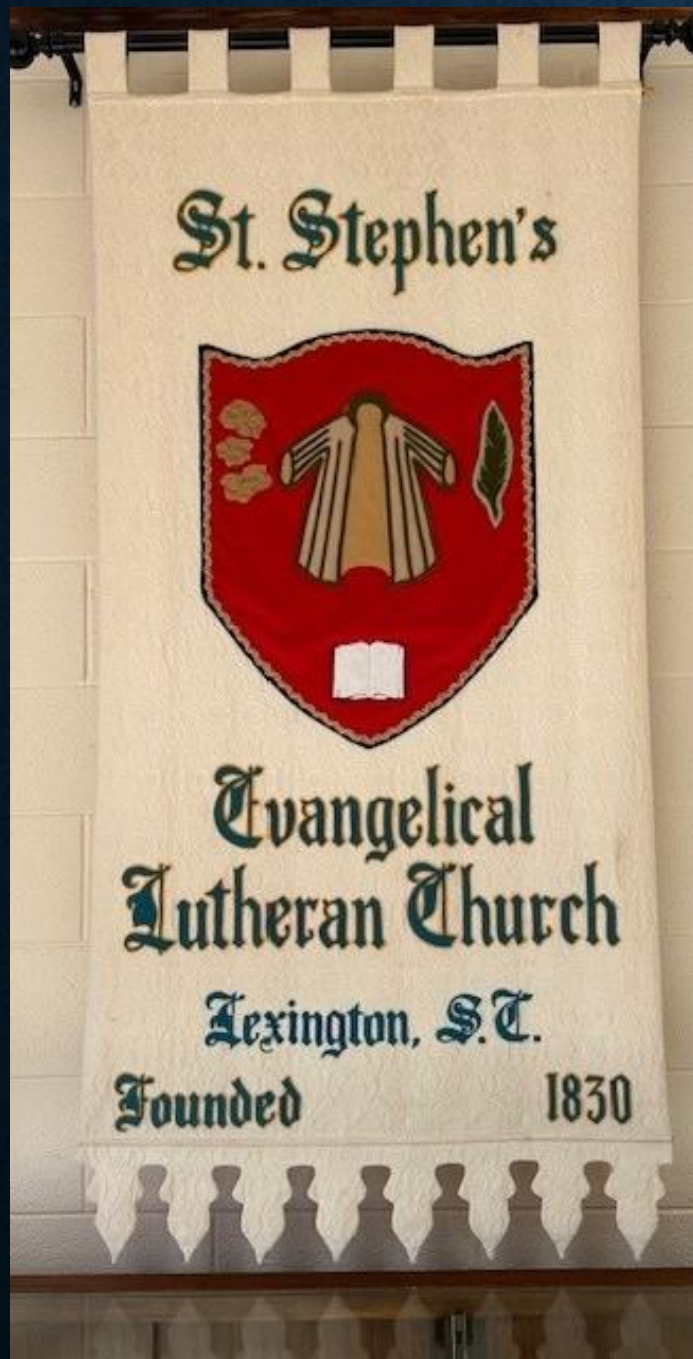
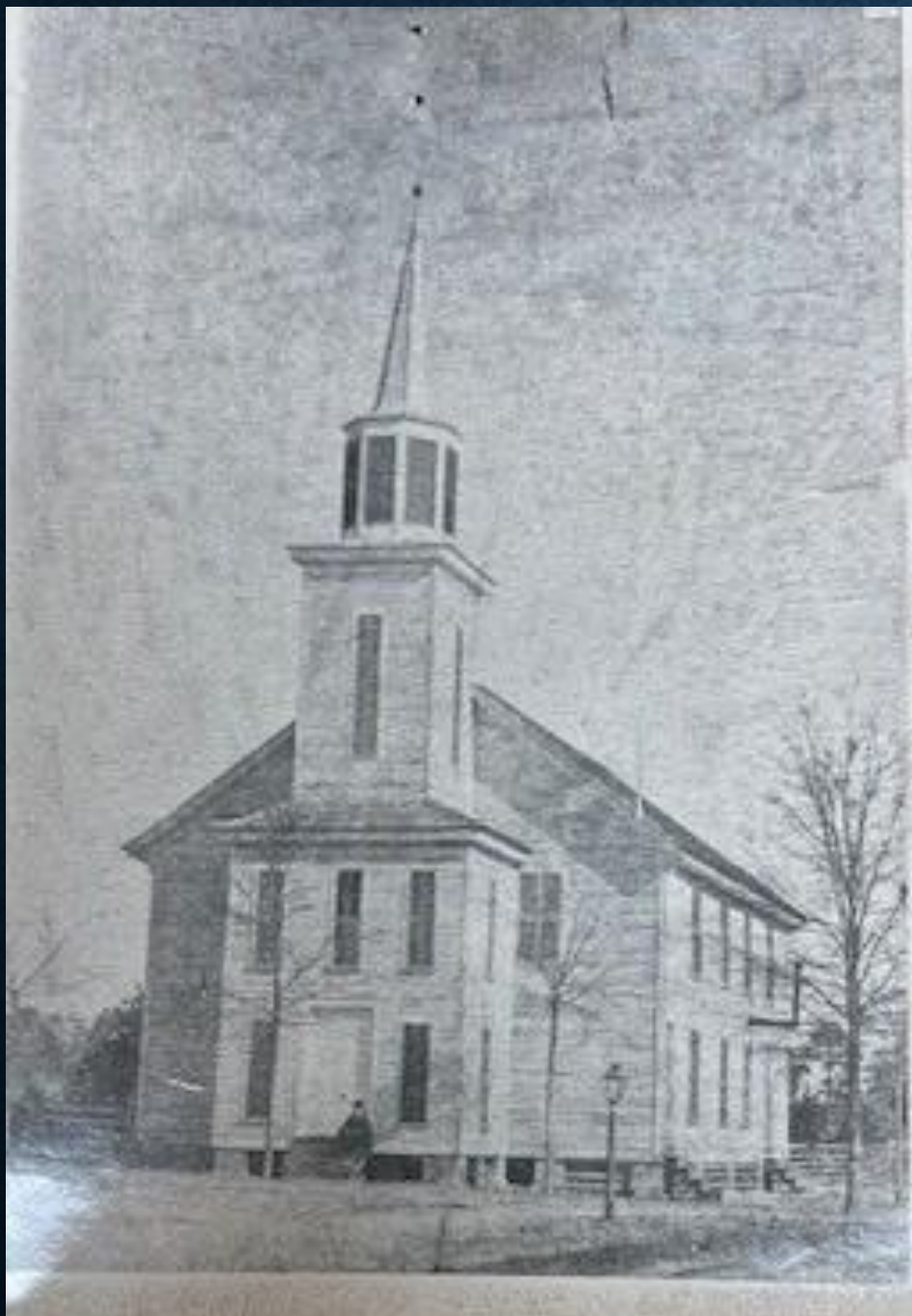


