

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 172 (11am) 73
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 56

General Offering Total for 2026: \$571,343.95
Total Expenses for 2026: \$590,939.88

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 adults 11:AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:30PM: Mission Trip Lunch/Presentation (Social Hall)
Monday	12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 1PM: Art Camp (Gym Hallway)
Tuesday	9:05AM: Men's Bible (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Romeo's (Carolina Buffet)
Wednesday	11:45AM: Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Wednesday Eucharistic Service (Sanctuary-Online) 1PM: Art Camp (Gym Hallway) 7:30PM: AA/Al-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	7PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online) 9:45AM: Sunday School for adults 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary)

Committee of 100: How would you like to be a part of bringing Jesus Christ into someone's life? It could be 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 75 members in 2025. All contributions are welcome. Please consider this stewardship opportunity. Over \$18,267.00 was distributed to mission churches in 2025. 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.

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for July 26 – August 2, 2026

Congregational Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **July - 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 July.

Hospitalized: Edward Bernard, Palmetto Richland

Join us for our Wednesday Eucharistic Service, July 29th 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.

Congratulations to Adam and Jessie Mintz on the birth of their daughter, Abigail Rose, on July 13. Andrew and Austin are going to be awesome big brothers! We are excited for grandparents Ed and Kelley Mintz too!

Blessing of the School Year: Next Sunday, August 2nd at both services, children and young adults are encouraged to bring their book bags to church as we ask God to bless the 2026-2027 school year.

Order of St. Stephen's training Sunday, August 16th 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.

Mission Lexington: Our Easter to Reformation food drive is underway with 2,662 lbs. of food collected toward a goal of 5,000 lbs. of food between now and Reformation Sunday, October 25. Our yearly donations are 4,237 lbs. toward a goal of 8,000 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), laundry detergent, 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

Summer Reading Program: The program continues through next Sunday, August 2. Prizes will be awarded on August 9 to each child completing the program by reading 10 non-chapter books, 5-chapter books, or a combination. Library hours are 9:30-11:00am each Sunday.

Our mission trip to Lake Traverse Reservation was an incredible experience and we can't wait to tell you all about it! Please join us for a spaghetti luncheon **TODAY** at 12:30pm. There will be no charge for lunch, but we will take up a love offering that will be divided amongst the 3 non-profits we learned about in Sisseton. You really don't want to miss this presentation!!

Lutheran Men: will meet in the social hall Monday, August 17 at 6:30pm for a meal. After the meal we will make our final plans for Lutheran Men's Sunday August 30 and for our First Responder Breakfast on Friday, September 11. Please join us. Ron Redd 803-360-0241 Rredd7848@gmail.com.

Sunday School Update: After taking the summer off, our children's Sunday School classes will resume in September. Shannon will need teachers! Please let her know if you are willing to teach. Our goal is to have enough teachers to rotate so no one must teach more than one Sunday a month. Curriculum is easy to follow and not much prep is needed. Our 2nd Sunday Discipleship class (beginning Sept. 13th) will continue to meet in the social hall. Our focus this year will be Fruits of the Spirit. This class is intended to be for all ages, although little ones are welcome to go to the nursery and play with Mrs. Ree! Come join in the intergenerational fellowship, learning, and snacking!

Music: If you are considering piano lessons for you or your child contact Susan Wilson. There are a few spots open for the fall if interested. Lessons take place once a week at the church. Our **children's choirs** will resume September 9. Save Wednesday evenings for choirs! Cherub Choir is for 2-4-year-olds and they meet from 5:00-5:30pm. Carol and Treble Choirs meet from 5:30-6:10pm. These choirs are for children in K-5th grade. Choir chimes will meet on Wednesdays as well from 6:10-6:40pm and is for children in 1st-5th grade. For more information contact susan@sslc.org

Prime Time Events:

- Join us for lunch at The Peanut Man on Thursday, August. 13th. We will leave the church at 10:45am. The Peanut Man Cafe is a gourmet cafe with a great lunch menu, specialty coffee drinks & desserts. They also have a great sweet n salty gift shop full of handmade chocolates, nuts and confections. Please sign up if you plan to go! No cost to go; lunch is on your own.
- On Saturday, August 29th we will head to The Gallery Tea Room located at 1104 Caldwell Street in historic downtown Newberry, South Carolina. The Gallery, where the tearoom is located, has works by local artists, gifts, jewelry, cards, children's items, furniture, gourmet foods, teas, and spices, as well as unique home décor. Join us for an afternoon of shopping and eating! We will plan to leave the church at 10:45am. Anyone is welcome to join us, just please sign up so we have a head count! **Sign up by August 19th!** Cost is \$45/person.
- On Thursday, August 27th we will go to the Lexington County Public Library for Lake Murray – Beneath the Surface from 6-7pm. Dive into an interactive presentation about the Jewel of South Carolina. Explore Lake Murray's layered history, discovering what still exists beneath the water's surface, and uncover how these treasures shape the gathering place it is today, sharing your own experiences and stories. Partnered with local diver William Roberts. If there is interest, the group can eat before at Señor Bird's where bold flavors and vibrant ambiance come together. If we plan to eat, we will need to leave the church by 4:30pm. Please sign up and place a check mark on the sheet so Shannon knows your plans. The presentation is free, but they suggest we arrive 10-15 mins early. Dinner will be on your own.

Upcoming Events:

August 2: Blessing of the School Year
August 16: Order of St. Stephen's Training
August 19: First Day of Preschool
September 9: WNL Starts
September 11: First Responder Breakfast
September 13: God's Work Our Hands
September 20: Hymn Sing
September 27: First Communion Class; Blessing of the Animals