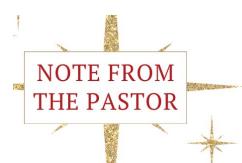
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ELCA - - The Friendly Visitor - -2024





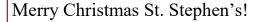
SSELCA: A Family that together prays, teaches, loves, and serves

God and our neighbors.



"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, "God is with us."

(*Matthew 1:13*)



As I look back on the year here at St. Stephen's, I cannot help but to give God thanks and praise for all that I have in you and all the blessings that you have given me! Thank you so much for the cards, gifts, and prayers that you gave me for Pastor Appreciation, but also for Bob as he went through his treatments. You have been amazing in demonstrating your love not only for me and my family, but also for all those who come to worship with us, those who are employed here, and all those in this community. I am blessed beyond measure to be a part of such a loving and caring congregation.

I am also excited about our future moving forward into the next year! I really do believe that our Lord has been leading us to provide ministry not only for young families, but also for the older generation and the seniors in our community. We have planned a Grand Opening date for our Sr. Activity Center for *Thursday, March 13, 2025*. Be on the lookout for more information and details! In the meantime, we will begin some activities such as a community Bible Study and a Bingo event. If you would like to be on the planning team for our Senior Center, please let me know!!

Our children's ministry, *Spirit Squad*, has been going well! We meet every Wednesday at 6:00PM. We have been averaging about 8 -9 children every week! It has given us so much joy to teach our children about the love of Jesus Christ! In just a couple of weeks, you will have the joy of watching them deliver the play about the birth of Jesus! I especially want to thank those who have been a part of this ministry in making this happen for our kids here at St. Stephen's! It could not happen without you!

And, if you need another sign of the Holy Spirit at work in our church, join us for any of our homeless ministries. We now provide our downtown meal right here at St. Stephen's the third Saturday of the month in the back parking lot underneath the picnic shelter. Other churches show up to bring clothing, tents, blankets, and toiletries. We have also started a prayer ministry with the homeless during that time. We always think we are the ones doing the blessing, but as it turns out, we are the ones who are blessed.

Don't forget! Our community meal is always the first Sunday of the Month! This meal is for every single person who wants to come and eat and enjoy fellowship at no cost! It's always so amazing how God provides even when we have no idea where the food or the money is going to come from – it just does!

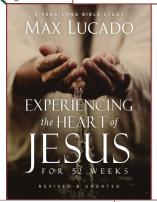
The Holy Spirit is at work in this place! We share His Love in amazing ways every single day. I give God thanks and praise for you and for all that you do! My prayer is that every single one of you have a very Merry Christmas and that together we continue to grow and love one another in the coming years!

Merry Christmas!

+ Paster Terre

+ Bible Studies & Ministry Group News +

Women, Coffee, & Jesus Tuesday's at 9:30AM at Parkway House



Would you like to join the **Tuesday Women's Bible Study?** ALL women are invited and happily welcomed to come and jump in the discussing of 'Experiencing the Heart of Jesus' by Max Lucado. In this Study, Although Jesus is familiar, and we know details of his life, could we consider him a companion or dear friend? Do his mannerisms and habits rub off on us because we spend so much time with him? Experiencing the Heart of Jesus for 52 Weeks is about walking with Jesus so closely that we become like him, that we imitate him. This may be purchased at amazon.com.

Tuesday, Dec. 3rd Week 17: Freedom from Want

- Romans 6:1-7
- Titus 2:11-15

Tuesday, Dec. 10th

Hopelessness

- Lamentations 3:19-25
- Romans 5:1-5

Tuesday, Dec. 17th

Week 18: Freedom from Week 19: Freedom from Fear

- Luke 22:39-45
- Psalm 23:4-6

Tuesday, Dec. 24th

* No Bible Study*



Pastor's Lectionary Bible Study Wednesday's at 10:30AM in the Bible Study Room

Engage in thought-provoking discussions on readings from the Old Testament to the New Testament at our inclusive weekly Bible Study. Join us as we explore the teachings of God's Word together!