"FOUNDED ON FAITH"

A Short History of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church: 1830-1980







1870-1898

Corner Stone Laying Service

October 27,
1896

"I was glad when they said unto me, let
us go into the house of the Lord"
Psalm CXXII, 1.

CORNER STONE LAYING SERVICES
—OF—

ST. STEPHENS'
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

1830.



1896.

LEXINGTON, S. C.,

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27th, 1896.

REV. JOHN G. GRAICHEN, Pastor.

Lexington Dispatch Print.

St. Stephen's rises from the ashes

By Claudette Holliday

John Backman wrote about St. Stephen's Church in 1830:

"A church 40x60 feet is being built at Lexington Court House, and is in a considerable state of forwardness. This, when completed, will be the only church in that flourishing village. The location is favorable to the formation of a large congregation and we feel assured that a minister of our church would exert a highly beneficial influence upon the village and neighborhood."

St. Stephen's was dedicated in 1831 with John C. Hope, the soon-to-be-ordained minister assigned to its parish. Rev. Hope also served Sandy Run, Bethlehem, Newberry, & Ebenezer, Columbia and was a professor at the seminary in Lexington.

West Caughman and John Meetze provided funds for construction of the church and supplies at St. Stephen's and the Lutheran Seminary.

Dr. Ernest Lewis Hazelius was St. Stephen's second minister. Rev. Hazelius, a Prussian, was trained in the Moravian church.

In 1806 he taught at Nazareth Hall, Pa., and later served at St. John's Church, Philadelphia; Hartwick, New York; and at Gettysburg, Pa. Hazelius was St.



St. Stephens built 1870, burned 1897.

Stephen's minister until 1837, when he became the full-time theological faculty at the seminary. He wrote a *History of the Lutheran Church in America* and remained at the seminary for the next 30 years until his health began to fail in 1853. Rev. Hazelius is buried in St. Stephen's churchyard.

The first St. Stephens church was located where the cemetery is now. This building was torched by Sherman's army February 17, 1865. After the church was destroyed the congregation met in the courthouse until a new church was completed in 1870.

Minutes from the 1865 synod records: "Some of our sanctu-

aries had been committed to flames by the barbaric hands of our vandalic invaders, and our people driven to uncomfortable and inconvenient places to worship their God. The destruction of a vast amount of property which the laws of civilized warfare would have protected, has greatly crippled the benevolent enterprises and operations of the church and retarded her prosperity."

In 1897 the new church also burned, and in 1900 a rock church was completed, replacing the wooden structure. This year marks the 100th anniversary of this rock church which still stands at the corner of Church and Butler Streets in Lexington.

132

JAN 31 1915

JAN 31 1915

132

WEEKLY OFFERING Amt.....

