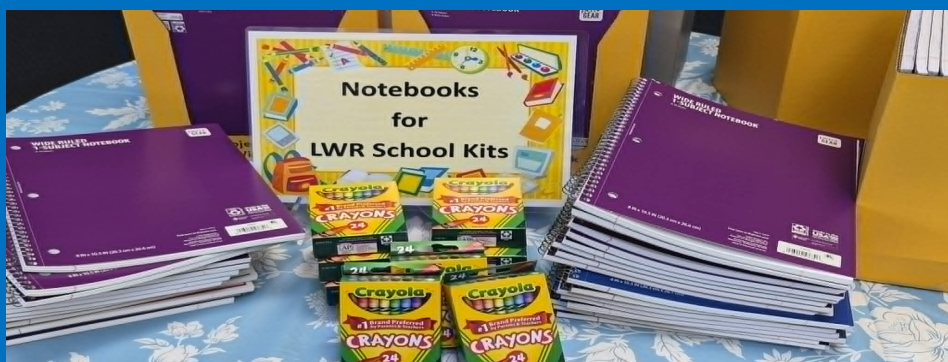


Vision of St. Stephen

September 2026



St. Stephen Lutheran Church
7800 Erie St. • Sylvania, OH
(419)885-1551
www.ststephenlutheran.church

Pastor: Rev. Beth Ferne Johnson
sslcpastor@buckeye-express.com

Ah, the start of a new school year—the stores have displays of crayons, markers, pencils and pens. The colors of markers and the sheen of 3 ring binders fill those pop-up displays.

For me, the start of the school year was an exciting and somewhat anxious time—who would be my homeroom teacher? Who would be in my class? The school year stretched out before me.... some parts the same (yes, I would likely hate gym class and love English) and yet some things could be different.

I'm not sure who began this tradition we have of covenanting. Whoever first had the idea—connecting it to this time of back to school way inspired.

In much the same way, this re-covenanting gives us the opportunity to make a fresh start. To think about different ways we might want to relate to our faith and to this community. To commit to doing something new for us. To stay with the activities we love. To be reminded that living out our faith in the world is conscious choice.

As we think about this covenant, we're invited to think about the promises we made in baptism or when we were confirmed (when we affirmed our baptism). These promises are printed on the covenant itself, but they're worth seeing here, too.

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

*to live among God's faithful people,
proclaim the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and work for justice and peace in all the earth?
I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.*

These promises are so big, so overwhelming, that we can't begin to accomplish them on our own, and yet—we cannot ignore them or pretend it's someone else's job to be working on them. No matter what or when or where we find ourselves, we have always needed people from a variety of backgrounds to speak a word of love, of peace, of hope, and of healing to our world. And as Christians, this calling is our reason for being. Even as others share this work, we bring something unique in that we speak these needed words out of the context of Jesus's life-giving act on the cross.

So, you're invited to think about these things, about God's calling, and to prayerfully consider your response to God's invitation and bring your signed covenant forward during our worship together, placing it on the altar. If you'd prefer, you can also mail or email your covenant back to St. Stephen as well. I give thanks that, together, we're on the start of this new year in faith.

Peace, Pastor Beth

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Spiritual Growth

RECOVENANTING

During September, you're invited to consider your ongoing participation in the life of St. Stephen. If you get your newsletter by email, you'll find a covenant attached. If you receive this newsletter in the mail, you'll find a paper copy included. We also will have paper copies on the bulletin table in the narthex. During the month of September, you're invited to bring your signed covenant forward during the hymn of the day, placing it in the basket on the altar.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Our Wednesday Bible study group is currently focusing on "The Way of Love", by the former presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Bishop Michael Curry. It is essential for addressing the seemingly insurmountable challenges facing the world today: poverty, racism, selfishness, deep ideological divisions, competing claims to speak for God. This book will lead readers to discover the gifts they need in order to live the way of love: deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, the discipline of nonviolence, and unshakable regard for human dignity. We'll be reading a chapter or two before each of our 11:00 a.m. sessions, noting things that we'd like to discuss together.

