

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 156 (11am) 240
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 68

General Offering Total for 2025: \$941,007.85
Total Expenses for 2025: \$966,978.98

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: Sunday School for all ages (Social Hall) 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:30PM: Council Meeting (Social Hall) 2PM: Blue Christmas Service (Sanctuary-Online) 3PM: Caroling 6PM: Sr. High Lock-in
Monday	12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 6:30PM: Adult Handbell (Balcony)
Tuesday	9:05AM: Men’s Bible (Social Hall) 6PM: Holden Evening Prayer Service (Sanctuary-Online)
Wednesday	11:45AM: Preservice Music (Sanctuary) 12PM: Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary-Online) 3PM: Family Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary) 5:30PM: Preservice Music (Sanctuary) 6PM: Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary-Online) 10:30PM: Preservice Music (Sanctuary) 11PM: Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary) 7:30PM: AA/Al-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	Church Office Closed – Merry Christmas! 7PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online) 9:45AM: No Sunday School 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary)

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for December 21 – December 28, 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.

Hospitalized: Brenda Bruner, Lexington Medical, Fred Douglas, Lexington Medical; Ronnie Smith, Palmetto Richland; Ebony Bowers, Lexington Medical

Christian Sympathy is extended to the family of Rhett Sharpe upon his death. May the peace and comfort of God’s Word be with them assuring them of the knowledge and truth of the Resurrection.

Congratulations to Spencer and Huntley Oliver on the birth of their daughter, Anna Catherine Oliver on December 17th. We are excited for them and for Anna Cate’s grandparents Suzanne and Danny Robinson!

Join us for our Wednesday Service, December 31st 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.

Blue Christmas Worship Service is **TODAY** at 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.

JCREW, Jr. Youth, Sr. Youth and congregational members that would like to participate!
It's time to bring Christmas joy to those we love! Join us for caroling **TODAY** at 3pm. We would love for anyone to join us!

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:

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.

Our 2026 Flower Calendar is available for sign up! Please find the calendar in the narthex. Available dates include: January 4, 18, 25, February 1, 22, and March 8

Prime Time: Join us on Sunday, January 11 as we stroll through Wild Lights at Riverbanks Zoo and discover over 60 larger-than-life handcrafted wildlife lantern displays inspired by nature. This interactive event showcases stunning illuminations sure to dazzle guests of all ages. Don't miss this unforgettable experience! We will leave the church at 4:15pm, stop and have an early supper, and then visit the zoo. The zoo will cost \$25, and dinner is on your own. Tickets are limited so as people sign up, Shannon will purchase tickets.

Pecans Available! Limited pecans, including praline, butter roasted, and dark chocolate are still available from the Preschool fundraiser. Contact Julie for information and to get your pecans in time for the holidays. 803-359-4369 or julie@sslc.org

Music: Thank you to all our volunteers for helping with the music events of Advent. **Christmas Eve** we will have preservice music beginning at 11:45am for the Noon service. At 6:00pm service the music begins at 5:30pm. At 11:00pm service music begins at 10:30pm. A string quartet will play at 6:00pm and 11:00pm services. The adult choir and the handbell choir will participate at the 6:00pm service. **Children's choirs** will resume on January 7.

Advent Holden Evening Prayer Service will be on Tuesday, Dec.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!

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)

Christmas Eve Services

- 11:45am: Preservice Music
- 12pm - Carols, Candlelight and Holy Communion
- 3pm - Family and Children's Service with Holy Communion
- 5:30pm - Preservice Music with Strings, Handbells, and Adult Choir
- 6pm - Candlelight Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion
- 10:30pm - Preservice Music with Strings
- 11pm - Carols, Candlelight and Holy Communion (Incense will be used at this service)