—FOR—

CURRENT EXPENSES

St. Stephen's
Lutheran Church
LEXINGTON, S. C.

THIS SIDE FOR OURSELVES

PAT. JAN 9 '10

BENEVOLENCE

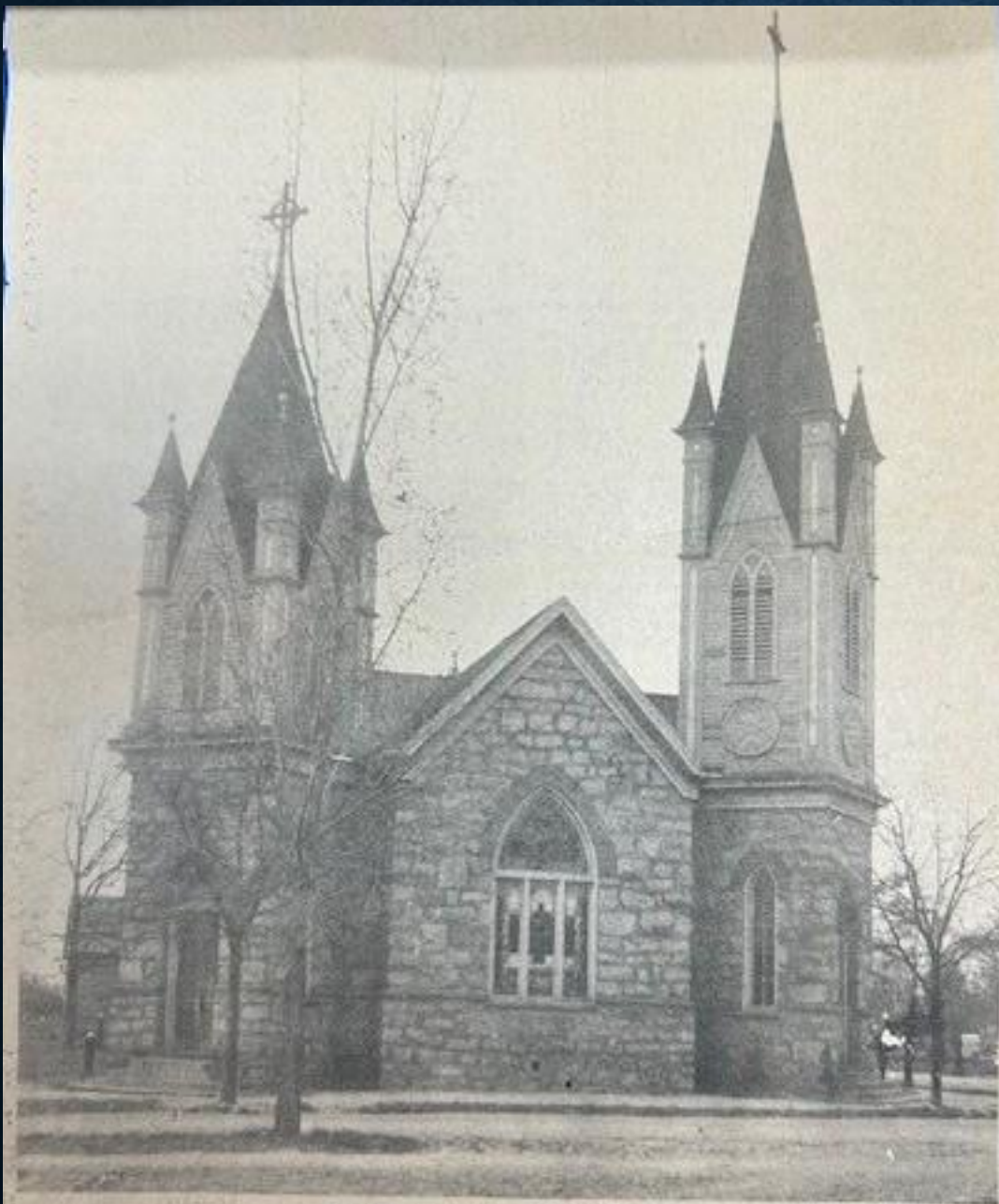
WEEKLY OFFERING

—FOR—

Home Causes of Synod-
ical Apportionment \$.....
Foreign Missions \$.....

