

ST. STEPHEN SCROLL

St. Stephen Lutheran Church is a community of believers, saved by the grace of God, who are called to:

- *share his love through words and actions;*
- *welcome others into the family of Christ.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

December is here and with the arrival of December our hearts and minds turn to celebrating Christmas. This month we will joyfully deck our halls, wrap gifts, and write Christmas cards. Our homes, Christmas trees, and yards will sparkle with twinkle lights. We will bake cookies and exchange presents. We will sing Christmas carols in the car, at church, and, much to the dismay of our children, some of us will sing along to the carols wafting through the mall and the grocery store. (Sorry, Jack!)

I love the smiles on folks' faces as they delight in all the Christmas season has to offer. I love the way Christmas brings out the best in us – our love, kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity. Christmas is truly a glorious season filled with amazing blessings.

But, Christmas can also be stressful. There are so many things that demand our time and attention. We try to squeeze lots of extras into one short month. There are school concerts and Sunday school Christmas plays. We have holiday parties for work and Christmas gatherings with the folks from church. There are all of those Christmas cards and letters to write, address, and mail. Piles of presents will be searched out, purchased, wrapped, and given. We have favorite cookies to bake, and homes to decorate. Most of us have visits with extended family to be arranged. And on and on and on we go.

This year give yourself a break from the frantic activity of the season by celebrating Advent. During Advent we prepare our hearts and minds for the birth of our Savior. This time of preparation is not like the somber season of Lent. Advent is a time of hopeful, happy preparation. We wait like expectant parents wait for the arrival of their baby. We wait with hearts filled with excitement, happiness, and joy. After all, we await the birth of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. We wait for the best news the world will ever hear.

Consider reading an Advent Devotional this year. You can find them online or grab one of the Advent devotionals I have placed on the table in the narthex. You could read a Psalm every day or from one of the Gospels. If you read a chapter a day from the Gospel of Luke – you will finish on Christmas Eve, because Luke is 24 chapters long. If you choose to read Matthew, you will be done before New Year's Eve.

This Advent give yourself a powerful gift by slowing down a bit to reflect on the birth of our Lord and what He means to you.

I wish you all a blessed Advent and a truly Merry Christmas.

In Christ –
Pastor Kerri



St. Stephen
Lutheran Church
5903 Bardstown Rd.
Fern Creek, KY 40291

502-239-7778

Email:
pastorkerri
@gmail.com

**Pastor Kerri M.
McFarland
Pastor Emeritus,
Thomas D. Swasko**

*St. Stephen Lutheran Church
is a member of the
Indiana-Kentucky Synod of
the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America.*

2016 Council Members

Rod Firquin,
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Vice President
Cheryl Markley,
Council Secretary
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Paul Kiser
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(youth rep, non-voting)

Bill Wise,
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Treasurer
Ibosh Chertmanov,
Musician
Kim Thonen,
Custodian
Cheryl Markley,
Office Secretary
secretary.ststephen

**Check out
the website!**

ststephen-louisville.com

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services and Holiday Schedule

Fourth Sunday in Advent, December 18th:	No Sunday school Decorate St. Stephen for Christmas following 10:00 am worship service Sack Lunch & Caroling following 10:00 am worship service 5:00 pm—3-Church Christmas Carol Sing & Cookie Fellowship
Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th:	5:00 pm—Candlelight Holy Communion 11:00 pm—Candlelight Holy Communion
Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25th:	No Sunday school, No worship services
First Sunday After Christmas, January 1st:	No Sunday school



Annual St. Stephen Ladies Christmas Tea

All mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends are invited to enjoy a fabulous Christmas tea provided by the Fellowship Committee:

When: **Saturday, December 10th at 1:00 pm**

Where: **St. Stephen Fellowship Hall**

We're having tea and a light lunch. Afterwards, we will work together to make bracelets to go with the beautiful dresses made by our Creative Hands Sew Group. Bring your friends! All are welcome! If you plan to come, please sign up in the narthex so that we will know approximately how many people are coming. Come enjoy the fellowship!

