

Vision of St. Stephen

November 2026



St. Stephen Lutheran Church
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Giving Thanks for the Saints in our lives

We celebrate "All Saints" Sunday on November 1st. Beginning in the 4th century, All Saints day served as a kind of "catch-all", a way to be sure that saints who didn't have an official church feast day were still remembered and included. In modern times, we have expanded this day to encompass those saints and sinners who went before us, those who are among us, and those who are yet to exist. We celebrate on this day the people we know and are known to God, but may not make a splash on the world stage.

November is also a season of Thanksgiving, as we celebrate the fall harvest and the winter rest of farms.

To combine these two parts of November, I invite you to give thanks for the people among us who have shaped and molded you in these ways:

Loved you like a sibling
Helped you grow in your faith
Mentored you in your profession
Wrote something that deeply moved you
Advocated for you
Showed you something key about yourself/ your values by being your adversary
Gave you a tangible object that continues to delight you
Parented or grand-parented you
Make you feel seen in a time and place you felt invisible
Pointed out your gifts
Embodied the values you aspire to
Disagreed with you but still loved you
Supported you emotionally through a low or stressful point
Prayed for you
Introduced you to grief by their loss
Created art (visual, music or dance) that touched you
Showed tough love
Coached you as you grew in skill and confidence
Founded an institution, group, or movement that is important to you
Modeled generosity for you
(elements of this list created by Pastor Laura Stephens-Reed)

Peace,
Pastor Beth

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Spiritual Growth



ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

During our All Saints worship on Sunday, November 1st, we'll be reading the names of those who have died in the faith before us. If you have a name of someone you'd like to add to our Book of the Dead, you're welcome to stop in and write in that name yourself during the week of October 25th or on Sunday, the 1st. If you won't be here in person to do this, please call Janell in the church office and she can add that name to the book. As we do this, we give thanks to God for these people who have made an impact on us.

This is also the weekend of the time change—so please set your clocks to “Fall Back” on Saturday night!

GATHERING SPACE

Beginning on November 15th, Pastor Beth will be leading our 9:15 Sunday time of learning together. Look for more information to come about our next focus in our weekly bulletin insert. We'd like to thank Dave Haddix for leading us in our focus on the book of Revelation this fall!

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Our 11:00 a.m. Wednesday Bible study will be concluding our walk through the book, The Way of Love, by retired Episcopal Bishop Michael Curry this month. Many of our participants have found this book to be very impactful. As we conclude our study of this book, we'll be figuring out what we'd like to study next—stay tuned to our weekly bulletin insert for more information.

YOUTH FUN FRIDAY

Our youth, grades 6-12, will be gathering on Friday night, November 20th for an evening of Bible story, craft, snacks, and games! We'll be meeting slightly earlier this month—from 6:30-9.

PRAIRIE

As fall marches on, our prairie will become a great source of seeds and shelter for wildlife during the winter months. The folks at Outdoor Sylvania will be coming sometime this fall to mow the prairie at a height of about 2 feet tall. Doing this will help control the tickweed sunflower population, as we work to have a shorter prairie!

Many thanks to Darrell Staup for his work creating a bench for watching and enjoying the prairie! You're invited to stop by anytime and check it out, it's amazing to see the birds flitting in and out.

Our prayer at the prairie was well attended and we had a wonderful sunny evening together as the sun set.

Advent & Christmas

CHOIR FOR THE ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SEASON

Choir rehearsals will begin after Sunday worship on November 15th. Once the group is together and schedules are shared, we will determine when we will sing in worship. All ages and abilities are welcome!

ADVENT

Our first Sunday in Advent is November 29th, the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend. While you're visiting with family and friends, why not encourage people to celebrate the Advent season together? In addition to our annual Advent devotional booklet, Pastor Beth will have a display of Advent resources for you to take and use yourself or share with others. Look for this display in the narthex during the week of November 16th and following. Pastor Beth will also be creating an Advent weekly video devotion which will be posted to our church's FB and YouTube pages to help us slow down and celebrate the Advent season.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

Look for more information on our Christmas flowers in future publications!