THIS SIDE FOR OTHERS

DANIEL RICHMOND, VA

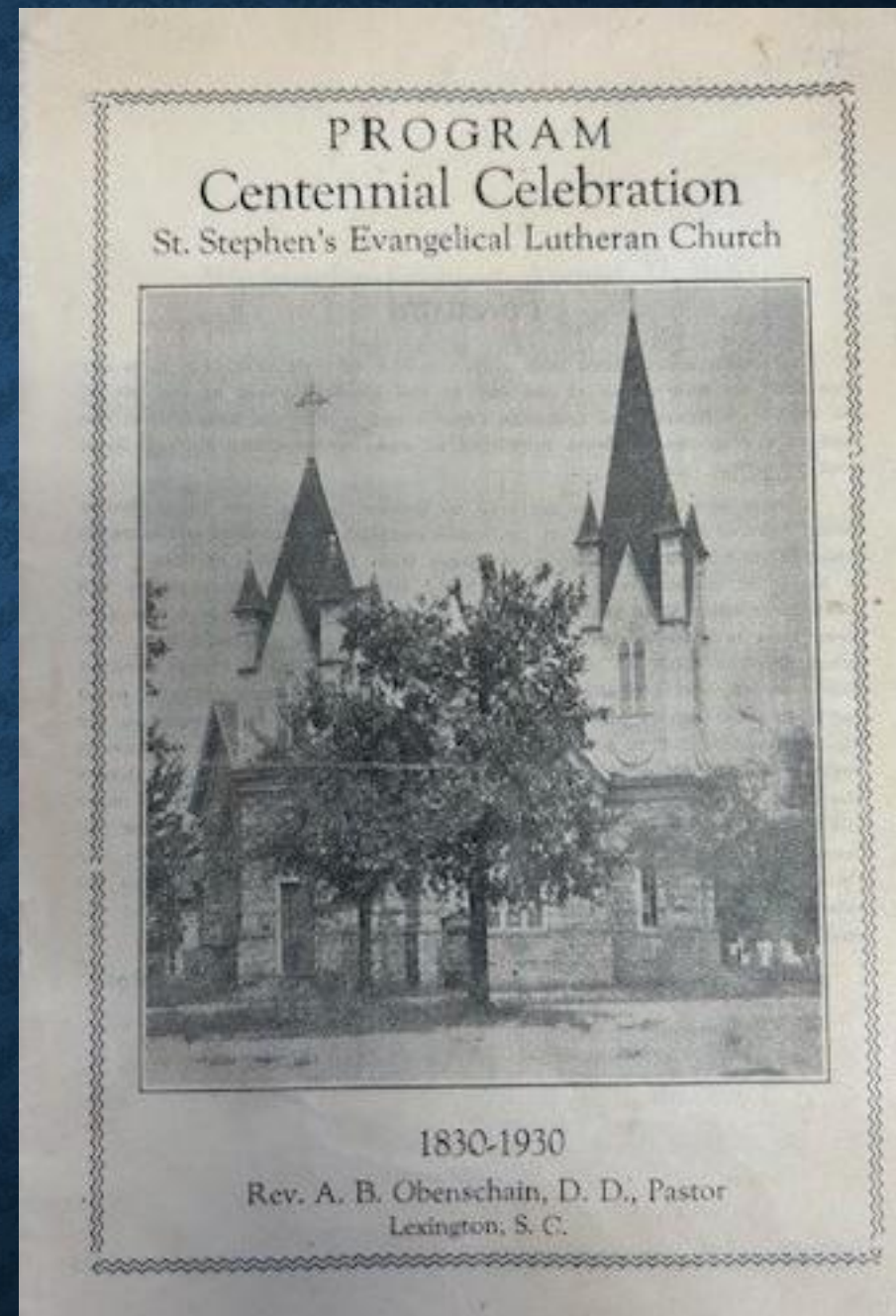


St. Stephens Church

1919

Celebrating
100 years

1830-1930

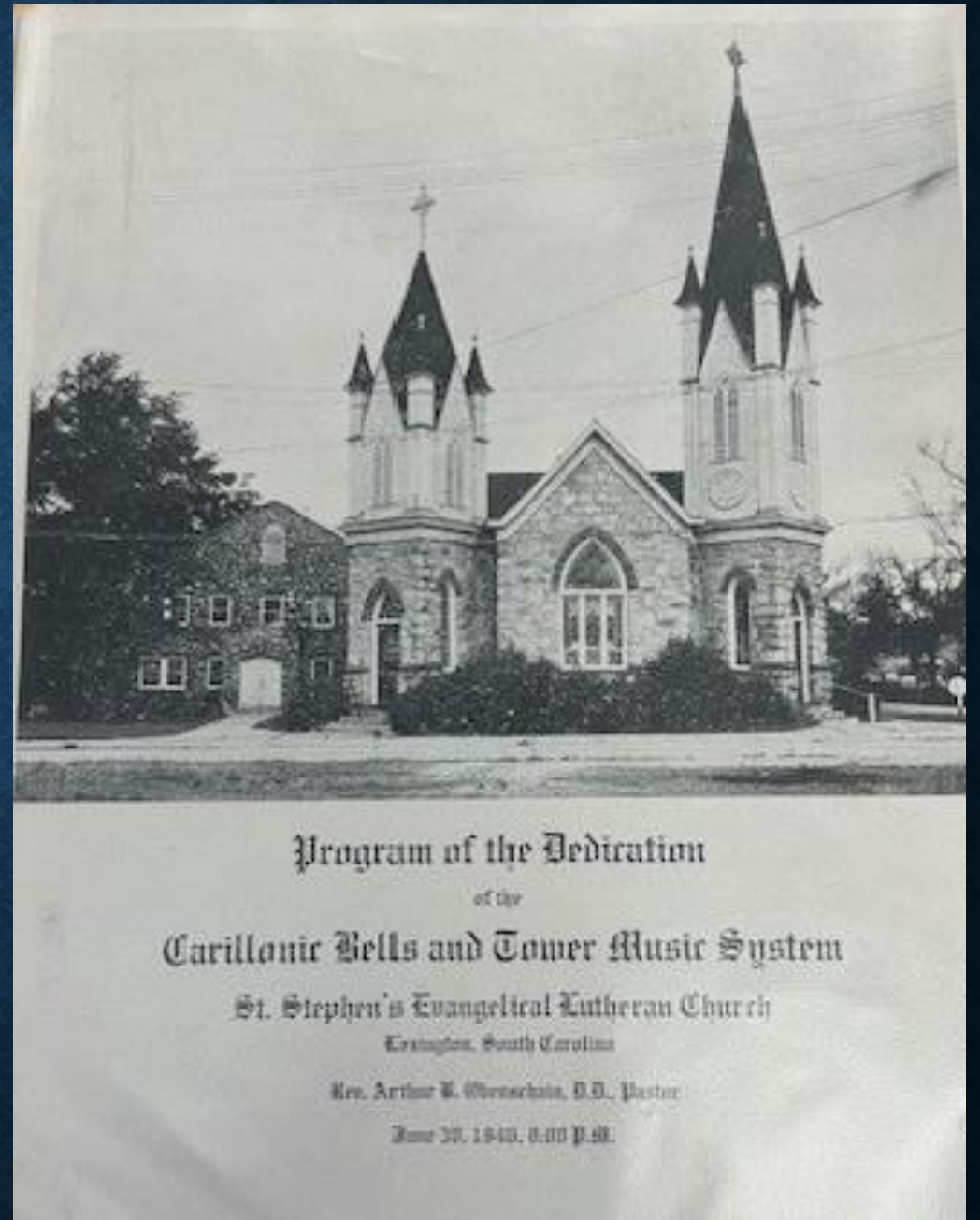


1934



Dedication of carillon bells and tower music system

June 30, 1946



Pastor
Obenschain
with the
Confirmation
class of 1947
and all the
people he
had
confirmed



Joe Boles was in this confirmation class

1951



1951





1953
Basketball
League
Champs

Interior of the Rock Church

May 29, 1955



Ground breaking of our current Sanctuary

February 3, 1957

Ground Breaking Ceremonies At St. Stephen's



Ground breaking services were held at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Sunday, Feb. 3, and the above picture was taken at that time. Shown in the picture, left to right, are: C. E. Black, chairman of the building committee; Rev. Ralph I. Luman, pastor; Ambrose Wingard, oldest member of the congregation; and Dr. Karl W. Kinard, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Carolina, who was in charge of the services. The ground breaking was held following the regular morning worship service and was attended by a large number of the congregation. Work was begun Monday morning on the new church. Present plans call for completion in early December. (Photo by Don Bruner.) (Feb 3, 1957) Uncle Ambrose age - 98