3-Church Christmas Carol Sing

St. Stephen Lutheran along with Saint Alban's Episcopal and Messiah-Trinity Lutheran Episcopal will have Christmas Carol Sing at **5:00 pm on December 18th, 2016** at St. Stephen. All are invited! We need as many voices as possible. After we have had our fill of Christmas carols, we will file into the fellowship hall where we will enjoy decorating and eating Christmas cookies together. Come and enjoy the season!



Sunday School Christmas Program

The annual Sunday school Christmas program will be held in place of the sermon **during the morning worship service on Sunday, December 11th**. Please make every effort to bring children to Sunday school prior to that date to participate in rehearsals for this joyous event. Come and watch!

Golden Sneakers Christmas Party

The Golden Sneakers are having their annual Christmas party on **Wednesday, December 14th at the church at 11:30am**. If you plan to attend, please sign up in the narthex so that we will know who is coming. Please bring a covered dish to share and a \$10 gift for a Yankee Exchange. Questions? Please call Fred or Judy McBride, 538-7617.

Help Us Decorate St. Stephen for Christmas!

The complete and detailed 2016 Saint Stephen Advent/Christmas decorating schedule is posted in various places around the church. Next, we will be **decorating St. Stephen for Christmas on Sunday, December 18th after the 10:00am worship service**.

After Christmas, the schedule continues as follows:

Week of January 2 – 6, 2017:

Take down all decorations except the large glass star during Worship & Music Committee meeting on January 3rd. **We welcome all help!** (Decorated trees will remain in place until after the 5 pm service on January 1st, the 2nd Sunday of Christmas.)

January 8, 2017 (Baptism of our Lord) - (Celebration of Epiphany is Friday, January 6, 2017.)

Week of February 20-25, 2017:

Remove large glass star prior to the 10 am service on February 26, 2017. (Transfiguration of Our Lord is February 26, 2017.)

If you have questions, please see Brenda Firquin, 231-2901, and again, **ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE.**

Come Caroling With Us!

Join the St. Stephen Youth as they sing Christmas carols to our shut-ins **following the 10:00 am service on December 18th**. Paul Kiser will lead this outing. Please sign up on the bulletin board next to Pastor Kerri's office if you plan to attend and if you can provide transportation. All ages from 4th grade through the Golden Sneakers are welcome. **Please bring a sack lunch to eat before we go**. We may stop for hot chocolate during our travels. If you want carolers to visit you, or if you know someone who would like a visit from our carolers on that date, please contact Paul Kiser, 435-5534. We will do our best to carol to as many of the people who request as we are able.

Mark Your Calendars for the Wine Tasting

Join us for an exciting fellowship opportunity and wine tasting in the St. Stephen fellowship hall on **January 21st, 2017**. More details will follow in upcoming bulletins and look for a sign up sheet in the narthex later in the month.



Youth Quake Poinsettia Fundraiser



During the Advent season, we are again holding a poinsettia sale to help fund our youth going to **Youth Quake in Cincinnati on January 13th-15th, 2017**. Order forms for the poinsettias are available on the table in the narthex. These beautiful plants are **\$10.00 each**. The first round of poinsettias sold will be delivered to the church and can be picked up on December 7th. The second round of poinsettia orders are due by December 18th. They will be delivered to the church a couple of days before Christmas Eve, where they will be used to decorate the sanctuary. For Christmas Eve, you may designate the poinsettias in honor or memory of your loved ones. If you order poinsettias in the second round, you may pick up your plant(s) after the 11:00 pm worship service on Christmas Eve or after. You may turn in your order with payment to Julia Davis or place it in the offering plate. Please mark your envelope "for poinsettia(s)". Thank you for supporting the youth, and please enjoy your plants!

