

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 163 (11am) 133
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 56

General Offering Total for 2026: \$627,408.40
Total Expenses for 2026: \$642,158.36

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; Order of St. Stephen's Training 11:AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:30PM: Council Meeting (Office Conference Room)
Monday	12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall) 6:30PM: Lutheran Men (Social Hall)
Tuesday	9:05AM: Men's Bible (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Romeo's (Carolina Wings)
Wednesday	8AM: Preschool 11:45AM: Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Wednesday Eucharistic Service (Sanctuary-Online) 7:30PM: AA/AI-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	8AM: Preschool 6PM: This Is Us (Hudson's) 7PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Friday	12:30PM: Ladies Who Lunch (Clara & Ray's)
Saturday	11AM: Harmon (Social Hall)
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online) 9:30AM: WELCA Board Meeting (Office Conference Room) 9:45AM: Sunday School for adults; ELCA Gathering Meeting (Social Hall) 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 Redd7848@gmail.com.

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for August 16 – August 23, 2026

Congregational Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **August-Lutheran Campus Ministry** is a Lutheran ministry for students, faculty, staff, and others on college campuses around the nation, not just a ministry for Lutherans. Its mission is to invite people in academic settings to engage more deeply with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the community that bears his name, so that they can discover and fulfill their vocation as disciples. In South Carolina we have 15 ministry sites that reach out to over 20 different colleges and universities. In recent years funding for Lutheran Campus Ministry has declined substantially and they could use our support to help them continue their important mission.

Hospitalized: Terri Geary, Lexington Medical Center; Rick Loging, Palmetto Richland

Join us for our Wednesday Eucharistic Service, August 19th 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 Ellie and Kyle Tisdale on the birth of their son, Robert Ray Tisdale. Lia is going to be a great big sister and grandparents, Ed and Kelley Mintz, are so excited!

Order of St. Stephen's training **TODAY** 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.

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 Redd7848@gmail.com.

Our WNL! Programs Start September 9!

- 5:00-5:45pm Dinner in the social hall
- 5:00-5:30pm Cherub Choir (2–4-year-olds)
- 5:30-6:10pm Carol (5-year-olds-2nd grade) and Treble Choirs (3rd-5th grade)
- 5:30-6:00pm Jr. High Youth (6th-8th grade) (beginning September 16)
- 6:00pm Adult Bible Study; Confirmation meeting with parents and youth
- 6:10-6:40pm Choir Chimes (1st-5th grade)
- 7:00pm Adult Choir

Mission Lexington: Our Easter to Reformation food drive is underway with 3,057 lbs. of food collected toward a goal of 5,000 lbs. of food between now and Reformation Sunday, October 25. Our yearly donations are 4,632 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

Sr. High Youth (9th-12th Grade): It's time to make plans and kick off the year at Sophie and Sam Taylor's house. Join us on Sunday, Aug. 30 at 4pm. You can play in the lake, ride on the pontoon, and possibly grab a ride on the jet ski! We will provide food and drinks. You provide your own bathing suit, a towel, and fun ideas for this year's activities! Please RSVP by Aug. 26th. If you can't drive, and want to ride the bus, let Mrs. Shannon know! Mark your calendars for the 1st Tuesday of each month as we will have breakfast at the church at 7:30am. First meeting will be Sept. 1st!

Sunday School Update: 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: **Romeo's** will meet on Tuesday, August 18 at 12:30pm at Carolina Wings for lunch. The **Ladies Who Lunch** will meet on Friday, August 21 at 12:30pm at Clara and Ray's. Please rsvp for either group to susan@sslc.org or by text at 858 729 8672. 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. **Wings of Worship** will not be taking place this year. Please join us on Sunday, September 20, for a potluck dinner followed by a **hymn sing** led by Ken Renfrow. Ken played on our May Music Midday series this year and is a fabulous musician. The event begins with dinner at 5:00pm.

This is Us (Parents of high school and college age youth) will meet Thursday, August 20 at 6pm at Hudsons Smokehouse. Please let Shannon know if you plan to attend!

WELCA Executive Board meeting August 23 at 9:30am in the office conference room.

Prime Time Events:

- 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.
- Friday, September 18 and Saturday, September 19: Trip to Myrtle Beach/Luau and Polynesian Dinner. Discover the sizzling spectacle of an authentic Polynesian Fire Luau in Myrtle Beach. Enjoy dinner and a show brought to you by a Samoan family from the village of Nu'uuli on the island of Tutuila in American Samoa. Cost per person: \$235 for a double room; \$335 for a single room. What is included: Luau with Polynesian Dinner and Live Show at St. John's Inn, Room at Grande Shores Ocean Resort, transportation, snacks, and Ripley's Aquarium entrance. Additional costs: Friday lunch, Saturday breakfast and lunch. Sign-up deadline is Sept. 1st! Please plan to pay the total amount when you sign up. Shannon has to buy tickets and secure rooms. You can find more details and the sign-up sheet on the Prime-Time bulletin board. See Shannon with questions

Attention Young Adults: Today at 10:00am, Pastor Ralph is inviting any Young Adults (20's/30's) for a brief input meeting in his office. We will gather to consider ideas/events for the fall. Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Events:

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