Mrs. Drew
Glover
Welch –
Back row;
4th from
the left





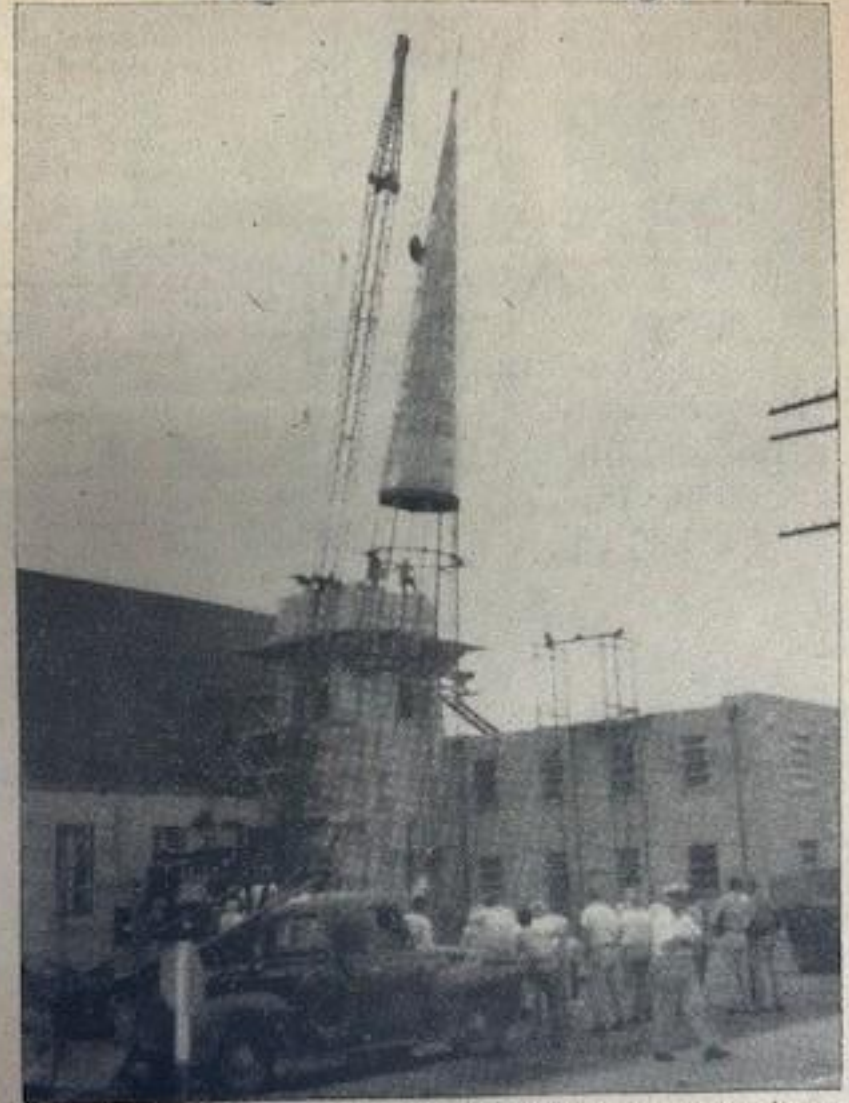
Who can find
Mr. Roscoe
Caughman?

Mr. Pat
Caughman
– where
are you?



The steeple
was placed on
October 3,
1957

October 3rd UP SHE GOES! 1957



The steeple of the new St. Stephen's Lutheran Church was hoisted into place late last Thursday afternoon after rains of the previous week had caused the postponement of this event. When word got around some two or three hundred people turned up, some waiting for two hours or more, to watch as the 65-foot steeple was placed into position by a large crane. The new copper covered steeple is 65 feet in length and is topped by a solid brass cross. It weighs approximately five tons.

Sanctuary Dedication on March 23, 1958

Members of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
To Dedicate New \$315,000 Structure Sunday



Dedication services for the new South Carolina, will officiate with dedicating the many special gifts t

1959 St. Stephen's Dedication Program Sunday Draws Crowd of Over 1,300

Dedication services held Sunday morning and afternoon at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Lexington, drew approximately 625 for the morning service and 750 for the organ recital heard the same afternoon.

The beautiful new \$315,000 struc-

ture was completed last week, with the final installation of the new Pels organ being finished on Thursday.

Rev. Ralph I. Luman, pastor, had charge of the morning services. Special greetings were brought by the Rev. Karl W. Kinard, D.D., President of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Carolina.

"Do You Know You Are God's Temple?" was Pastor Luman's sermon topic for the morning worship service.

At 4:00 p.m., an organ recital by John Morton, famous organist of Jacksonville, Fla., was held, with dedication of special gifts for the new church. An overflow crowd again filled the church for the recital, with extra chairs being used from the Sunday School rooms and many sitting in the nurseries, hearing the music over the loud speakers.

Sunday, March 23 was indeed a day to be remembered not only by the congregation of St. Stephen's, but everyone of the community.

625 attended
morning
service; 750
attended the
organ recital

Mortgage Burning on December 12, 1968



St. Stephen's Burns Mortgage

Members of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Lexington, look on approvingly as the mortgage to the beautiful Church is burned on Sunday morning at special services. President of the South Carolina Synod, Dr. Karl W. Kinard (left) was present for the ceremonies,

as well as participating in the groundbreaking in 1957. Others (left to right) are W. Reed Corley, finance chairman; C. E. Black, vice chairman and M. Wise Caughman, two of the four original note signers; and Pastor J. Milton Frick. (Photo by Robert B. Liverman.)