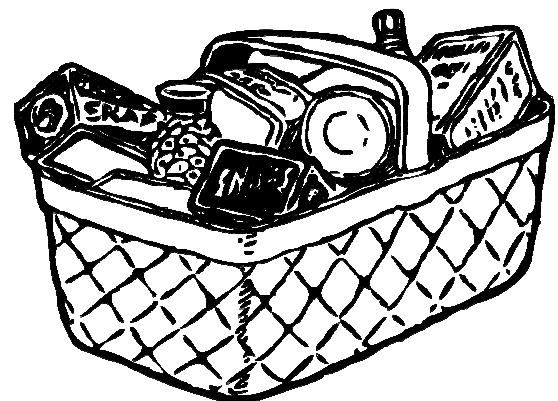
FCHUM Christmas Holiday Cheer Program

In recent years, we have helped at Thanksgiving with Fern Creek United Ministries' (FCHUM's) Thanksgiving Holiday Cheer program. However, this year St. Stephen has been collecting toys, filled shoeboxes, and toiletries for other programs, so we are going to participate in FCHUM's **Christmas** Holiday Cheer program instead. We hope to make **at least 8 Holiday Cheer Christmas baskets** for needy families in our community. Holiday Cheer baskets contain everything a family needs to prepare their Christmas dinner. These baskets will be distributed by the Fern Creek/Highview United Ministries just before Christmas. Look for a display in the narthex that will aid you in buying food items for this project. We need to collect the food items no later than **Sunday, December 11th**.

For each basket we will need:

- stuffing mix
- 1-5 lb. pound of potatoes (**bring close to FCHUM delivery date**)
- 1-3 lb. bag of onions (**bring close to FCHUM delivery date**)
- 2-cans of cranberry sauce
- 3 to 5 cans of green vegetables (green beans, peas...)
- 3 to 5 cans of mixed vegetables (corn, yams...)
- 1 to 2 cans of pie filling
- 1 bag of flour and 1 bag of sugar
- \$15-\$25 gift certificate to buy meat/perishable items

Thank you in advance for your generosity!



Creative Hands Sew Group Fundraiser



On **Sundays, December 4th & 11th**, there will be an ornament fundraiser after the worship services to raise money for purchasing supplies for the Creative Hands Sew Group at St. Stephen. These ornaments are beautifully hand-made by Deb Steines. Pick up a couple of these beauties for your Christmas tree!

Send Christmas Cards

Please send Christmas cards to our Saint Stephen shut-ins who may not be able to join us for Advent and Christmas Eve worship services:

**Liz Chapman,
Nancy Davidson,
Lucile Duke,
Andrea Eshenaur,
Florence Loy,**

**Marie Pfau,
Norma Steiner,
Tom & Maxine Swasko,
Catherine Thonen,
Rueben Zander**

Contact information for all can be found in the latest St. Stephen directory. Share the season!

4th Qtr Special Ministries Collection

On **Sundays, December 4th & 11th**, our 4th quarter special collections will be taken for social ministries. 50% of the money collected will be sent to Fern Creek Highview United Ministries, and 50% will be kept for other social ministry needs.



2017 Sanctuary Flowers and Candle Donors

Sign-up sheets for 2017 sanctuary flower and candle donors are in the narthex in the Flower and Candle binder near the literature rack. Saint Stephen's cost is \$20.00 for flowers and \$2.00 for the sanctuary candle. We hope to cover our costs with donations so that we can continue to provide flowers and candles. Please take this opportunity to honor or memorialize your loved ones in 2017. We need to have the flowers and candles donated as many weeks as possible. Thank you for your care and generosity.



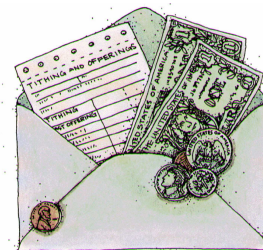
Are You Behind?

Based on our records at St. Stephen, we have not been collecting what we need to satisfy our church budget every week. We have cut back on our spending so that we can pay our bills. However, now is a good time to catch up on your giving and give us some relief while giving yourself a tax break. Your generosity is appreciated!

