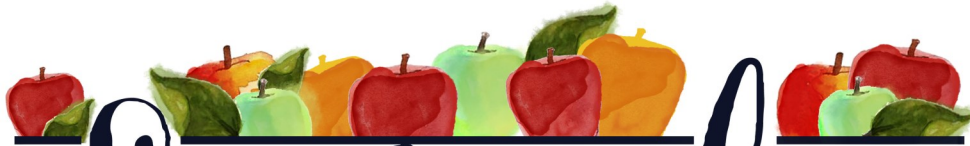




St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ELCA

***– – The Friendly Visitor – –
2026***



September

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

† To the Congregation †

Let us each take a moment to thank the beautiful ladies of our Good Cheer Group for all the kindness, joy, and thoughtfulness they share with our church family.

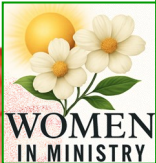
We are so grateful for each of you and for the love you bring to our church.

Your kindness may come in little ways, but it makes a BIG difference!

Thank you for all that you do!



The Thursday Women's Ministry and Monday Women's Ministry recently conducted a project of collecting quarters and boxes of tissues for Trinity Village to use as prizes for Bingo and their Lima Bean Auctions. The Thursday Women's Ministry collected \$90 in quarters and 53 boxes of tissue and the Monday Women's Ministry collected \$57.25 in quarters and 19 boxes of tissues. Thanks to all the women who contributed to this project that was greatly appreciated!!



Dear church, Not only do you feed the homeless, but now you have collected so many supplies for them. We could not believe how much you gave! We are blessed to have you as part of this ministry! In today's society so many people forget about the poor and the homeless. It is so refreshing to have a church stand up for those in such extreme need. With people like you we can show the needy that God loves them even at their lowest points in life.

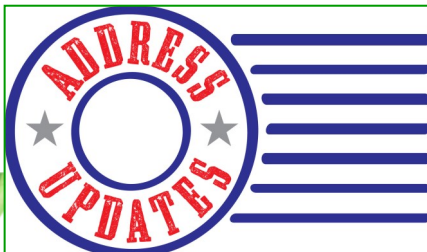
'Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.' – Proverbs 14:31.

Thank you so much, Open door Homeless Ministry

– Donna Austin & Roger Cornett



There are **NEW SIGN-UP SHEETS** for **Worship Servers** and our **Food Pantry**. Please consider signing up and helping out in these ministries! Never served for one or the other? No worries, training is available!



**** UPDATED ADDRESS ****

Please note that **Henley Huhn's** address is now the following:

Henley Huhn
1007 Five Oaks Ct.
Lebanon, TN 37087

† To the Congregation †

Senior
SAINTS

GOOD



CHEER

Senior Saints and Good Cheer will be taking a *trip to Blowing Rock* (rain or shine) on *Wednesday, September 9th* and will *meet in the church parking lot at 10AM!* The cost will be *\$15 per person*. You may have your lunch at the place of your choice or bring your own lunch. Everyone attending will meet at the church at 10AM. Call Cathy Ollis or Vickie Eckard to reserve your spot.



BIG NEWS!! BINGO NIGHT IS BACK!!

Our next *Bingo night* will be *Friday, 9/11* serving burgers, chips, drink, cookie for \$5 at *5:15PM*. Bingo starts at *6:15PM* and ends at *8PM*. If you are able, we kindly ask for gift cards as prize donations from the

The **Wired** WORD™

The Wired Word Sunday School Class has resumed *Sunday's at 9:15AM* in the Bible Study Room – and **YOU'RE INVITED!** Join us for thoughtful conversation, faith, and fellowship as we explore current topics through the lens of Scripture. Using studies and discussion topics from *The Wired Word*, we connect what's happening in the world with our Christian faith and everyday lives.



Via de Cristo, “The Way of Christ,” is a highly structured three-day weekend retreat designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christians and bring them to a deeper awareness of living in God's grace.

The retreat begins on Thursday evening and ends Sunday afternoon. It includes Christian fellowship, worship, and instruction led by lay people and clergy, with a focus on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ and the spiritual renewal of the church, family, and community.

The next *Via de Cristo* weekends will be held this fall at Bethelwoods Camp and Conference Center near York, S.C.