Wednesday, Dec. 4th

- Malachi 3:1-4
- Luke 1:68-79
- Philippians 1:3-11
 - Luke 3:1-6

Wednesday, Dec. 11th

- Zephaniah 3:14-20
 - Isaiah 12:2-6
- Philippians 4:4-7
 - Luke 3:7-18

Wednesday, Dec. 18th

- Micah 5:2-5a
- Luke 46b-55
- Hebrews 10:5-10
 - Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

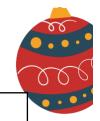
Wednesday, Dec. 24th

* No Bible Study*





† To the Congregation **†**





NOVEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

- GENERAL FUND OFFERINGS \$22,868.46
- ♦ GENERAL FUND EXPENSES \$23,705.88 SHORTFELL — (\$837.42)



Spirit Squad will rehearse the Christmas play Wednesday, December 4th following Advent Worship, dress rehearsal Saturday, December 7th at 11AM (pizza will be served), Wednesday, December 14th following Worship, and the play will be during the Sunday, December 15th Worship.



'I want to thank Linda Baker and Candy & Danny Sexton for their thoughtful contributions to the Andy Griffith Sunday School Class. If anyone has any Andy Griffin DVDs or resources

available, please be sure to let me know. They will be greatly appreciated.' -Marge Chandler

FRIENDS Cof

The December Friends of Faith will take place at the Sullivans' home on the 14th at 5:30 PM. If you're able to attend, kindly bring a finger food to share with the group. We will need at least three desserts, so please inform Deborah if you're contributing one. Feel free to bring an 'adult beverage' if you'd like. Tea, water, and coffee will be provided. We will also have the game 'Dirty Santa,' so if you wish to participate, please bring a gift. Please RSVP to Deborah Sullivan by December 1st at (828) 244-4276.



* ADVENT PARTY*

We will be having a Soup and Sandwich Luncheon on Sunday December 8th after the Worship Service. After lunch we will go

Christmas Caroling to our shut-ins. After caroling return to the Church Fellowship Hall for hot chocolate, warm apple cider and cookies. Join us for this time of Food and Fellowship as we begin The Advent Season. Hope to see you there. -Social Ministry Committee



Now through Sunday, December 8th we will be collecting orders for our limited supply of Christmas Poinsettias. They are \$18 and in 8 inch pots.

If you would like one, please fill out the green form by each main entrance and return to an Usher or the Church Office. (If you need any changes made or have questions, contact the Church Office.)







+ Mission & Outreach +

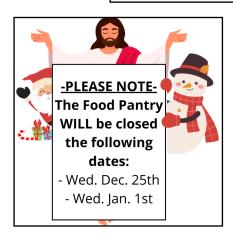


In the month of November the Food Pantry was only open 3 Wed. and fed <u>72</u> households.



There were <u>75</u> men, women, and children served in November at the Community Meal.

<u>70</u> people in our Outdoor Homeless Meal were fed in November here underneath the Picnic Shelter



PATTER PATTERNE

During the next few Cold Winter Months we will be collecting Gently Used or New Coats for those in need who may come to our Sunday Community Meals and/or our Saturday morning Homeless Meals. If you have coats to donate please place them in the Fellowship Hall on table marked Coat Drive. Thank You for your support in this project . (Please only coats, no other clothing)

Social Ministry Committee



- LITTLE SOMETHING EXTRA -

Little Something Extra offerings for December will be given to The Hickory Salvation Army.



St. Stephens ELCA

November Council Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2024

Meeting called to order by President Barry Sullivan.

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

Devotions by Sandy Barton.

October council minutes were approved by email.

A motion to approve minutes from Annual Congregational Meeting made by Dee Fry, seconded by Deborah Pruitt. Approved.

Treasurer's Report - Report for October

Pastor's report - Report for October

Ministry Team Reports

Christian Education/Youth Congregational Life

Evangelism Property

Social Ministry Stewardship/Finance

Stewardship/Finance Worship & Music Report on file No meeting

Report on file Report on file

> No meeting No meeting

Report on file

Old Business

Viewmont AA gave \$50 for use of facility.

