

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 160 (11am) 109
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 72

General Offering Total for 2025: \$900,430.85
Total Expenses for 2025: \$930,998.31

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:

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| TODAY | 8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online) 9:45AM: Sunday School for all ages 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 2PM: Petting Zoo and Cocoa (Front Lawn) 4:30PM: Pancakes with Santa (Gym) |
| Monday | 8AM: Preschool 12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 6:30PM: Adult Handbell (Balcony) |
| Tuesday | 8AM: Preschool 9:05AM: Men's Bible (Social Hall) 6PM: Holden Evening Prayer Service (Sanctuary-Online) |
| Wednesday | Gym Closed 8AM: Preschool 11:30AM: Church Christmas Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Wednesday Eucharist Service (Sanctuary-Online) 5PM: Cherub Choir (Children's Choir Room) 5:25PM: Carol Choir & Treble Choir (Children's Choir Room) 7PM: Adult Choir (Adult Choir Room) 7:30PM: AA/AI-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor) |
| Thursday | Gym Closed 8AM: Preschool 6:30PM: Romeo's (Huckabee's Home) 7PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) |
| Friday | Gym Closed 8AM: Preschool 12:15PM: Nantz (Social Hall) 6PM: Jr. High (Meet at the bus) |
| Saturday | Gym Closed 8AM: Quilt Guild (Social Hall) 10AM: Rehearsal (Gym) |
| Sunday | 8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online) 9:45AM: Discipleship Sunday School (Social Hall) 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 5PM: Dinner (Gym) 6PM: Family Christmas Night (Gym) |

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for December 7 – December 14, 2025

Congregational Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **December - Lutheran Services Carolinas.** With the help of thousands of volunteers, donors, and faith partners, LSC helps veterans and others transition from homelessness to dignity; protects children at risk of abuse and neglect with foster care; improves the lives of those battling severe and persistent mental illness through innovative programs; encourages growth and independence for those with developmental disabilities; places children in loving adoptive homes; provides warmth and welcome to refugees seeking sanctuary; and enables many men and women with varying life challenges or disabilities to live proudly and independently with residential or supportive services. Please consider supporting this worthy organization and its cause with your love offering donations during the month of December.

Join us for our Wednesday Advent Service, December 10th 12:30pm in the sanctuary to enhance your weekly worship experience and to share God's Word. **We will have a special Christmas luncheon at 11:30am.** Come enjoy and celebrate the Christmas season!

Our 2026 Flower Calendar is available for sign up! Please find the calendar in the narthex.

Advent Holden Evening Prayer Service will be on Tuesday, Dec. 9, 16, & 23 at 6pm in the sanctuary. Holden Evening Prayer is a beautiful, contemporary vespers service that was written by Marty Haugen in 1985-86 while at Holden Village. We hope you will join us!

Christmas Event! Join us **TODAY** at 2pm on the front lawn by the Nativity for a petting zoo for all ages. This will take place before the Lexington Christmas Parade, and we will serve cocoa and cookies and play Christmas music for the community to enjoy!

Pancakes and PJs with Santa: **TODAY** from 4:30pm-5:30pm (immediately following the Lexington Christmas Parade) wear your Christmas PJs, fill your belly with pancakes, and get your picture made with Santa! Benefiting: Our youth that will be going to Lake Traverse Indian Reservation in South Dakota for our 2026 Mission Trip. Ticket cost is \$20 per child (one adult admitted free per child); additional adults \$10

Pecans Available! Thank you to all who supported the pecan fundraiser! If you missed the opportunity to order or just want more, you're in luck because we have extras on hand. Contact Julie for information and to get your pecans in time for the holidays. 803-359-4369 or julie@sslc.org

Mission Lexington: Our end of the year food drive is underway with the goal of 1,500lbs between now and the end of the year. We have collected 1,550 lbs. so far. Our year to date total collected is 7,474 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. Holiday items needed: cranberry sauce, cornbread mix, candied yams, gravy mix, stuffing mix, instant potatoes, cake mix. 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, December 15 at 6:30pm in the social hall for a meal and a Christmas message from Pastor Ralph. Ron Redd 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 each 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.

Blue Christmas Worship Service is Sunday, December 21st 2pm in the sanctuary. Come 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.

Ham and Turkey Gift Card Donations: Nurture and Outreach is seeking donations of \$25 that will be used to buy gift cards for those in need. The gift cards will then be used to purchase a ham or a turkey for Christmas. Please make checks payable to St. Stephen's and in the remarks section put "ham and turkey fund".

JCREW, Jr. Youth, and Sr. Youth (and any family or congregational members that would like to participate!) It's time to bring Christmas joy to those we love! Join us for caroling on Sunday, Dec. 21st at 3pm. We would love for anyone - not just youth - to contact Pastor Jason or Mrs. Shannon by Sunday, December 14th if you are interested in participating. Don't let anything stop you from coming to make a joyful noise! Once we know how many folks are willing to sing, we will form groups that will travel to member's houses to spread Christmas cheer!

Music: There will be children's choir rehearsals on Wednesday, December 10. The Cherub Choir will meet at 5:00pm and the Carol and Treble Choirs will meet at 5:25pm. The choir chime ensemble will not rehearse on Wednesday. Parents, please save the date for the December 13 at 10:00am **Dress Rehearsal** for the Christmas Pageant. **Family Night Christmas**, December 14, will begin with a potluck dinner at 5:00pm, followed by our children's choir's Christmas program at 6:00pm. They will be presenting a traditional Christmas pageant. On December 19, at 2:00pm, we will have **Carols, Cookies, and Cider** with piano duets of the season presented by Tammy Lorick and Susan Wilson, accompanied by Matthew Jones, percussionist. If you are willing to bake some homemade cookies for the event let Susan know. December 21 the **Adult Choir** will present their music of the season at both worship services, accompanied by brass and percussion. **Ladies who Lunch** will meet on December 16. Ladies don't forget we are supporting Sister Care with gift cards during this season. Please bring your gift cards to Susan by December 16. **Romeo's** will meet for the annual Christmas party on December 11 at the home of Billy and Sarah Huckabee. Bring a dish to share.

St. Stephen's Angel Tree is up! Please consider choosing an angel to make someone's Christmas brighter. 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 or gift for the recipient. Please wrap your gift, tape the angel outside of the box, and return it by **TODAY!** Thank you in advance for your participation!

Jr. High Youth (6th-8th grade): Join us Friday, December 12th for a Progressive Dinner and Christmas Lights. Let's get into the holiday spirit and travel around for appetizers, dinner, and dessert! We will enjoy the lights along the way. We plan to leave the church at 6pm (meet at the bus) to head to our first stop.

WELCA Circle Meetings: All women of St. Stephen's are members of WELCA and warmly invited to engage with one of our five circles. Each circle offers wonderful opportunities centered around faith, fellowship, and service. Below are the monthly meeting times and key contacts for each circle. Please don't hesitate to reach out, we would love you to join us!

- **Lunch Belles**, 1st Tuesday, 12:30pm at the Country Club of Lexington. Peggy Sherman (sshe695063@aol.com)
- **Sunshine Circle**, 1st Monday, 6:30pm at rotating hostess home. Marty Nantz (no.1mimi@yahoo.com)
- **Circle 5**, 1st Tuesday, 6pm in the church social hall or parlor. Kay Keener (the_keeners@live.com)
- **Circle of Love**, 2nd Tuesday, 6:30pm in the church social hall. Suzanne Robinson (robinsons1@yahoo.com)
- **Circle 9**, 1st Wednesday, 11am, at the church parlor or hostess' home. Drew Welch (DrewRoyWelch@gmail.com)