"The Chosen" BIBLE STUDY

Our look at each episode of The Chosen continues as we look at Season 5 together. This season will focus entirely on the events of Holy Week. Jamile Shibley leads us as we watch an episode and then discuss it together. Starting on Tuesday, September 8th from 6:30-8:00, we'll meet for the next 8 weeks.

GATHERING SPACE

Dave Haddix will be leading a study of the book of Revelation Sundays at 9:15 a.m. beginning on September 13th. This book has fascinated Christians for centuries—you're invited to come and learn more about its meaning and purpose! No prior experience is necessary—questions are most welcome!

ALMOST END OF SUMMER PICNIC

We'll be gathering in our Fellowship hall on Sunday, September 13th for our annual indoor picnic! Subs from Jersey Mike's will be provided, as well as drinks. You're invited to bring yourself and if you're able, a salad or dessert to share! As our meal concludes, you're invited to help assemble LWR School kits, putting the needed items into a cloth string backpack.

CHURCH COUNCIL

During the next few months, our church council will be reading Church Tomorrow? What the 'Nones' and 'Dones' teach us about the future of faith. The author, Stephanie Spellers was one of the speakers at the Rostered Minister's Gathering Pastor Beth attended this summer. This book reports on Stephanie's research with interviews she made with people 18-40 years old in several locations across the U.S. about their spiritual journey. If you'd like to join in our discussion, you're invited to do so! For more details, please speak with Pastor Beth or Marilyn Scuralli!

Activities

JOY CLUB

My Way Bistro at 5827 Monroe Street will be our noon lunch location on Tuesday, September 15th. Women, if you'd like to eat out, please sign up on our bulletin board. Thanks!

BOOK GROUP

We're reading The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife. Written by Anna Johnston, Barnes and Noble describes it as: "Bittersweet and remarkably perceptive, the book is a hilarious, feel-good, clever novel about forgiveness, redemption, second chances and finding family." Sound interesting? We'll be talking about it on Thursday, September 24th at 7:00 p.m.

Our October book is The Gales of November, the untold story of the Edmund Fitzgerald.



PET BLESSING

Our annual blessing of pets will be on Saturday, October 17th! A general blessing and individual prayers for pets will be available! We're in the process of inviting some rescue groups to bring dogs that are available for adoption.

Fun Friday

With many of our high school students involved in cheer and marching band, we're trying to squeeze in a Fun Friday event at a slightly different time this month! Stay tuned as we figure that out!

Northview Theatre

Would you like to support young people in our community and enjoy a good musical? Northview is presenting "Into the Woods"! Please sign up on the bulletin board if you'd like to go as a group to the Thursday opening night on September 17th at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors. Please mark "NV Into the woods" on your envelope, with either cash or check.

9/11 Worship

Did you realize that the events of 9/11 happened 25 years ago? To commemorate this day, our interfaith congregations are planning a worship of healing, remembrance, and hope hosted by St. Joseph Catholic Church, 5411 Main Street Sylvania, on Thursday, September 10th at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Beth and other area religious leaders will be participating in this service of readings, a combined choir, and other music. If you're interested in singing in the choir, please let Pastor Beth know and she can share the music with you.

Outreach



Prayer Ground

Our prayer ground area, to help our youngest members grow in faith, has been in place for a couple of weeks now. The kids are enjoying the books and wooden toys—one little one is enjoying pouring “wine” into the chalice! This is a bit of an experiment for us all—so we invite your patience and interest as we explore this new ministry! If you have questions or suggestions, please speak with Pastor Beth.

LWR QUILTS AND SCHOOL KITS DEDICATION

We'll be dedicating our quilts and school kits during worship on Sunday, October 4th. They will sent to people in crises around the world and here in the US as well. Last year, people like us provided 315,818 quilts and 179,200 school kits!! And we've been about this work for 80 years! That's a lot of love reaching our neighbors across the world!