THE DISPATCH-NEWS

December 12, 1968

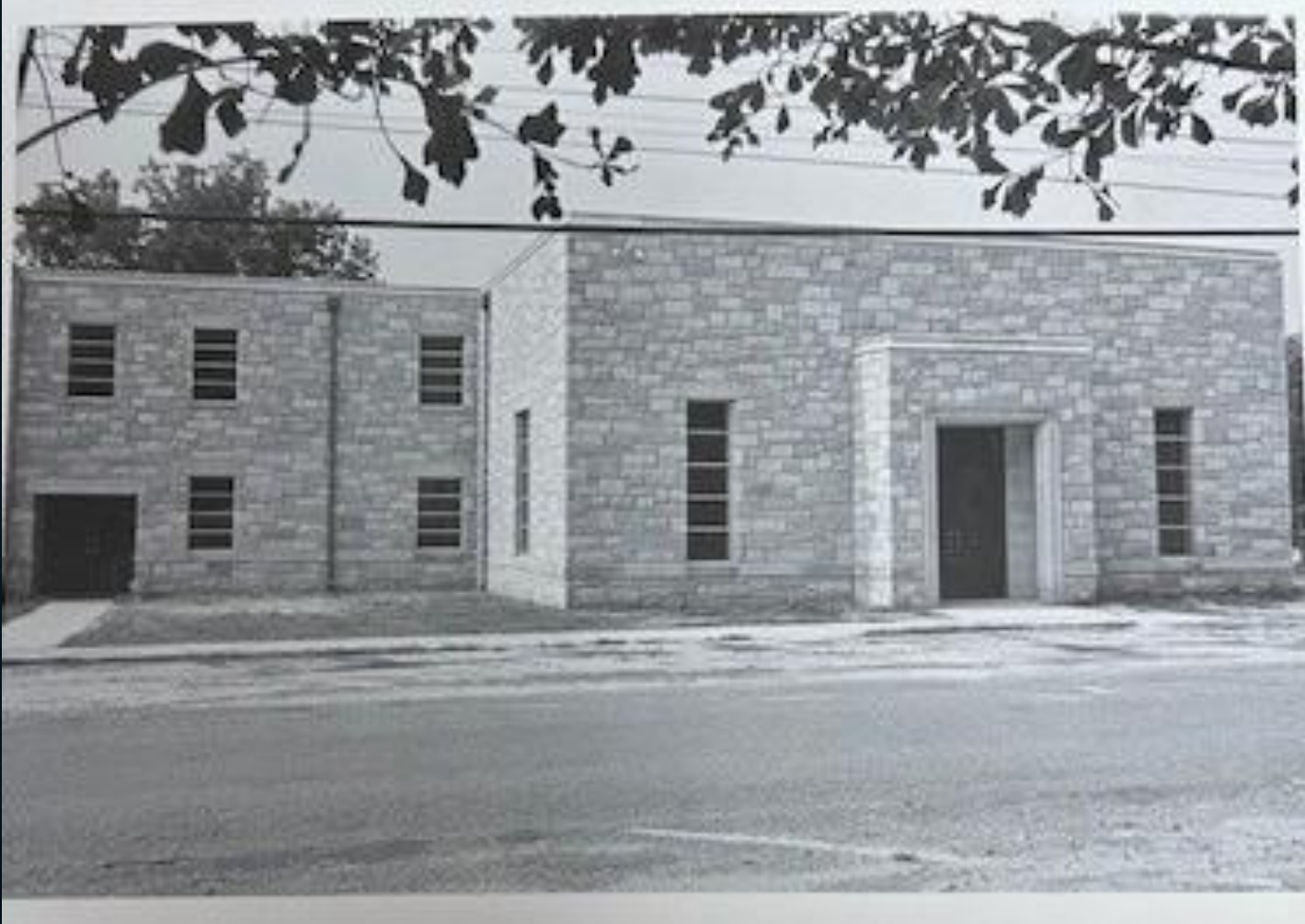
Confirmation Class of 1969





Breaking ground for the Social Hall

July 1972



Completed Social Hall



Choir Loft
(Late 70's)