Members of St. Stephens Lutheran Church are invited to prayerfully consider attending this grace-filled weekend for spiritual renewal and a closer walk with Christ. You may also speak with **Brent or Carol Talley** for more information. The cost for first-time attendees is \$125

Upcoming Retreat Dates:

September 24-27 (Men)

October 1-4 (Women)

October 8-11 (Men and Women)

† Save the Dates & More †



Join us for our next *Community Hymn Sing* on **Saturday, October 17th** from 4–6PM out at our Picnic Shelter! Come out and enjoy hot dogs, experience uplifting live music and fellowship, sing beloved songs together. This joyful event welcomes all ages, so bring your family, friends, and neighbors and make it even more memorable!
Be sure to bring your favorite lawn chair!!



Be sure to mark your calendars for our next *Trunk-or-Treat* on **Saturday, October 31st** from 3–5PM in the lower parking lot! Contributions like decorating your car, helping serve/making popcorn and nachos, or donating candy is very much appreciated. Look for a sign-up sheet by the church office in October if you would like to decorate your car!



We would love to invite all women and girls to join us for *Sisters in Christ—Fall Gathering* on **Saturday, October 10th** at 3PM in the fellowship hall! There will be refreshments served by the Men's Ministry Group and Pastor Michael Collins will provide fun musical entertainment. Tickets will go on sale **September 13th** for \$5 for women and 10 years and younger are free. All proceeds will go to Safe Harbor. If you would like to purchase a ticket(s) you may reach out to Deborah Sullivan at (828)244-4276 or Emily in the church office. Dress is casual. We hope to see all you ladies there and bring your family, friends, and neighbors to join us!



Centro Latino is seeking volunteer conversation partners for the fall session September 17 – November 5. Partners do NOT need to speak Spanish. They will visit with English students to practice English speaking skills Thursday evenings, 5–7PM at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church. September 10th there will be an informational training meeting for English partners. If you are willing to serve as a conversation partner, please contact Jane Guelzow, 828-638-7005.



Mt. Olive Lutheran Church has invited St. Stephens Lutheran Church to a 2-part program on the film, *A Time For Justice* on **Wednesday, September 16th** and **23rd** each night will start with a meal at 6PM and the program beginning at 6:30PM. Please RSVP by 9/14 with Emily in the church office if you would like to attend or if you have any questions.

† Mission & Outreach †

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We did not host a Community Meal in the month of August.

Our Food Pantry provided an outstanding 109 households with non-perishable food items in the month of August. Thanks to you all for the continued support to such an important community cause!

Our Outdoor Homeless Meal fed 45 people in our local homeless community last month in August!



American Red Cross

The next Blood Drive will be Monday, October 19th from 2-6PM. Currently 5 have signed up to help meet our goal of 22.
Walk ins are welcome!
Please help spread the word!

thank you

Thank You!

We are so grateful to our congregation for your continued support of our Community Outreach Ministries. Whether you have given a monetary gift, donated much-needed items, volunteered your time, served others, or prepared a meal, your generosity is making a difference in the lives of our neighbors and community.

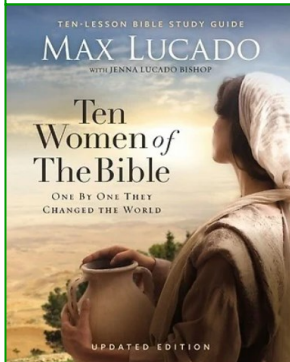
Every gift of time, talent, and treasure helps us share Christ's love in meaningful ways. Thank you for answering the call to serve and for helping make our outreach ministries possible.

Your kindness, generosity, and willingness to serve are truly a blessing. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ in our community!

† Bible Studies & Ministry Group News †



Women, Coffee, & Jesus Tuesday's at 9:30AM in the Bible Study Room



Our *Women's Bible Study* will begin meeting again on *Tuesday, September 15th at 9:30AM*, and we invite all women to come and join us on a 10 week journey of learning, fellowship, and growing in faith together. We will be studying *Max Lucado's Ten Women of the Bible*, a 10-lesson study that looks at the lives and faith of ten women from Scripture. Please let Vickie Eckard know if you are interested in attending..