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Is there someone you can invite to worship with you on Christmas Eve? Will you be seeing them over Thanksgiving? You're encouraged to pray about this and invite people now to put our worship times of Thursday night, December 24th, 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on their calendar. We'll also have some postcard invitations you can share with them as a reminder.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Do you have someone on your Christmas list that you just don't know what to get for them? If so, you're invited to consider the ELCA good gifts catalogue-----Look for it to appear in the narthex after our annual meeting.



Activities

ANNUAL MEETING

St. Stephen will be holding our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, November 8th after our 10:30 worship service. At this meeting, we will be sharing our current financial situation and celebrating the things we've done during the past year. We'll be voting to approve our 2027 budget and voting on council members.

After our meeting, we'll adjourn to the fellowship hall for a Chili cook-off! If you have a great chili recipe, bring it in and we'll give it a taste! If you have a metal muffin tin at home, you might want to bring that to fill up each spot with a different chili! Bragging rights will go to the top 3 ranked chili's. This year's judges are last year's winners: Sharon Mason and Faith Lum-breezer.

ISAIAH 117 HOUSE

Remember last year when we asked everybody to contribute \$1 at our annual meeting potluck on 11/7? Well, now a year later, the Isaiah 117 house is up and running providing a safe, welcoming place as kids enter foster care. If you'd like to help kids in that transition, check out their website at <https://isaiah117house.com/lucas-county-oh>

THE CHOSEN

On November 10th, we'll gather to watch 2 short Christmas episodes of The Chosen. You're invited to bring snack, dessert, or finger food to share as we think about the events surrounding Jesus's birth! All are welcome—even if you haven't been to previous sessions—as the Christmas story is a welcoming one! Our viewing and discussion of Season 6 will occur in 2027 when it is released to the public.

BOOK GROUP

You're invited to join in the guided discussion as our book group reads, One Summer in Savannah, by Terah Shelton Harris. If you've read it, please consider coming to discuss this together! To avoid Thanksgiving, we're meeting on Thursday, November 19th at 7:00 p.m.

JOY CLUB

Women, would you like to go out to lunch together? The JOY club will be heading out to lunch at noon on Tuesday, November 17th at Sideline's Italian Grille. Ruth Moeller will be making our reservation for us. Please sign up on the bulletin board.



Outreach

Pet Blessing

We held our annual Pet Blessing October 17! Thank you to everyone who came out and brought their pets to be blessed! Also thank you to Best Friends Forever Rescue for bringing out many adorable adoptable dogs to participate in this fun yearly event!



Kerry Patrick Clark Concert

You're invited to gather for an afternoon of music featuring singer, storyteller, and songwriter, Kerry Patrick Clark. We'll be hearing him in concert Sunday, December 20th at 4 PM.

Warm Winter Clothing Drive

We are gathering warm clothing in all sizes to give to those in need. Brand new items will be shared with Sylvania Area Family Services. Those that are gently used will be shared with other charities, including Salem Lutheran. Please place your donations in the box in the narthex.



Sylvania Area Family Services

Our annual Thanksgiving and Christmas drive begins on October 11th and will conclude on November 8th. Our goal is to collect \$2,500 to help 4 families with Thanksgiving food, a Christmas meal, and \$50 for Christmas presents. Your gifts of cash, check, or online can be designated SAFS. We'll be announcing the totals received as we go along. If we collect more than the amount requested, we'll donate that to assist SAFS in their work of helping our neighbors. Thank you for your ongoing support of this program.

Parking Lot

Parking Lot

Thanks to your generosity, we have reached our goal and suspended our capital campaign for this project!! If this lovely weather continues to hold, we tentatively expect the asphalt work to be done beginning Nov. 2. During this time, you'll need to park at Highland Elementary and walk across to get to the building. Jennite expects the job to take 3 days, 5 if there are any complications with weather, etc. Our ability to park in the lot for Sunday worship will not be impacted.

Administrative News

SOUND UPDATE

You likely will have noticed that we have been having trouble with our microphones during Sunday worship. We hope we are in the process of resolving those issues in 2 different ways! Scott discovered and replaced a cord that had a broken wire. A piece of equipment that compresses the sound (softening those popping p's in a reading) broke down. Getting a replacement didn't make sense, because modern soundboards automatically include this ability--so we decided to replace our 15+ year old sound board with a new one--both to get that compressing ability back and to ward off a breakdown of our old sound board. This new soundboard should arrive and be installed in early November. We're hoping you will hear the difference very soon!

