

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for July 27 – August 3, 2025
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Congregational Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **July - Helping Hands**

In the Spring of 2015, it came to the church staff's attention that St. Stephen's had no funds available specifically for helping members of our own congregation who might fall into financial hardship of any kind. It was this conversation that led to the establishment of the Helping Hands Fund. Moneys donated to this fund will be dispensed at the discretion of a group of staff, council, and financial leadership representatives, appointed by the Congregational Council, who will assess each special circumstance and evaluate the best use of the funds to assist in the most helpful way possible.

Hospitalized: Harry Burns, Home; Renata Chappell, Lexington Medical; Stephen Lever, Parkridge; Caroline Bryson, Lexington Medical

Join us for our Wednesday Eucharist Service, July 30th at 12:30pm in the sanctuary to enhance your weekly worship experience and to share God's Word. Lunch will be served at 11:45am in the social hall.

Summer Reading Program - The program continues through August 10. Prizes will be awarded on August 17 to each child completing the program by reading 10 non-chapter books, 5-chapter books, or a combination. Library hours are 9:30-11:00 each Sunday.

End of Summer/ Back to School Bash TODAY: Join us at Celebrations Skating Rink in Batesburg-Leesville **TODAY** from 4:30-6:30pm. Families of all youth (Rising K-12th grade) are encouraged to come! Pizza will be served.

Altar Flowers are needed for August 31. If you would like to sign up for this date, please let Tonya@sslc.org know.

Children's and Youth Sunday School starts August 17th. Rally Sunday is August 10th at 9:45am in the gym. We need your help to find teachers! The curriculum is provided, and the opportunity is open to anyone in the congregation. If you have a desire to interact with awesome kids and want to have fun helping children and youth learn more about Jesus, then this is for you! Please let Shannon@sslc.org know if you are interested in teaching 2–3-year-olds, 4–5-year-olds, 1st-5th graders, or Jr. High (6th-8th grade).

Mission Lexington: Our Easter to Reformation food drive is underway with 1,817 lbs. collected towards the 6,000 lb. goal. Our year to date total collected is 3,887 lbs. Mission Lexington needs the following items: **Please No Glass Jars** – laundry detergent, canned fruit, beef stew, canned chicken, peanut butter & jelly, mac & cheese, chili, pork & beans, canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned soups, rice, coffee, grits, sugar, flour, oatmeal, applesauce, breakfast cereals, dog & cat Food (Dry & Wet), chicken/ turkey/beef broth, and pasta. If you prefer to make a monetary donation toward the purchase of food, please make your check payable to St. Stephen’s and in the remark section put Mission Lexington. Thank you again for your support. Ron Redd 803-360-0241 Rredd7848@gmail.com

Lutheran Men: Please join us Monday, August 18th at 6:30pm in the social hall. Mr. Tom Ramsey, Executive Director of South Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission, will be our guest speaker. We will also finalize our plans for Lutheran Men’s Sunday on August 24th. A special thank you to Allen Shealy and Lance Young for providing the meal. Ron Redd Rredd7848@gmail.com 803-360-0241.

Committee of 100: How would you like to be a part of bringing Jesus Christ into someone’s life? It could be really simple – by becoming a part of the Committee of 100 which is composed of members who contribute \$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 82 members in 2024. All contributions are welcome. Please consider this stewardship opportunity. Over \$17,000.00 was distributed to mission churches in 2024. Please make your check to: Committee of 100 – place 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.

Sr. High Youth (finished 9th-12th grade): On Friday, Aug. 1st as we will take a trip to the White Water Center in Charlotte, NC. We will plan to leave at 8:00am (eat breakfast before you arrive). The cost will be \$50. You can bring extra money for snacks. The church will cover the cost of lunch. We will return to Lexington late afternoon. **2025 Mission Trip participants:** We will have our overnight planning session on Thursday, July 31st.

Hymn Sing is coming up August 24 with Camille Jones, guest accompanist. We’ll start at 5:00pm with a potluck supper followed by the hymn sing. Have hymn requests? Send them to Susan at susan@sslc.org and plan to come to the event.

Blessing of the School Year: Next Sunday, August 3rd at both services, children and young adults are encouraged to bring their book bags to church as we ask God to bless the 2025-2026 school year.

Order of St. Stephen’s training next Sunday, August 3rd at 9:45am in the sanctuary. All 5th graders and up who are interested in serving as an acolyte, crucifer, or banner bearer please plan to attend.

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 133 (11am) 101
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 68

General Offering Total for 2025: \$519,469.33
Expenses Total for 2025: \$570,056.99

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) 9:45AM: Adult Sunday School 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 4:30PM: Back to School Bash (Celebrations)
Monday	8AM: Lifeline Screening (Gym) 12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 6PM: Hill (Gym)
Tuesday	6PM: Lackore (Gym)
Wednesday	10AM: Hill (Gym) 11:45AM: Wednesday Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Wednesday Eucharist Service (Sanctuary-Online) 7:30PM: AA/AI-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	5PM: Mission Trip Overnight Planning (Social Hall) 6PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall); Lackore (Gym)
Friday	8AM: Sr. Youth (White Water Center)
Saturday	
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online)-Blessing of the School Year 9:45AM: Adult Sunday School; Order of St. Stephen’s Training (Sanctuary) 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary)-Blessing of the School Year

Summer Music: Today we welcome Austin Means, soloist and Caroline Beck, clarinetist. Parents, when planning your fall schedules, please save Wednesday nights for our children’s choir. **Cherub Choir** for our 2/3-year-olds will rehearse on Wednesdays from 5:00pm - 5:30pm. The **Carol Choir** for children ages 4-5 rehearses from 5:25pm-6:10pm. The **Treble Choir** for 1st-5th graders rehearses from 5:25pm-6:10pm as well. **Choir chimes** for children in 1st grade through 6th grade rehearses from 6:10pm-6:40pm. **Wings of Worship**, under the direction of Mrs. Rhonda Marchant, will return this fall, taking place on Wednesday evenings from 6:45pm - 7:30pm beginning September 3. This liturgical dance group is for children in grades 1-6. For more information, reach out to Susan Wilson or Rhonda Marchant. Piano lessons are offered this fall. If you are interested contact Susan@sslc.org. Adult learners and children are welcomed. **An adult beginner’s handbell/choir chime ensemble** will form this fall for those who are interested in making music and learning about handbells/choir chimes. The group will rehearse during the daytime, with a time and day selected by those interested in playing. Contact Susan to sign up.