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

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

Wednesday, Sept. 16th

- ♦ Jonah 3:10—4:11
- ♦ Psalm 145:1-8
- ♦ Philippians 1:21-30
- ♦ Matthew 20:1-16

Wednesday, Sept. 23rd

- ♦ Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32
- ♦ Psalm 25:1-9
- ♦ Philippians 2:1-13
- ♦ Matthew 21:23-32

Wednesday, Sept. 30th

- ♦ Isaiah 5:1-7
- ♦ Psalm 80:7-15
- ♦ Philippians 3:4b-14
- ♦ Matthew 21:33-46

St. Stephens ELCA

August Council Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2026

Meeting called to order by President Dee Fry.

Attendance– Pastor Michael Collins, Dee Fry, Corky Miller, Kim Long, Kim Frankel, Bill Duncan, Steve Baker and Sandra Barton. Absent: Robert Ollis and Phil Barton

Devotions by Bill Duncan

June minutes were approved by email.

Call Committee Update Working on updating MSP with stories instead of bullet points. We need a mission statement. Who are we, what are we doing, where are we going? A 3 yr. vision plan. Council will meet next Sunday, Aug 16 at 2:00 to work on this.

Treasurer's Report– Report for July

Pastor's report– Report for July– no written report

Ministry Team Reports

Christian Ed./Youth/Evangelism	No meeting
Congregational Life	No meeting
Property/Security	Report on file
Social Ministry	No meeting

Stewardship/Finance	No meeting
Worship & Music	No meeting

Old Business

Landscaping looks good, planting will take place this fall.

New Business

Motion from property to replace an AC unit for the sanctuary that has not been working. Price from Pringle and Son \$7,385.00, Seconded by Steve Baker. Approved.

Nominating committee needs to start working for this year's elections. Billie McMahan, Kay Lafone, Pat Patton, Janie Ward, Donald Bumgarner, and Deborah Pruitt.

September is budget preparation month. Budget sheets will be in your boxes soon. Southern Seminary (LR) has asked for local congregations to host a meal for approx. 50 students for First Week Aug. 24–26. We volunteered to serve baked potatoes, salad, cheese sauce, veges, etc. on the 26th at 5:30.

Social Ministry and Christian Ed have been asked to purchase school supplies for teachers at our local elementary schools.

Motion to adjourn by Steve Baker and seconded by Corky Miller.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting September 13th. Kim Long has devotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Fry, President

Sandra Barton, Secretary

Remember in Prayer



Brookdale Hickory- (*Hickory*) Margaret Yount #17

Brookdale Lenoir- (*Lenoir*) Angie Asherbraner #28

Trinity Village- (*Hickory*) Lois Stine #202,

Wilkes Assisted Living- (*North Wilkesboro*) Sylvia Hoke #206

At Home: Ramona Baker, Hilda Eckard, Lorene Fox, Glenda Kanupp, Carl Baker, and Doris Jones

Family and Friends: Dylan Godfrey, Ben Godfrey, Janet Stinson, Tim Hollar, Andrea Keast, Tami Elmore, Melissa Zarou, Ted Chandler, Greg Deitz, Kathy Powell, Candy Sexton, Amani Dior Mull, Gene Frye, Kevin Eckard, Joyce Stinson, Austin Smith, David Crump, Bill Hill, Vickie Kerby, Susan Jones, Phil Barton, Rufus McCrary, Marlon Short, Tonda Cable, Frank Stooks, Phyllis Schrage, Bruce Godfrey, Susan Shelor, Kenn Phillips, Brenndan Korsas, Lane Fulbright, and Pat Chadwick

Bereavement: The Family of Ronnie Ross, The Family of Don Raker, The Family of Tracy Beseman Family, The Family of Susan Baker Shelor, and The Family of Annie Mae Herman Bowman.

Armed Forces:

U.S. Navy: IS2 Chris Powell

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 of Israel, The People affected by Hurricane Helene, The People affected by the flash flooding in Texas, and The People of Palestine

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





SCAN ME
TO FIND
OUT MORE!

INSPIRATION FROM ABOVE
WORSHIP THAT'S DOWN TO EARTH

✝ Scan QR Code below with
camera phone to give Offering
to SSELCA ✝



SCAN ME

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- Monday-Friday -

8:30AM-1:30PM