LSS DONATION CAN

Did you know that the bin marked for LSS Food Pantry that sits outside our main entry doors consistently gathers about 3-4 bags of groceries each week? Our community members are dropping off donations and we appreciate these contributions that go to the LSS food pantry. It's an easy way to help feed our neighbors!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

As always our newsletter deadline for anything you want to be added is the 2nd Tuesday in the month. So for **December/January 2026** Newsletter please have all your **items submitted by November 10.**



SAVE THE DATE

Greening of the narthex, December 5th
Sensory Santa (tentatively scheduled for December 11)
December 12th, cleaning of sanctuary
Christmas cookie exchange, December 13
Kelly Clark Concert - December 20 4:00 PM
TBA, reseeding the less dense portions of the prairie
Christmas Eve worship—4 and 7, December 24

Prayer

Thankful Prayer

Father, Father up above

Thank you, thank you for your love

Thank you, for my parents and my teachers too

I can see and I know these came from you

Father, Father up above

Thank you, thank you for your love

Thank you for my meals and my warm bed too

I can see and I know these came from you

Father, Father up above

Thank you, thank you for your love

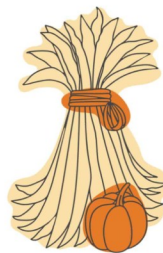
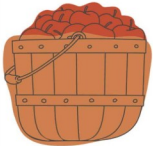
Thank you, for my friends old and new

I can see and I know these came from you

Thank you Father

For your gifts to me

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

Danny—Safety & Protection

Roger—Comfort & Healing

Katie—Comfort & Healing

Libby - Healing & Comfort

Tim - Peace & Healing

Linda B. - Healing & Comfort

Emma - Safe Delivery

All Victims of Trauma and War

Fun

ALL IN GOOD FUN



BIBLE QUIZ

Which prophet did not actually die, but was taken directly to heaven?

(Answer page 10)

- A. Ezekiel
- B. Malachi
- C. Elijah
- D. Amos

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>	
<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>	
<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

Time Change

The Fall Back Time Change is happening on November 1! Don't forget to set your clocks back!

Prayer at the Prairie!



Advent starts November 29 this year! We have Advent devotionals available in the office and that will be set out in the narthex later this month!

Bible Quiz Answer:

C. Elijah

November Celebrations

Baptismal Birthdays

11/3	Lin McKelvey
11/5	Angela McCoy
11/8	Tom Schmidt
11/11	Becky Henderson
11/14	Joyce Cunningham
11/24	Amelia Huddleston
11/26	Kristi Shepler

Birthdays

11/2	Mary Dwyer
11/5	Linda Blaesing
11/13	Michelle Ballard
11/13	Sharon Sorenson
11/19	Linda McDonough
11/30	Elyse Gochenour-Davis

Anniversaries

11/12	M&A Mercer
11/13	T&A Schmidt
11/15	B&C Turvey
11/21	B&S Markin
11/30	R&J Cornell

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 All Saints Sunday Fall Back Time Change <u>9:15 Gathering Space</u> 10:30 Worship	2	3 Election Day	4 11:00 Bible Study	5 <i>*Hosting Sylvania Area Clergy</i>	6	7
Parking Lot Work						
8 SAFS Deadline <u>9:15 Gathering Space</u> 10:30 Worship 11:30 Annual Meeting 12:15 Chili Cook-Off	9	10 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 Chosen Christmas Episodes	11 11:00 Bible Study	12	13	14
15 <u>9:15 Gathering Space</u> 10:30 Worship Choir Practice	16 LWR Quilting 5:30 Council Meeting	17 12:00 JOY Club	18 11:00 Bible Study 6:00 Tantallon Neighborhood Meeting	19 7:00 Book Club	20 6:30 Fun Friday	21
22 Baptism <u>9:15 Gathering Space</u> 10:30 Worship Choir Practice	23	24	25	26 	27	28
29 1st Sunday of Advent <u>9:15 Gathering Space</u> 10:30 Worship Choir Practice	30					