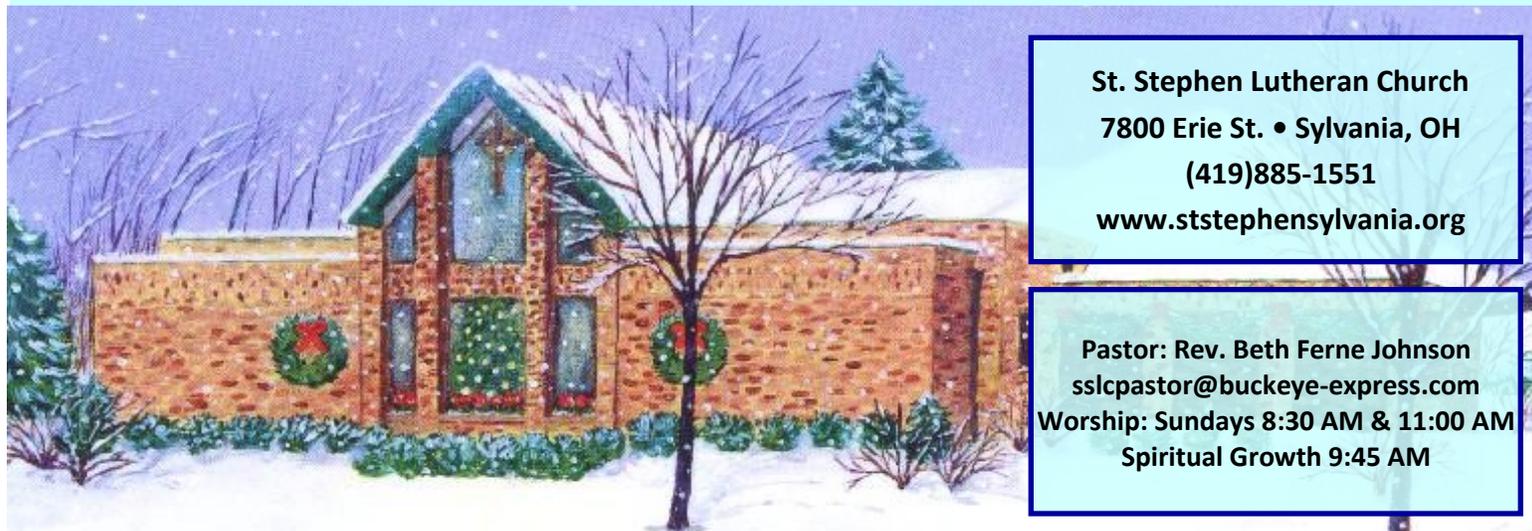


Vision of St. Stephen

January 2017



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

Pastor: Rev. Beth Ferne Johnson
sslcpastor@buckeye-express.com
Worship: Sundays 8:30 AM & 11:00 AM
Spiritual Growth 9:45 AM

“The Mood of Christmas”

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home
When the shepherds are back with the flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoners,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the land.

Howard Thurman

Once the Christmas trees and decorations are put away, I’ve learned that to add snowmen and women to our house, otherwise the house looks too bare and empty. I’m not a huge fan of winter, or of snowpeople, really, but somehow their cheery faces help me with the after-Christmas letdown.

This poem is honest about that after Christmas mood, reminding us that we can’t live in the land of Christmas trees and carols forever....and that’s a good thing. Because once we’re done with Christmas, we get to the point of why Christmas exists. Christmas exists because Jesus is born.

Jesus is born to show us what God wants us to be working on. God has had this agenda for a long, long time. The Old Testament prophets rail at the people, trying to convince them to care for their neighbors, strangers, and even enemies. But Jesus comes to do more than just lecture; Jesus comes to demonstrate, to model, how God wants us to relate to others. We see in Jesus the things that God is most worried about.

Jesus is also born to show us that this humble stable holds the weapon of victory over death. Jesus’ ultimate victory is his resurrection and the promise that this eternal life is ours as well. Light, love, and peace overcome darkness, hatred, and war. So, as we put our Christmas decorations away, let the work and the music begin!

Shining stable in the night,
Breathing victory with your light;
Darkness cannot hide your flame,
Shining bright as Jesus’ name.

“Savior of the Nations, Come”, LBW 28

God’s peace,

Rev. Beth Ferne Johnson

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Spiritual Growth

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Women's Bible Study is currently on hiatus. We plan to resume our study of Romans on March 7.

