

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for July 13 – July 20, 2025

Congregational Council approves causes to be featured monthly. **July - Helping Hands**
In the Spring of 2015, it came to the church staff's attention that St. Stephen's had no funds available specifically for helping members of our own congregation who might fall into financial hardship of any kind. It was this conversation that led to the establishment of the Helping Hands Fund. Moneys donated to this fund will be dispensed at the discretion of a group of staff, council, and financial leadership representatives, appointed by the Congregational Council, who will assess each special circumstance and evaluate the best use of the funds to assist in the most helpful way possible.

Hospitalized: Coraline Johnson, Home; Harry Burns, Lexington Medical

Christian Sympathy is extended to the family of Rev. Ron Diegel upon his death and to Mary Westberry upon the death of her sister, Carolyn Griffin. May the peace and comfort of God's Word be with these families assuring them of the knowledge and truth of the Resurrection.

Join us for our Wednesday Eucharist Service, July 16th 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.

Summer Reading Program - Ages 18 months through the 6th grade are invited to participate in the Summer Reading Program sponsored by the Church Library through August 10. The theme is Old Testament Stories. Parents may read books to young non-readers. Prizes will be awarded on August 17 to each child completing the program by reading 10 non-chapter books, five-chapter books, or a combination. The library is located on the 2nd floor of the Educational Building down from the Balcony Choir. Hours are 9:30-11:00 each Sunday. Check out all the books in the library, and rest, relax, and READ this summer!!

End of Summer/ Back to School Bash: Join us at Celebrations Skating Rink in Batesburg-Leesville Sunday, July 27th from 4:30-6:30pm. Families of all youth (Rising K-12th grade) are encouraged to come! Please RSVP to Shannon (Shannon@sslc.org) by July 24th. Pizza will be served.

Preschool Registration for the 2025-2026 school year is ongoing! Limited spaces remain in the 3s and 4s classes. For more information and to register, visit <https://sslc.org/st-stephens-preschool-ministry>. Contact Julie at 803-359-4369 with any questions! We'd love to have you join our preschool family!

Mission Lexington: Our Easter to Reformation food drive is underway with 2,977 lbs. collected. Our 2025 goal is 12,000 lbs. of food. Mission Lexington needs the following items: **Please No Glass Jars** - 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

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 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 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. Ron Redd 803-360-0241 Rredd7848@gmail.com.

Summer Music continues...today we welcome Gali Ramos, soprano and Joanna Taylor, flutist. On July 20 we welcome Cole Catalanatto, cellist, and Jack Jebaily, trumpeter. Coming July 27, we welcome Austin Means, soloist and Caroline Beck, clarinetist. **Parents**, when planning your fall schedules, please save Wednesday nights for our children's choir. **Cherub Choir** for our 2/3-year-olds will rehearse on Wednesdays from 5:00pm - 5:30pm. The **Carol Choir** for children ages 4-5 rehearses from 5:25 – 6:10pm. The **Treble Choir** for 1st-5th graders rehearses from 5:25-6:10pm as well. **Choir chimes** for children in 1st grade through 6th grade rehearses from 6:10-6:40pm. Piano lessons are offered this summer and in the fall. If you are interested contact Susan@sslc.org. Adult learners and children are welcomed.

Jr. High Youth (those that have finished 6th, 7th, & 8th grade): Join Mrs. Shannon for a trip to Whirlin' Waters in North Charleston on Thursday, July 24th. The cost is \$20 plus money for snacks. The church will cover the cost of lunch. Please RSVP by July 20th so Mrs. Shannon can get tickets.

Sr. High Youth (finished 9th-12th grade): Mark your calendars for Friday, Aug. 1st as we will take a trip to the White Water Center in Charlotte, NC. We will plan to leave at 8:00am (eat breakfast before you arrive). The cost will be \$50. You can bring extra money for snacks. The church will cover the cost of lunch. We will return to Lexington late afternoon. **2025 Mission Trip participants:** We will have our overnight planning session on Thursday, July 31st.

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30am) 115 (11am) 101
Wednesday Service: (12:30pm) 58

General Offering Total for 2025: \$488,764.33
Expenses Total for 2025: \$530,840.17

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: Adult Sunday School 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary)
Monday	12:30PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Tuesday	6PM: Lackore (Gym)
Wednesday	11:45AM: Wednesday Lunch (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Wednesday Eucharist Service (Sanctuary-Online) 7:30PM: AA/AI-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	6PM: AA Meeting (Social Hall); Lackore (Gym)
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	8:30AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary-Online) 9:45AM: Adult Sunday School 11AM: Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:30PM: Council Meeting (Social Hall)

Calling All Women of St. Stephen's! Did you know that every woman at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church is a member of WELCA—Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—both nationally and right here in South Carolina? This year's SC WELCA Annual Convention is happening just down the road at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Aiken, on Friday and Saturday, August 15–16. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect, grow, and be inspired through fellowship and engaging workshops. Closer to the date, carpooling opportunities will be arranged. Early **registration discounts are available through July 15!** Details and registration forms, including workshop descriptions, are available at www.scwelca.com/sc-welca-2023-convention. Need a hand with registering or have questions? Reach out to Lenna Young at lenna.c.young@gmail.com and she'll be happy to help!