

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 123 (11am) 117
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 57

General Offering Total for 2025: \$659,875.17
Total Expenses for 2025: \$705,009.10

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: Discipleship Sunday & St. Stephen's 101 Class (Social Hall) 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:30PM: God's Work Our Hands (Social Hall)
Monday	8AM: Preschool 12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 6:30PM: Lutheran Men (Social Hall)
Tuesday	8AM: Preschool 9:05AM: Men's Bible (Social Hall) 12:30PM: ROMEO's (Carolina Wings) 6:30PM: Ladies Bible (Sr. High Room)
Wednesday	8AM: Preschool 10:15AM: Ladies Bible (Sr. High Room) 11:45AM: Wednesday Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Wednesday Eucharist Service (Sanctuary-Online) 5PM: WNL Dinner (Social Hall); Cherub Choir (Children's Choir Room) 5:25PM: Carol Choir & Treble Choir (Children's Choir Room) 5:45PM: Jr. High Youth (Jr. High Room) 6PM: Adult Bible Study (Agape Classroom) 6:10PM: Choir Chimes (Children's Choir Room) 6:30PM: Confirmation Class (Saints & Sinners Classroom) 6:45PM: Wings of Worship (Gym) 7PM: Adult Choir (Adult Choir Room) 7:30PM: AA/Al-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	8AM: Preschool; Lifeline Screening (Gym) 5:30PM: Chat-N-Chew (Blue Marlin) 7PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Friday	8AM: Preschool
Saturday	
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online)-Building Maintenance Lunch 9:45AM: Sunday School all ages; St. Stephen's 101 Class (Sanctuary) 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary)-Building Maintenance Lunch 12:30PM: Council Meeting (Office Conference Room) 5PM: Family Night (Social Hall)

There is coffee available in the social hall between services. Enjoy!

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for September 14 – September 21, 2025

Congregational Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **September – Music Fund**
The Music Fund donations go to support the ongoing music ministry at St. Stephen's. Donations support such things as music scholarships, instrument purchases for children's choirs, community outreach programming such as May Music Midday, Music/Art/Faith summer camps, ALMS projects, and additional music needs that arise as the music program grows and expands.

Hospitalized: Rhett Sharpe, NHC

Christian Sympathy is extended to Gregg Mills and his family upon the death of his mother, Sunie Mills. May the peace and comfort of God's Word be with them assuring them of the knowledge and truth of the Resurrection.

Join us for our Wednesday Eucharist Service, September 17th 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. Join us Wednesday, September 24th at 9:30am for a fun game of BUNCO! Never played? No problem! Come and learn and enjoy some fellowship time before lunch.

Building Maintenance Lunches are back! Join your church council next Sunday, September 21 for lunch in the social hall. These luncheons are held once a month September – May. All proceeds go directly to the building maintenance fund. Meals are ready for take-out or eat-in after the 8:30 & 11:00 services.

Discipleship Gatherings: Starting back **TODAY**, on the 2nd Sunday of the month, all Sunday School classes (except 2'and 3's) will meet in the social hall at 9:45am. Our focus will be on being contributor-oriented vs consumer oriented in our faith. Activities for our intergenerational audience will be provided by the pastors and Shannon as they will be leading these classes! It's sure to be a fun time and an opportunity to gather as a community of faith!

God's Work Our Hands Service Day: This day has been reserved to participate in the ELCA's Annual "God's Work Our Hands" Day. **TODAY** we will be working as a congregation to do some much-needed cleaning up in the basement. Volunteers are asked to meet in the social hall at 12:30pm with their own bag lunch. We will eat together before heading downstairs.

First Communion Class will be offered by Pastor Jason and Pastor Ralph on Sunday, September 28th at 12:30pm. We will eat some pizza together and then delve into the day's curriculum and activities! If you plan to attend, please RSVP to the church office no later than Thursday, September 25th so that we can know how much pizza to order. If you have any questions, please contact one of the pastors!

Mission Lexington: Our Easter to Reformation food drive is underway with 2,749 lbs. collected towards the 6,000 lb. goal. Our year to date total collected is 4,819 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

Prime Time: We will be traveling to Narroway Productions on Friday, Oct. 10th to see Lord of Light. If you are interested, please sign up as only 12 tickets have been reserved.

Lutheran Men: Please join us in the social hall at 6:30pm on Monday, September 15th for a meal and presentation by Amy Reeves, Executive Director of Mission Lexington. Ron Redd Rredd7848@gmail.com 803-360-0241.