Our 150th
anniversary
was in 1980



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

**St. Stephen's Lutheran celebrating
150th anniversary with concert, speaker**

Loyal Ladies Class

1980



Prime Time of 1980



Lutheran Men April 12, 1987





Mother/Daughter Brunch 1989



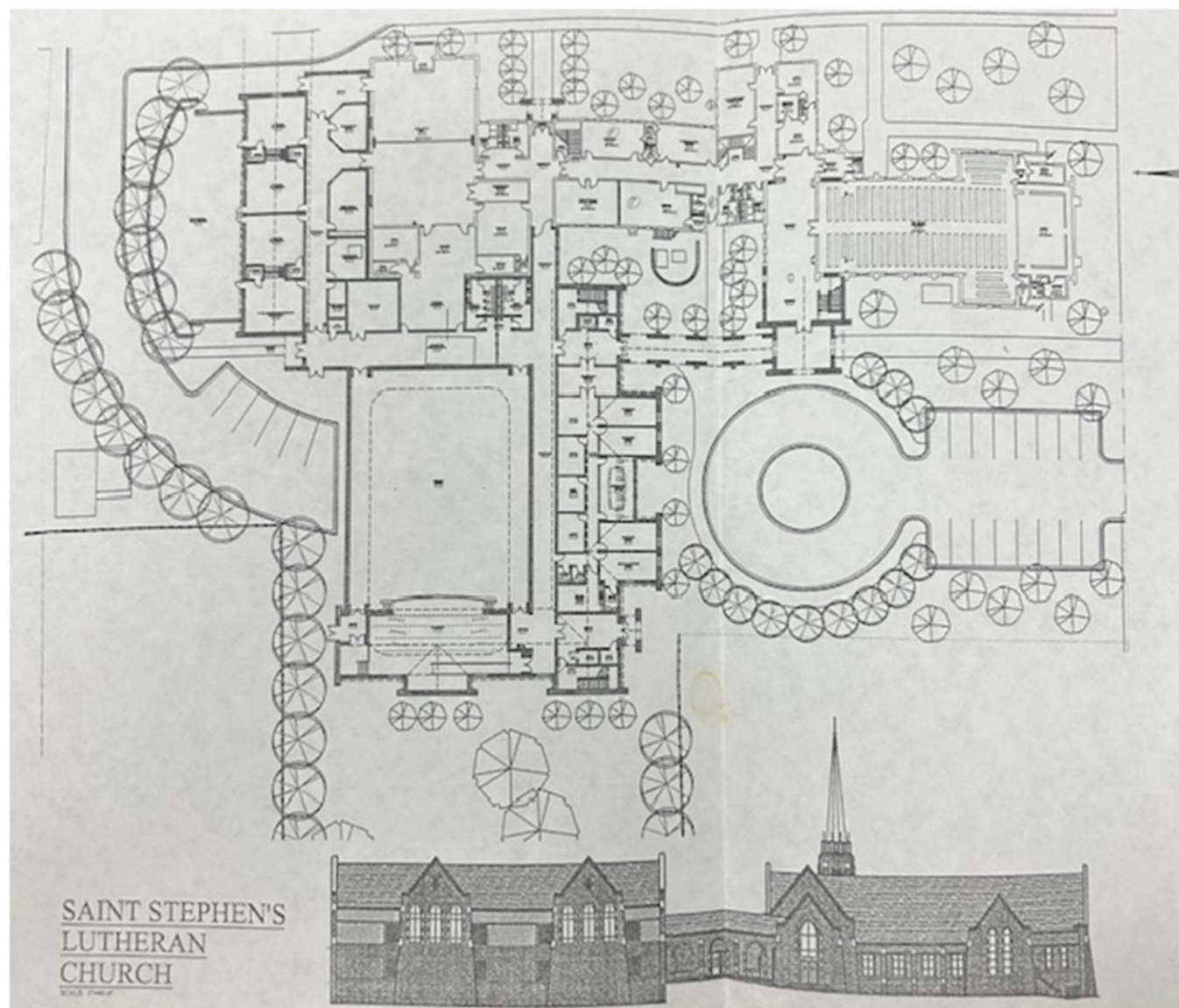
Spring
1991



1991 -
Prior to
current
parlor
renovations



FOR GOD...FOR OTHERS...FOREVER.







Groundbreaking

Dec. 12, 2004





DEFINING PLACES

An occasional series

'It's always been there'



PHOTOGRAPH BY JACLYN GLAZIER FOR THE STATE

Pastor Dennis Bolton offers communion at the close of Lenten services at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church. The church was established in 1830, among the oldest in the town of Lexington.

The earliest days of St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lexington remain shrouded in mystery. Thanks to the unwelcome visit of an uninvited guest named William Tecumseh Sherman, church records were destroyed by fire on February 17, 1865. Thus the exact dates and moments of the church's founding and the names of charter members will never be known.



St. Stephen's Lutheran:

175 Years Young

St. Stephen's mission statement reads:

**People of faith
seeking to make
a difference.**

For 175 years,
this congregation
has done just that.

2005

Granny Corley's Descendants

2005















Celebration Sunday May 20, 2007





Homecoming 2007





Marty Party

2010

Winterfest 2013





WELCA Event 2014



VBS
2014



Operation Christmas Child

2015



Trunk
or
Treat

2015

November
2016

Worship in
the gym
celebrating
our 10th
Anniversary
of our Family
Life Center





2016



Easter Eggstravaganza 2017



Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

2017



2018 Talent Show



Lutheridge Day Camp 2019



Sanctuary Renovations 2019



Family Check-ins during COVID

2020

Relay for Life Luminary Ceremony

2020





Preschool Graduation 2021



Worship in The Grove

2021



Turkey
Soup
with our
4's

2022



Mother's Day Brunch

2022



Mortgage Burning Service April 30, 2023



May Music Midday

2023



Men's Bake-off

2023



Easter 2024



Music, Art, and Faith Camp 2024



Superbowl BINGO 2025



The Living Last Supper

2025







Rev. Jason T. Antley
Associate Pastor, 2015-2021
Senior Pastor 2022-



Rev. Ralph G. Hill
Pastor, 2022-