Praying for the Congregation

Our annual praying for the congregation leaflet will be available Labor Day Weekend. In it you'll find that each day has been assigned a person's name or a prayer request. You're invited to pray for that person by name as we hold each other and our world up in daily prayer together. Pamphlets are available in the Narthex!

Prayer at the Prairie

October 14th (rain date, October 21st) for Prayer at the Prairie! Bring bag chairs—enjoy brief prayer service as we enjoy our prairie, a fire ring, cider, donuts and a S'more dessert! Larry Golba will be leading us in some campfire songs! We'll gather from 6:30-7:30 p.m, on the parking lot near the prairie.



Financial News

KROGER REWARDS

Do you shop at Kroger? Did you know that if you sign up to do so, Kroger will give a portion of your purchases to area nonprofits –including St. Stephens? During the last quarter, St. Stephen members and friends designated our congregation as their reward recipient. Interested in doing this too? On the Kroger app, look for the rewards tab under the “my info” tab and choose “St. Stephen Luthern” (yes, it is spelled wrong in Kroger’s system!).

Administrative News

Beware

A few members of our congregation have gotten spam calls and e-mail from Pastor Beth asking for gift cards and money given directly to her. Pastor Beth will never ask that of anyone, so please let her know if you receive such a request, and under no circumstances send money as they request.

Parking Lot Meeting

Having served us well for many decades, our parking lot is beginning to show its age and is in need of replacement! We’re having a special informational meeting on Sunday, September 30th after worship hear our church council’s plans for this project! You’re invited to attend! Not able to attend? We’ll e-mail the information presented and include info in the October Newsletter!

Pastor Beth Vacation

Pastor Beth will be on vacation from September 25th through October 2nd!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

As always our newsletter deadline for anything you want to be added is the 2nd Tuesday in the month. So for **October 2026** Newsletter please have all your **items submitted by September 15.**



Prayer

SEPTEMBER PRAYER NOTES

A Prayer for Peace

Lord, may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts today. Fill us with your peace and may it overflow into our homes and communities. Grant us peace and stability within our nations. Help us to strive to maintain peace among our neighbors, family members, and friends.

Amen

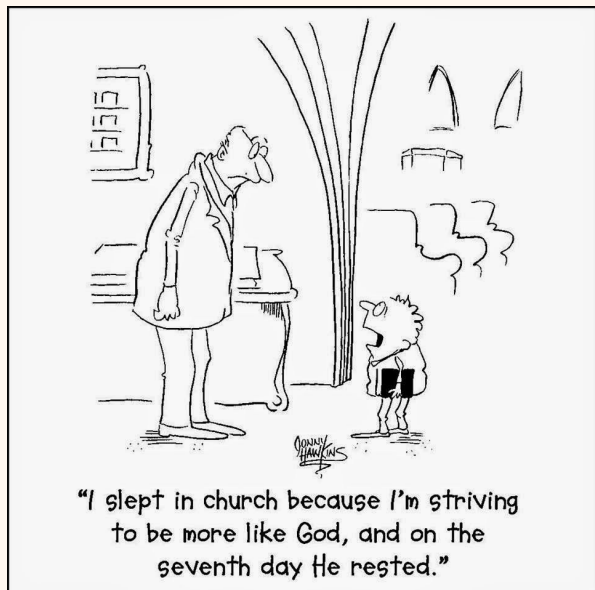
COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Wolf—Stomach Cancer
Laura—Healing & Comfort
Ali—Guidance & Comfort
Lisa—Healing
Brenda—Healing
Mike—Recovery & Guidance
Beth—Healing & Comfort
Nancy P.—Healing & Comfort
Jim—Healing & Recovery
Kay—Healing & Comfort
Nancy—Healing & Comfort
Sharon—Comfort & Answers
Marvin Family—Peace & Comfort
Danny—Safety & Protection

All Victims of Trauma and War

Fun

ALL IN GOOD FUN



BIBLE QUIZ

How many days was Lazarus buried in his tomb before Jesus resurrected him?