2017 Offering Envelope Boxes Available

The 2017 offering envelope boxes are now available in the narthex. Please take the box with your name on it. If you do not see your name, please call the church office, 239-7778, so that we can give you a box and record the box number. If you are not able to come to church and would like a box, please call the church office or send a note to secretary.ststephen@gmail.com.

As in the past, we included a mortgage fund envelope for each month to make it easy for you to contribute to the mortgage fund. There are also mortgage fund envelopes in the pew racks. Thanks for your continued contributions. We also thank Buddy & Peggy Zimmerman for placing the mortgage envelopes in each box and labeling each box with each person's name.



Turn Down the Thermostat

Now that the weather has turned colder, we need to be more aware of the thermostat settings at church. When you are not using an area in the church building, please make sure that the thermostat is set to 55°F. Thank you for your help!

FCHUM Thank You for Toiletries

A car load of toiletries were collected for Rev. Ron Loughry, Director of the Fern Creek Highview United Ministries, (FCHUM), to take back with him to FCHUM when he led worship services at St. Stephen on Sunday, November 6th. He was very grateful for these toiletries that will benefit those in the area who cannot use food stamps on items like this. Thank you to all who donated.

Operation Christmas Child Thank You

St. Stephen again collected filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child for children in war zones, disaster areas, and areas of extreme poverty around the world. This year we collected **49** boxes. Thank you to all who contributed!



Thanksgiving Enjoyed at St. Stephen

Approximately **113 people** enjoyed the Worship & Thanksgiving Dinner at St. Stephen on November 20th. Thank you to all of the turkey bakers, (Ellen Ullom, Karen Davis, Rita Sarson, Cathy Meyer, Marilyn Mills, and Buddy & Peggy Zimmerman), and special thanks to Buddy & Peggy Zimmerman and Marilyn & Barry Mills who also prepared the green beans, mashed potatoes, and corn and who set up additional tables and decorations. Thank you to all who brought other sides and desserts, and thank you to Pastor Kerri who provided items for the centerpieces.

St. Stephen's Annual Trunk & Treat Was a Hit!

Over 150 people (over 80 kids) enjoyed "trunk & treating" and eating chili at Saint Stephen at the Annual Trunk & Treat Festival on October 30th. Our fine high school and middle school students, pictured here, led by Paul Kiser, built and managed the fun and spooky haunted house.

Thank you also to all who prepared chili, donated food, served food, set up & cleaned up the fellowship hall, prepared visitor packets, and provided treats. We handed out 60 visitor packets!



Did you ever wonder what the Synod does with the benevolence money from our church?



COMFORT IN PRAYER

After a long, exhausting day training with a group of U.S. Marine Corps Reserve members, Cris Frigm, pastor of Trinity Lutheran in Taneytown, Md., and a U.S. Navy Reserve chaplain, handed out prayer books and led night prayer in the field. Following worship, members turned in for the night, leaving not one prayer book behind.

"Every time I train with the group, I try to lead a service out of the prayer book," said Frigm. **"Sometimes they take the books with them, and sometimes they don't. This particular night, it seemed they really needed the time for worship. Not one book came back to me."**

Now in his sixth year as a Navy Reserve chaplain, Frigm has developed a long relationship with a group of residents at Oakwood Lutheran Ministries in Wisconsin who, inspired by the Green Bay Packers, call themselves the Oakwood Packers. During the third Friday of each month, they pack boxes of prayer books and ship them to pastors like Frigm.

"My first deployment was to Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, Africa. That was the first time I received the books," he said. **"They have been a great resource especially with the Marine Reservists because they don't get a lot of support outside their drill weekend. It's helpful for them to take that book with them and have that extra support."**

Ron Mach, a retired pastor and Oakwood resident of 14 years, said he has spent the past nine of those years volunteering with the packing group. **"This opportunity for serving our sons and daughters in the military with food for the spirit as well as food for the body was the right mission for our Oakwood Packers,"** said Mach. **"We have a joyful sense of partnership with the ministry of Chaplain Frigm who provides pastoral care in the name of Christ and the ELCA."**

To date, the group has packed approximately 1,000 boxes to send to various ministries throughout the world, and they hope to continue their ministry long into the future.

