

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30) 115 (11:00) 120
Wednesday Eucharist Service: (12:30) 47

General Offering Totals for 2021: \$680,121.85
Expenses to date 2021: \$672,185.85

Freedom to Imagine Campaign: Pledged: \$1,039,288.19 from 129 Families
Received: \$340,938.69
Loan Balance: \$972,000.00

Our weekly offerings are about returning back to God a portion of what he has first given us. We are able to be generous givers when God is at work in our hearts. St. Stephen's Activities for this week include:

TODAY	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary & Online) – First Sunday in Advent 9:45AM: Sunday School for All Ages 11:00AM: Worship Services (Sanctuary) 2PM: Grief Group (Social Hall); 11 th & 12 th Grade Community Group (Sonic) 4PM: Pastor Jason's Installation Worship Service (Sanctuary)
Monday	9AM: Preschool 12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 6PM: Geary (Gym)
Tuesday	9AM: Preschool 6PM: Holden Evening Prayer Service (Sanctuary)
Wednesday	9AM: Preschool 11:45AM: Wednesday Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Eucharist Service (Sanctuary & Online) 5PM: Wings of Worship (Gym Stage) 6PM: Cherub Choir; Children's Choir; Adult Handbells (Balcony) 6:30PM: Tone Chimes (3 rd , 4 th , 5 th Grade Classroom) 7PM: Adult Choir 7:30PM: AA/AI-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	9AM: Preschool 6PM: Christmas Bingo (Gym) 7PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Friday	
Saturday	10AM: Social Hall Reserved 2:45PM: Prime Time (Harbison Theater) 6PM: Living Faith (Stafford's Home)
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary & Online) – Second Sunday in Advent 9:45AM: Sunday School for All Ages 11:00AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:15PM: Jr. & Sr. High Youth 2PM: Grief Group (Social Hall) 5PM: Cocoa & Carols at the Nativity

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for November 28 – December 5, 2021

Congregation Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **November - Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary** is 1 of 8 ELCA Seminaries and the only seminary found in the Southern region of the United States. The campus is found on North Main Street in the Eau Claire community of Columbia. LTSS has been educating and preparing leaders for the church since 1830 and continues that mission today. As members of the SC Synod of the ELCA it has been and will continue to be a part of our mission to support the seminary both with our prayers and our treasures. Please consider designating any donations over and above your regular giving to LTSS to help support the institution, the students, and their ministry present and future.

Hospitalized: Ronald Slice, Still Hopes Rehab; Linda Pittman, Home

Join us for the Wednesday, December 1st Eucharist Service held at 12:30PM in the sanctuary to enhance your weekly worship experience and to share God's Word in a unique, shortened, but spiritual time of worship. Lunch will be served at 11:45am in the social hall.

Installation: Please join us for the installation service for Senior Pastor Jason T. Antley **TODAY** at 4 PM in the sanctuary. A reception will follow in the gym.

Love Offering: Our seminarian, Stephen Abbot's, last day with us will be next Sunday, Dec. 5th. We are collecting a love offering to show our appreciation of his time and devotion to SSLC. We wish him well as he begins his internship next semester!

Christmas Bingo: Whether you have been naughty or nice **Everyone** is invited to come play!! Please join us in the gym on this Thursday, Dec. 2nd at 6pm. Snacks, drinks, and plenty of Christmas cheer will be provided! Please email Tonya (Tonya@sslc.org) and let her know you are coming so that we have enough prizes!!

A HUGE thank you to the Lutheran Men for a wonderful debt retirement meal last Sunday! The food and the fellowship were fantastic! Our next debt retirement meal will be hosted by WELCA on Jan. 23rd!

We would like to invite you all for **Caroling and Cocoa** on the front lawn by the nativity on Sunday, December 5th at 5PM (after the 3PM Lexington Christmas Parade). Come enjoy the parade, stay for caroling, and enjoy some cocoa!

Mission Lexington: Our end of the year food drive is underway with 1,481 lbs. of food collected. Our goal is to collect 5,000 lbs. between now and the end of the year. The total food collected for this year is 15,335 lbs. Our goal for 2021 is 15,000 lbs. Please place your food donations and plastic or paper bags in the food barrel next to the elevator in the admin wing or in the box in front of the men's class room. The following items are the most needed: Canned Fruit, Beef Stew, Canned Chicken, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Mac & Cheese, Canned Vegetables, Chili, Pork & Beans, Canned Soups, Rice, Grits, Sugar, Flour, Oatmeal, Applesauce, Cereals, Coffee, Dog & Cat Food. The following holiday items are needed too: stuffing mix, instant potatoes, canned sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, candied yams, and chicken/turkey/beef broth. Remember even one can of food will feed someone who is hungry. **Holiday Hams and Turkeys for Mission Lexington:** Nurture and Outreach is seeking donations to purchase turkeys and hams to donate to Mission Lexington during the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday. Please prayerfully consider donating \$20.00 toward the purchase of hams and turkeys. Write a check to St. Stephen's and in the remarks section of your check, please mark it for ham and turkey purchase and place it in the offering plate. We will make a ham and turkey purchase close to Thanksgiving and another purchase closer to Christmas. Thank you for your prayerful consideration. Ron Redd: 803-360-0241 Rredd7848@gmail.com.