(Answer page 10)

- A. 1
- B. 4
- C. 6
- D. 14

ARE YOU OKAY?

If you find yourself in need of emergency supplies or in need of someone to talk to, please don't hesitate to call the church office and we will assist you however we can or direct you to resources that may be able to help.

Council

2026 Council Members

<i>President</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Vice President</i>	Tom Dangelo
<i>Secretary</i>	Beth Madden
<i>Treasurer</i>	Kathie Tefft

Ministry Liaisons were established as follows:

<i>Christian Education</i>	Pastor Beth
<i>Finance</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Prayer, Praise, Worship</i>	Pastor Beth
<i>Property</i>	Tom Schmidt
<i>Staff Support</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Stewardship/Evangelism</i>	Beth Madden
<i>Technology</i>	Tom Dangelo
<i>Youth & Family Ministry</i>	Joan Haddox
<i>Social Ministry</i>	Kathy Aldrich
<i>Member at Large</i>	Carol Turvey

WHAT IS COUNCIL?

Church council is a group of members that regularly meet to help guide St. Stephen. If you are interested in being a part of council or learning more about it, please reach out to any member or Pastor Beth for more info!

Steve's Bulletin Board

Volunteer Sign Up Sheet

If you would like to help with worship, a new volunteer sign up is available in the Narthex on the bulletin board! Thank you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 13th---Soup potluck meal

October 17th—Pet Blessing

November 8th—Our Annual Congregational meeting and Chili cook-off!

ST. LUCAS ANNIVERSARY OF FOUNDING “140 Years of Serving Jesus”

On March 21st, 2026, St. Lucas Lutheran Church turned 140! They're celebrating on Sunday Sept. 27 with festive worship, old-fashioned church dinner and tours of the organ, sanctuary and archives! If you're interested in any or all of these events call the St. Lucas church office for more info at 419.243.8189.

Bible Quiz Answer:

B. 4

September Celebrations

Baptismal Birthdays

9/1	Marty McKelvey
9/17	Marilyn Scuralli
9/21	Lou Weil
9/28	Joan Haddox
9/30	Niel Johnson

Birthdays

9/2	Darrell Staup
9/5	Patrick McCoy
9/20	Lou Weil
9/25	Ruth Moeller
9/27	Marsha Noe
9/28	Jackie Cornell

Anniversaries

9/2	T & J Dangelo
9/6	L&K Tefft
9/9	S & M Ballard
9/12	S & C Kahan
9/14	J&K Bork

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 11:00 AM Bible Study	3	4	5
6 Re-covenanting 10:30 AM In Sanctuary/ Online Worship	7 Labor Day— Office Closed	8 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 "The Cho- sen" Bible Study	9 11:00 AM Bible Study	10 7:00 PM 9/11 Remembrance @ St. Joe's	11	12
13 Re-covenanting 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30 AM In Sanctuary/ Online Worship 11:30 AM End of Summer Picnic/Assemble School Kits	14	15 12:00 PM JOY Club 6:30 "The Cho- sen" Bible Study	16 11:00 AM Bible Study	17 7:30 PM Musi- cal@ NV	18	19 5:05 PM Mudhens
20 Re-covenanting 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30 AM In Sanctuary/ Online Worship 11:30 AM Prairie Meeting	21 5:30 PM Coun- cil Meeting	22 6:30 "The Cho- sen" Bible Study *HOA Rental in Sanctuary	23 11:00 AM Bible Study	24 7:00 PM Book group	25	26 
27 Re-covenanting 9:15 AM Gathering Space 10:30 AM In Sanctuary/ Online Worship	28 LWR Quilting	29 6:30 "The Cho- sen" Bible Study	30			
Pastor Beth on Vacation						