WOMEN'S DAYTIME BIBLE STUDY

Women's Daytime Bible Study will be starting a new session on January 11 which will meet from 1:00 p.m. -2:30 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Prayer Room. This session Genesis will be studied, which is especially fitting starting a new year! If you have any questions you can contact Betty Lock or Pastor Beth.

ST.STEPHEN PODCASTS AND SERMONS

Did you miss a week at church and want to hear the sermon? Looking to hear a little more from Pastor Beth throughout the week? Great news! There is a website you can now go to and find both the sermon for the week and a link to Pastor Beth's podcasts:

<http://www.ststephenchurch.podbean.com>

A special thanks to Shawn Murphy and Scott Ballard for their time in getting it up and running!

Epiphany Night Bonfire

Let's celebrate the Wise Men following the star with a celebration of light here at St. Stephen. We'll gather around a campfire, enjoy s'mores and hot chocolate, a quick litany, and warm fellowship together. If it is bitter cold, bring a flashlight and we'll create a flashlight campfire inside! We'll gather at **7:00 on Epiphany Night, Friday, January 6th**.



Family Game Night

We will be hosting family game night the second Friday of the month for the next three months and so our game nights will be on:

January 13

February 10

March 10

Each game night will run from **7:00-9:00 PM**. We hope to see you there!

Youth and Family

Sunday Youth

Our Sunday classes for youth aged 4 years to 4th grade are meeting at **9:45-10:45** in the Yellow Classroom! Our teachers are Kristin Huffman, Beth Thomsen, Niel Johnson, and Libby Boldt.

Our themes for November are:

January 1: Escape to Egypt

January 8: A Light to the Nations

January 15: The Lamb of God

January 22: United in Christ

January 29: The Beatitudes

5th and 6th Grade Seekers

Seekers will be held at **9:45-10:45** on **January 8 and 22**, in the conference room. We hope to see you!

Catechism

Catechism will be meeting **on January 8 after the second worship service**. Please contact Pastor Beth with any questions. Parents please be sure to bring you calendars so we can plan the dates for the rest of winter!

Women

JOY Club

Thank you to our JOY Club for continuing our meetings for the women of St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Our next JOY Club meeting scheduled soon, so look for more information in future beacons and newsletters so that you can come and join us!

Lutheran World Relief Quilting

The St. Stephen quilters will be starting again on MONDAY, Jan. 23rd, from 9:30 to 3:00 . All are welcome to come for an hour or all day and lunch will be provided for our first meeting! No skills are necessary...training is easy! For those who cannot come on our work days, kits can be had to sew squares at home. I was recently notified that our 28 quilts from 2015 went to Tanzania on 11/9/16! With refugees, orphans, illnesses, floods, earthquakes and other crises, the need is great the world over.

Additional Opportunities

BIG SCREEN MOVIE NIGHT



Join us for Big Screen movie night on **January 15th from 5:00-7:00pm** at St Stephen. We'll be showing a Disney film which tells the story about reuniting the

friendly-but-forgetful blue tang fish with her loved ones, and everyone learns a few things about the true meaning of family along the way.

SATURDAY MORNING COFFEE

Our Saturday morning coffee group has found a new home! We are now meeting Saturday morning at **McDonald's on Alexis at 9:45 AM** every week. It is a great chance to connect and participate in fellowship! *Questions? Contact Tricia Kunkel or Pastor Beth!*



Thank You!

POINSETTIA SALE

Thank you to everyone who supported our flower sale this year and helped to make our Christmas services even more special. A special thank you goes out to Patti Pearson for making the sale possible again this year!



GREENING OF THE CHURCH

Thanks to all our volunteers who helped to decorate the church for the Christmas season. Your time and abilities made our Christmas season a little more beautiful! Thank you again!

Outreach

Noisy Offering

The Noisy Offering for December-February will be benefiting Lutheran Social Services which is a faith based social service agency which assists families and communities!

December Noisy Offering Total: \$76.31



Christmas Baskets



Thanks to everyone who donated food & Christmas gifts for the 10 families St. Stephen supported through Sylvania Area Family Services Your generosity is always appreciated. Also, a special thanks goes out to Lynn Teft for writing a Thrivent grant for the supplies needed for not only the Christmas gifts, but also the Thanksgiving baskets as well.