Jr. Youth (6th-8th grade) & Sr. Youth (9th-12th): Plan to stay after the 11:00 service on Sunday, Dec. 5th. We will walk to Groucho's to get lunch and then come back to the church to paint sun catchers for the folks that we will be caroling for. Stay for the Lexington Christmas Parade (3PM) and/or Cocoa and Carols (5PM)! RSVP by Dec. 2nd!

Living Faith: Brittany and Chas Stafford have invited everyone to their home (128 Brighton Court, Lexington, SC 29072) for our 7th Annual Living Faith Christmas party on Saturday, December 4th from 6-9pm! We really appreciate them offering to host this fun and festive evening! Dinner will be provided. Everyone is asked to bring three things: 1) your own beverage, 2) a dessert to share, and 3) a Mission Lexington food donation. Hope everyone will mark their calendars and plan to be there!

Prime Time: Join us Tuesday, Dec. 21st at 11:45 for a Christmas celebration catered by our own Andy Marchant! Please sign up on the Prime Time bulletin board so we know how many folks to expect. Join us Saturday, Dec. 4th for a trip across the dam to Harbison Theater at Midland's Technical College. After a two-year hiatus, a holiday favorite *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical* is back by popular demand! Join the entire Herdman clan as they crash, bash, smash, and sing their way to the true meaning of Christmas. We hope you will join us for this on-stage holiday classic. We plan to leave the church at 2:45PM and enjoy the 3:30PM show! 20 tickets have been purchased. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you are interested in going! Price is \$18

The Angel Tree is in the hallway outside of the narthex. We are asking that you prayerfully consider taking an angel (or two) from the tree, record your name next to the corresponding number on the log, and then purchase a gift card for the recipient. We are collecting gift cards for those that are served through Lutheran Family Services. We are also asking that you provide a box of candy to go with your angel so that each resident can get a sweet treat and a gift card! All gift cards should be returned by **December 12th!** Thank you!

Advent and Christmas Materials in the Church Library: Looking for information about Advent symbols, the Christmas story, Christmas traditions, the history of Christmas carols, devotions, family activities or books to read with your children? Stop by the Church Library located on the 2nd floor of the Educational Building down from the Balcony choir to see the large selection of Advent and Christmas books for both children and adults. The library is open on Sundays from 9:30-11:00 or by appointment. For questions or to reserve a book, please contact Sharon Mackintosh (359-2407).

Committee of 100: How would you like to be a part of bringing Jesus Christ into someone's life? Actually it could be really simple – by becoming a part of the Committee of 100 which is composed of members who contribute a special \$100.00 in a given year to help support newly organized mission churches in the SC Synod as they struggle to become self-supporting. St. Stephen's has led the way in this program since 1980 – having 79 members in 2020. Please consider this stewardship opportunity. Over \$19,000.00 was distributed to mission churches in 2020. The Make your check to: Committee of 100 – drop it in the offering plate or give it to Ron Redd and he will handle the details. Ron Redd 803-360-0241 Rredd7848@gmail.com.

Holden Evening Prayer Services: Tuesdays, Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, and 21 at 6pm.

Holden Evening Prayer is a beautiful, contemporary vespers service that was written by Marty Haugen in 1985-86 while at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat center in Washington State. The service includes a short reading and homily, this year entitled "Advent...finding Grace, Hope, Peace, and Joy!" We hope you will join us for what is destined to become one of your favorite services of the whole church year.

Blue Christmas Worship Service: Christmas can be a painful time for some. The constant refrain on the radio and television, in shopping malls and churches, about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or never had. If you have suffered the anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation, the loss of a loved one, or anything else that makes this holiday season difficult, St. Stephen's invites you to a special Blue Christmas service next **Sunday, December 19th at 3pm** in the Sanctuary to give space and time to acknowledge your sadness and to let you know that you are not alone. Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scripture, and acknowledgment that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle - and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness

The Chrismon trees were given in honor of Miriam Wessinger and Mildred Shull and in memory of Ralph Wessinger, Sr., Edward Shull, Arthur and Jeannette Tansey, James Flynn, and Priscilla Flynn by Chris and Nina Tansey.