CD's have been dispersed to respective accounts.

Floors in Fellowship Hall will be refinished Nov. 12-14. FH to be closed during this time.

Reminder to submit committee reports at end of year.

New Business

Request from Pastor to set aside the \$7500 from Yount memorial to start up the St. Stephens Sr. Saints Activity Center. Motion made by Regina Reece, seconded by Kathy Smith. Approved.

Staff Support presented a personnel report. Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss the report made by Dee Fry, seconded by Deborah Pruitt. Approved. Closed Session

ended.

Property requested \$3500 to paint the woodwork and paneling in the hallway from gym to sanctuary. Motion made by Corky Miller, seconded by Kathy Smith. Not approved.

A request from Pastor Terri that we honor Bobby Elmore for 20 years of service by asking the congregation for a love offering and also giving him \$5000 from the Endowment Fund. Motion to do so made by Donald Bumgarner and seconded by Deborah Pruitt. Approved. A reception for him will be scheduled soon.

Election results from the Annual Congregation Meeting are as follows: Council Members for 2025-2027 are Bill Duncan, Steve Baker and Robert Ollis. Nominating Committee: Tony Lafone, Linda Baker, Carol Hildebrant, Bonnie Rushing, Kathy Smith, and Donna

Specht.

Deborah Pruitt volunteered to take Kathy Smith's place on the Staff Support Committee. Need someone to take Pat Patton's place on the Endowment Fund.

Motion to adjourn by Corky Miller and seconded by Dee Fry Closed with Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting Dec. 8th at 6:00 pm. Deborah Pruitt has devotions.

Respectfully submitted, Barry Sullivan, President Sandra Barton, Secretary

Remember in Prayer

Nursing Homes:

Brookdale Lenoir - Angie Asherbraner #16

Graceview Retirement Home- Guy Miller

Rock Barn - Pat Hedrick #207 and Margie Isenhour #221

TerraBella- (Newton) Loyd Hoke #C16

Trinity Ridge- (Mountain View) Tammy Falcone #714

Trinity Village - (Springs Road) Mary Alice Punch # 504, Lois Stine #202

Valley Nursing- (Taylorsville) Sylvia Hoke #111

At Home: Betty Eckard, Jenny Eckard, Leon & Ramona Baker, and

Linda Zarou

Family and Friends: Dylan Godfrey, Ben Godfrey, Eric Deitz, Robby Patton, Guy Miller, Janet Stinson, Tim Hollar, David Pruett, Teddy Hefner, Bob Landers, Andrea Keast, Roxanne Duncan, Margie Isenhour, Jean Patton, June Yount, Diedre, Tamie Elmore, Helen Miller, David Crump, Ann Sulteen, Ron Barton, Pat Kirby, Mack Adams, Martha Sigmon, Rex Teague, David Gissy, Mark Ewing, Jeff Matthews, Nancy Quinn, Bill Hudson, Derrick O'Brien, Susan Jones, Loyd & Sylvia Hoke, Jeff Matthews, Russ Crandall, Richard Powell, Robin Hefner, Lois Stine, Danielle Scott, Bobby Elmore, Bill Hill, Jim Robinson, Dale Pope, Tim Wilkins, Alan Pruitt, and Heather Rushing.

Bereavement: The Family of Eric Johnston, The Family of Bill Hud-

son, and The Family of Eisele Herman.

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 People of Israel. The People affected by Hurricane Helene.

Armed Forces:

U.S. Navy: IS2 Chris Powell;

U.S. Marines: Maj. John Teágue;

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



+ Scan QR Code below with camera phone to give Offering



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

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The Rev. Terri Landers (828) 228-9887 (cell)

pastorterri@sselcahky.org (email)

Radio Station: 94.3FM

Office Hours:

- Monday-Friday -

8:30AM-1:30PM