To read more stories, visit ELCA.org/Resource/Stories-of-Faith-in-Action and download a copy of *Stories of Faith in Action*.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

December 2016 Servants of the Church

Sunday - 10 a.m.	12/04/16	12/11/16	12/18/16	12/25/16	1/1/17
Lector	Reagan Morris	Chuck Ullom	Brenda Firquin	No worship service	Paul Kiser
Ushers	Teta Thompson B. Zimmerman	Tom Curtis Jacob Curtis	Steven Sarson Rita Sarson	No worship service	Jim Clark Glenn Eisenbrey
Acolyte	Maddie Allen	Kayleigh Kiser	Ellerie Seifert	No worship service	Peace Kahn
Communion Table	Steven Sarson Rita Sarson	Teta Thompson Michelle Sarson	Adolphus Kahn Deb Steines	No worship service	Marilyn Mills Kayleigh Kiser
Commun. Deacon	Cheryl Markley	Tammy Utley	Rod Firquin	No worship service	Steven Sarson
Nursery	Jessica Allen	Teta Thompson	Julie Zimmerman	No worship service	Morgan McCauley
Cantor	Paul Kiser	Karen Eisenbrey	Fred McBride	No worship service	Bill Wise
Worship Coord.	Brenda Firquin	Paul Kiser	Pat Markley	No worship service	Rita Sarson
Greeter(s)	Ellen & Chuck Ullom	Marilyn Mills	Bob & Cathy Meyer	No worship service	Phyllis Boston
Coffee Hr Host(s)	Markleys	Needed	McFarlands	No worship service	See you Jan. 8th!

Christmas Eve Worship Servers Needed

St. Stephen needs worship servers for the Christmas Eve worship services. If you can help, please sign up in the narthex on the sign up sheet for the job that you would like to do at the worship service you will attend. We need worship coordinators, ushers, greeters communion table servers, deacons, and acolytes.

God's Blessings to these December birthdays:

Traci Christopher 1
Deb Steines 2
Bob Meyer 4
Megan Thonen 4
Linda Herrmann 5
Bill Thompson 5
Stephen Gomah 8
Liz Chapman 10
Margaret Fajardo 10



Kaely Peterson 10
TJ Harrel 12
Dick Wiedewitsch 14
Catherine Thonen 19
Austin Clark 20
William McFarland 21
Charlie Boston 28
Vivian Wise 31

We celebrate with these couples having December anniversaries:

Janet & Bobby Utecht (2nd/1995)
George & Paula Morris (7th/1968)
Matthew & Christina Clark (31st/2006)



November Sanctuary Flower and Candle Donors

November Sanctuary Flower Donors

6th - Fred & Judy McBride in honor of their wedding anniversary
13th - Rod & Brenda Firquin in thanksgiving for their children & grandchildren
20th - Connie Clark in honor of Sarah Schultz's & Rachel Clark's birthdays
27th - Steven & Rita Sarson in honor of their wedding anniversary

*The cost to provide altar flowers is \$20.00.

November Sanctuary Candle Donors

6th - Connie Clark
13th - Connie Clark in honor of Sarah Schultz's & Rachel Clark's birthdays
20th - Elaine Peterson in honor of Cole Summers' birthday
27th - Steven & Rita Sarson in honor of their wedding anniversary

*The cost to provide the sanctuary candle is \$2.00.