Sensory Santa

We had another successful Sensory Santa this year, even though the weather came in full force! Sensory Santa is a great friend who offers time and a great alternative to those children who may not enjoy all the ruckus that can accompany other Santa's from time to time. We not only want to thank Santa, but also Dave Davis for all he does to support the annual Sensory Santa visit!



Winter Clothing Drive

Be on the lookout for a clothing box in the Narthex. We will be gathering clean gently used warm clothing though mid February. They will be taken (all sizes) to area sites such as SAFS or The Giving Store at Glenwood. Think of the coat that is being replaced, outgrown, etc. New items are welcome as well. Watch for the those wonderful sales, knowing your gift will help another.

Operation Christmas Child

168 shoe boxes filled this year for Operation Christmas Child. That is 168 children who are smiling and finding out that someone, somewhere cared about them. As you read see the pictures on the news of children who have been orphaned or have had to flee from their home, think about the difference these 168 shoe boxes made, and remember those children also learned about Jesus' love. So, as the New Year begins for us, don't forget the children.....please pray for them.

Church Finances

Simply Giving®

Have you been thinking about signing up for our Simply Giving program here at St. Stephen, but just haven't gotten around to it? Now is the time. It is convenient and safe, and easy to register. There are applications in the tract rack on the far left side above the ushers table. It is a white folder with a green tree on the front and I have written Simply Giving at the top. See me to participate in this program.

Sally Goetz, Coordinator

Kroger Rewards

Kroger's has a rewards program that includes donating to the community. This past quarter, St. Stephen received \$257.43 in total donations from 15 of our households who shopped between **7-31-2016** and **10-30-2016**. If you have not already done so, please go online to:

www.krogercommunityrewards.com

Once there, sign up to have your Community Rewards directed to St. Stephen! If you would like assistance in signing up for this program, please see Marilyn Scuralli or Kathy Aldrich.

GIFTS

General Fund

\$14,469

Building Fund:

\$1,205

Other Designated

\$1,327.61

NOTE: TOTALS DO NOT INCLUDE
DECEMBER 25 OFFERINGS.



Prayer

PERSONAL PRAYERS

Those desiring prayer for ANY NEED, HEALING, or THANKSGIVING, may find two chairs BETWEEN THE SANCTUARY DOORS with a Praying Friend seated in one of the them. After receiving communion, sit in the other chair and confidentially let the prayer *friend know of your need. She/he will anoint you with oil and pray with you.*

Community Prayers

St. Stephen welcomes prayer requests from the community and for family and friends. We will keep each request on for the current month, and an additional month upon request. Here are our current prayer requests:

Jill—Peace and Strength

Debbie—Terminal Cancer

Sue—Cancer Treatment

Joel—Kidney Failure

Jim—Cancer

Vicki—New job

Matt—Kidney Health

Steve—Health

Kevin—Cancer

Greg—Heart Problems

Chima—Job Opportunities

Roger—Recovery

Tracy & Reed—Comfort & Healing

PRAYING FOR THE CONGREGATION

1/2/17	NEW YEAR'S Holiday
1/3/17	Niel Johnson
1/4/17	Pr. Beth Ferne Johnson & Rob Johnson, Vivian, Niel
1/5/17	Sue & Joe Kahl
1/9/17	Jessica Klimesh
1/10/17	Mary Ann & Don Klimesh
1/11/17	Florence Kopfmann
1/12/17	Nancy Kubiak
1/16/17	Kayla Kunkel
1/17/17	Tricia & Jerry Kunkel
1/18/17	Edward LaBo
1/19/17	Tracy LaBo, Reed
1/23/17	Judy Lanham
1/24/17	Ruth Liaros
1/25/17	Ashley Lock
1/26/17	Betty Lock
1/30/17	Debbie & John Lock
1/31/17	Kyle Lock, Autumn

Pr. Beth prays, throughout the year, for each St. Stephen family. You are encouraged to offer your prayers for each family as well. For specific concerns, please call the church office, 419-885-1551, or email Pr. Beth @ sslcpastor@buckeye-express.com. Do not leave confidential messages on the machine.

Fun

All in Good Fun

A collector of rare books ran into an acquaintance who told him he had just thrown away an old Bible that he found in a dusty, old box. He happened to mention that Guten-somebody-or-other had printed it.

"Not Gutenberg?" gasped the collector.

"Yes, that was it!"

"You idiot! You've thrown away one of the first books ever printed. A copy recently sold at auction for half a million dollars!"