First Responder Breakfast: A BIG thank you to all who participated and helped make our 2nd annual First Responder Breakfast a huge success! It was a wonderful event for our community, and we couldn't have done it without everyone's help and participation.

Weekly Men's Bible Study is every Tuesday at 9:05am in the social hall. Pastor Ralph leads a discussion time of all talk" as we gather around the table and interpret together the Scripture from the previous Sunday's lessons. Bring your bulletin & Bible. Refreshments will be served.

St. Stephen's 101: For New Members (and Seasoned Ones Too!) The Pastors and staff of St. Stephen's will be offering a class for folks interested in learning more about St. Stephen's and how to get more involved. This class is for those who may be interested in joining and anyone else who would like to attend. This is meant to be a helpful tool. It is not a requirement to attend if you want to join. There will be three sessions. Classes will be held during the Sunday School hour.

- **TODAY– Faith 101** (9:45am in the social hall)
Pastor Ralph will lead this class that will focus on introducing the basics of Lutheranism and how that is lived out at St. Stephen's.
- **Sunday, September 21st – Getting Plugged In**
Our church staff will team together to introduce you to all the basics of being a member of St. Stephen's and all the different opportunities you will find to be "People of Christ Making a Difference" within and outside the walls of our congregation.
- **Sunday, September 28th – SSLC 101**
Welcoming of New Members: We will welcome new members at both services as the culmination of our time together. Pastor Jason will also lead the last session that will focus on getting to know a little more about each other and learning some of the history of our congregation

Music: If you are interested in the **adult beginner's handbell/choir chime ensemble**, be sure to let Susan Wilson know so we can set a rehearsal time with all those interested. No experience necessary. **Romeo's** will meet on Tuesday, September 16 at 12:30pm at Carolina Wings. Ladies Who Lunch will meet on Tuesday, September 23 at 12:30pm. The location has not been determined yet. The **adult choir** will meet on Wednesday at 7:00pm in the choir room. It's a great time to join the choir! The Handbell Choir will resume rehearsals on Monday at 6:30pm.

Chat & Chew: Join your church family on Thursday, Sept. 18th at 5:30pm at The Blue Marlin for dinner. Hosted by Georgianna and Don Dukes. The cost is \$20 per person (cash) and a cash bar will also be available. Please sign up on the bulletin board so we have a head count. We are looking forward to a fun night of food and fellowship.

A new Sunday School opportunity: Women Digging Deeper: This Sunday school class for women will begin September 7th. We will gather and discuss the scripture readings for that day. We will meet in the parlor. This class will be a group think for facilitating and discussing. Our hope is the Word will sink in deeper as we dig deeper in the Word!

Young Adult/Young Family/Living Faith Group/J-Crew Groups please join us for our Quarterly Family Night next Sunday, September 21st from 5-7pm. We are going to have Moe's for dinner and then the kids will break off into different groups so the adults can have some time to fellowship. Our Jr. and Sr. High Youth and Mrs. Shannon will provide care for the children. Our littlest ones will be in the downstairs classrooms while our 1st-5th graders will watch a movie/do an activity in the Sr. High Room. Please RSVP by **TODAY** to Shannon and let her know how many to expect!

The Blessing of the Animals will be September 28th at 3pm on the front lawn at the corner of Butler St. and N. Church St. All animals are welcome! If you can't bring your pet, bring a picture! Please bring dog or cat food to donate to Mission Lexington!

Save The Date: The Imani Milele Children's Choir from Uganda, Africa, will be singing a concert at St. Stephen's on Tuesday, Oct. 21st. This ensemble has sung here before, and they are looking forward to coming back. If you haven't heard this choir, you're in for a treat!! With song and storytelling, they present a very uplifting concert. A free will offering will be taken to support the choir's expenses.

WNL! Schedule

- 5:00pm-5:45pm: Dinner in the social hall
- 5:00pm – 5:30pm: Cherub Choir – 2-year-olds–4-year-olds
- 5:25pm – 6:10pm: Carol Choir – 5-year-olds-2nd grade
- 5:25pm – 6:10pm: Treble Choir – 3rd-5th grade
- 5:45pm - 6:30pm: Jr. High Youth 6th-8th grade
- 6:00pm: Adult Bible Study
- 6:10pm – 6:40pm: Choir Chimes – 1st -6th Graders
- 6:30pm -7:30pm: Confirmation 7th and 8th grade
- 6:45pm – 7:30pm: Wings of Worship
- 7:00pm: Adult Choir