

-Acts 8:26-40

-Psalm 22:25-31

-1 John 4:7-21

-John 15:1-8



MISSION & OUTREACH



We would like to thank all those who helped make our Easter Egg Hunt a terrific success! The community, especially the children, had a blast thanks to you all that provided the eggs, candies, novelty items, monetarily, their time, and efforts making this a success! It definitely showed on the faces of over 300 in our community!
Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!



Join us for our next Community Meal and enjoy some tasty BBQ, with fixings, refreshments, and dessert!
Sunday, April 7th
1-2:30PM!



Our next Blood Drive will be Monday, April 8 from 2-6:30PM! If you would like to sign up go to RedCrossBlood.org, or let Emily in the Church Office know.

This past month the Food Pantry supplied approx. 90 families in our community with canned and dry food items.



During the months of April, May, and June Little Something Extra will be collecting School Supplies for St. Stephen's Elementary and Webb. A. Murray Elementary. Look for more information to come! If you have any questions, please reach out to Cathy Baker.



Get Ready! We are SOO excited for our first Bingo night! Grab your family, friends, neighbors, and share amongst others in the community to join us on Friday, April 26th from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM for an enjoyable evening, with food available.
Fun & Fellowship with new and old Friends!
Food will be available!
We hope to see everyone there!

In March we prepared and took food to 90 people that are Homeless in Downtown Hickory.

We fed 88 men, women, and children during our Community Soup Kitchen Meal in March.

ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS!!!!

Would you like to help the Food Pantry? If you are a Thrivent member, you can apply for an Action Team Impact card valued at \$250. This can be used to purchase food for our Community Food Pantry. If you are willing to help, please contact Deborah Sullivan at 244-4276 to learn how to apply. Thanks!

St. Stephens ELCA

February Council Meeting Minutes

February 24, 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, Kathy Smith and Dee Fry.

Devotions by Donald Bumgarner

Motion to approve January Council Meeting minutes made by Dee Fry, seconded by Kathy Smith. Approved.

Treasurer’s Report– Report for January

Pastor’s report– Report for January

Ministry Team Reports

Christian Education/Youth

Report on file

Congregational Life

No Meeting

Evangelism

Report on file

Property

Report on file, next mtg. Mar 6

Social Ministry

Report on file, next mtg. Apr 16

Stewardship/Finance

Report on file, next mtg. April

Worship & Music

Report on file, next mtg. Feb 25

Old Business

None

New Business

Executive Committee presented a motion to not renew the Centro Latino lease as of March 1 effective May 31, 2024. Letter with 90 day notice as required by lease will be presented to them by Barry Sullivan and Dee Fry this week. Motion seconded by Phil Barton. Approved.

Motion to adjourn by Kathy Smith and seconded by Phil Barton

Closed with Lord’s Prayer

Next Meeting March 10th at 6:00 pm. Donna Specht has devotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Sullivan, President

Sandra Barton, Secretary

St. Stephens ELCA

March Council Meeting Minutes

March 10, 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, Kathy Smith and Dee Fry.

Devotions by Donna Specht

February council minutes were approved by email.

Treasurer’s Report– Report for February

Pastor’s report– Report for February

Ministry Team Reports

Christian Education/Youth

No Meeting, next mtg. Mar 12

Congregational Life

No Meeting

Evangelism

No Meeting, next mtg. Mar 12

Property

Report on file, next mtg. Apr 8

Social Ministry

No Meeting, next mtg. Apr 16

Stewardship/Finance

No Meeting, next mtg. April

Worship & Music

Report on file, next mtg. Apr 28

Old Business

None

New Business

Deborah Sullivan presented a copy of the ELCA Peeler Grant for approval to submit for application. Motion to submit made by Dee Fry, seconded by Kathy Smith. Approved.

Property submitted a request by Kevin Ramsey to borrow the Boy Scout trailer to take Kara’s robot to robotic competition. Motion to approve by Corky Miller, seconded by Donna Specht. Approved.

A request to use the gym by AAU Team Hickory at a proposed interim rate of \$35/hr. and a key deposit of \$100. Motion to approve made by Dee Fry, seconded by Deborah Pruitt. Approved.

Committees are asked to submit requests to be put on a wish list of items needed that can be paid for with memorial monies.

Motion to adjourn by Corky Miller and seconded by Regina Reese

Closed with Lord’s Prayer

Next Meeting April 14th at 6:00 pm. Kathy Smith has devotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Sullivan, 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

Graceview Retirement Home– Guy Miller

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

Family and Friends: Dylan Godfrey, Ben Godfrey, Eric Deitz, Kim Ramsey, Robby Patton, Guy Miller, Tim Hollar, David Pruett, Connie Love, Nancy Quinn, Charles Elmore, Sherry Huffman, Lorene Fox, Candy Sexton, Jerry Bolden, Rodney Harrison, Mike Pannell, Steve Hedrick, Mary Sue Barnett, Ruben Sipe, Mr. & Mrs. Boyd Canipe, Barry O'Rourke, Linda Baker, Pam Pope, Krystal Sharp, Kevin Bentley, Catherine Bray, and Mia Sexton.

Bereavement: The Family of Kevin Bentley and The Family of Joanne Godfrey.

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.

Armed Forces:

U.S. Navy: IS2 Chris Powell;

U.S. Marines: Maj. John Teague;