December 2016



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Upcoming Events: January 1st—No Sunday School January 13th - 15th—Youth Quake January 21st—St. Stephen Wine Tasting</p> <p>Merry Christmas</p>				1	2	3 8:30—Weight Watchers
<p>4 Social Ministry Collection 9:00—Education Hr 10:00—Holy Communion 11:30—Fellowship Committee 11:30—Coffee Hr 5:00—Holy Communion</p>	<p>5 6:00—Creative Hands Sew Group</p>	<p>6 12:30—Prayer Shawl Group 6:30—Christian Education Committee 6:30—Worship & Music Committee</p>	<p>7 6:30—Choir Rehearsal First Poinsettia Pick Up</p>	8	9	<p>10 8:30—Weight Watchers 1:00—Ladies Christmas Tea</p>
<p>11 Social Ministry Collection 9:00—Education Hr 10:00—Holy Communion, Christmas Program 11:30—Council 11:30—Coffee Hr</p>	12	13	<p>14 11:30—Golden Sneakers' Christmas Party 6:30—Choir Rehearsal</p>	15	16	<p>17 8:30—Weight Watchers Noon-6:00—Amber Buehner X-mas Party</p>
<p>18 NO Education Hr 10:00—Holy Communion 11:30—Coffee Hr 11:30—Decorate St. Stephen for Christmas 11:30—Sack Lunch & Caroling 5:00—3-Church Christmas Carol Sing & Cookie Fellowship</p>	19	<p>20 6:00—Finance Committee</p>	<p>21 6:30—Choir Rehearsal</p>	22	23	<p>24 8:30—Weight Watchers 5:00—Candlelight Holy Communion 11:00—Candlelight Holy Communion, 2nd Poinsettia Pick-up</p>
	Secretary Out of Office					
	JCPS Break					
<p>25 Christmas NO Education Hr NO Worship Services</p>	26	<p>27 4:30—Ronald McDonald House Visit</p>	<p>28 6:30—Choir Rehearsal</p>	29	30	<p>31 8:30—Weight Watchers</p>
	Pr. Kerri Out of Office					
	Secretary Out of Office					
	JCPS Break					

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
 5903 Bardstown Road
 Fern Creek, Kentucky 40291

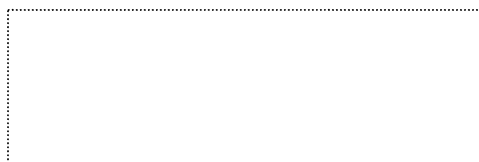


Worship Services:
Education Hr (during school yr) 9:00 AM
Sunday 10:00 AM
Sunday 5:00 PM

Due date for next month's newsletter articles is always the 17th of the month before. Send to:
 secretary.ststephen@gmail.com

December 2016

St. Stephen Scroll



January 2017 Servants of the Church					
Sunday - 10 a.m.	1/1/17	1/8/17	1/15/17	1/22/17	1/29/17
Lector	Paul Kiser	Tammy Utley	Marilyn Mills	Connie Miller	Cheryl Markley
Ushers	Jim Clark Glenn Eisenbrey	Marcus Utley Barry Mills	Carolyn Graham Fred McBride	Pat Markley Andy Morris	Bill Wise Vivian Wise
Acolyte	Peace Kahn	Jack McFarland	Jacob Curtis	Emma Morris	Caroline Zimmerman
Communion Table	Marilyn Mills Kayleigh Kiser	Charlie Boston Phyllis Boston	Maddie Allen Buddy Zimmerman	Peggy Zimmerman Nicole Legg	Marcia Peterson Sarah Giles
Commun. Deacon	Steven Sarson	Bob Meyer	Rod Firquin	Cheryl Markley	Tammy Utley
Nursery	Morgan McCauley	Jennifer Kiser	Elaine Peterson	Carol Ochs	Connie Miller
Cantor	Bill Wise	Bob Meyer	Paul Kiser	Karen Eisenbrey	Fred McBride
Worship Coord.	Rita Sarson	Rod Firquin	Brenda Firquin	Paul Kiser	Pat Markley
Greeter(s)	Phyllis Boston	Jan Wilkins	Darlene Clark	Bill & Vivian Wise	Teta Thompson
Coffee Hr Host(s)	See you Jan. 8th!	Needed	Needed	Needed	Needed