"Oh, I don't think this book would have been worth anything close to that much," replied the man. "It was scribbled all over in the margins by some guy named Martin Luther."

Bible Quiz

Who is Stephen in Acts of the Apostles? (Answer on page 9)

- A. The 11th disciple
- B. There is no Stephen in Acts
- C. The first Christian martyr
- D. An arch angel
- E. The Bible doesn't say



HANDICAPPED PARKING

We have a few people who are finding it difficult to get from their cars into the church building On Sunday mornings. In addition to the marked spaces at the front door, if we could leave the 6 spaces closest to the back door (3 on either side of the door) available to them, it would make it much easier for them to worship with us. Thank you!

Council

2017 Council Members

Council officers were elected at the November 2016 council meeting.

<i>President</i>	Marilyn Scuralli
<i>Vice President</i>	Joe Kahl
<i>Secretary</i>	Lin McKelvey
<i>Treasurer</i>	Libby Boldt

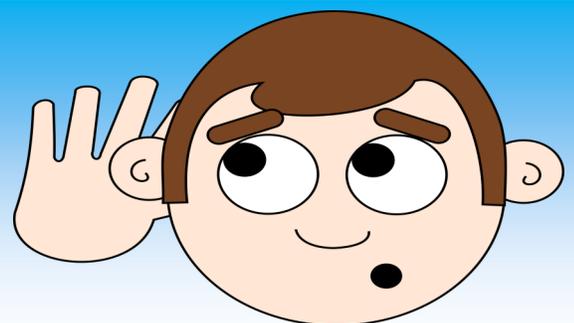
*Bryan Huffman
Beth Thomsen
Marilyn Scuralli
Kristi Shepler*

*Shawn Murphy
Libby Boldt
Joe Kahl
Lin McKelvey*

These council members are in the process of selecting their Ministry Liaisons.

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Hearing assistance equipment for up to 8 users available for anyone who needs help hearing the service better. Please ask Jeremy Hopkins or anyone who uses the equipment for assistance.



Administrative News



Lending Library Re-Opened

A big thank you to Lin and Marty McKelvey who updated the red box on our lending library to make it waterproof! The lending library is free to anyone who would like to use it and is located between our parking lot and Highland Elementary. Feel free to leave a book or take a book and let others in the community know if you think they might be interested!



St. Stephen Library

Check out our church library, located in the council room. Please browse and borrow at your leisure from our Christian library! We have bibles, hymnals, bible studies for groups or individual use, biblical biographies, novels by Christian authors, and even books for kids! We also have a historical section which contains albums and photos from St. Stephen Lutheran Church throughout the years!

Professional Leadership Conference

Pastor Beth will be away at a conference from January 19-21st. The main speakers for the Professional leadership conference this year are Dr. Joy Schroeder, who is a history professor at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, and Dr. Ken Inskeep, who is the director of research and evaluation for the ELCA. Together they will be taking a look at our denomination as we look forward to the next 500 years of Lutheranism,. If you're in need of pastoral care during this time, please contact Janell in the church office.

CHURCH RENTAL

Want to use St. Stephen rooms? Contact the office to have your activity logged in the church calendar, which is available to view online. However, space approval is based on the secretary's calendar. Please not that set-up and clean up is your responsibility when using the building.

** Please contact the church office before you borrow tables or chairs as they may be promised for other functions. Thanks!*

Newsletter Deadline

As always our newsletter deadline for anything you want to be added is the 2nd Tuesday in the month. So for **February 2017** Newsletter please have all your **items submitted by January 10.**

Steve's Bulletin Board

KROGER REWARDS: Want to earn money for St. Stephen while you shop? Register your Kroger Plus card online at:



KROGERCOMMUNITYREWARDS.COM

St. Stephen Book Club
Book: Plainsong
by Kent Haruf

A story set on the High Plains east of Denver. In the town of Holt, a high school teacher is confronted with raising his two boys alone. A teenage girl is pregnant with nowhere to go, and two brothers, elderly bachelors, work the family homestead. From these lives emerges a vision of life, and of the town and landscape that bind them together..

We will meet at the Haddix home on January 17th at 7 PM to discuss!

2017 POCKET CALENDAR



We have received the 2017 edition and they are available at the usher's table. Due to the rising cost, we are asking for a \$4.75 donation to offset the charges. Look for the donation box with the calendars.

See the Bulletin Board in the Narthex for more information and opportunities!

January Celebrations

Baptismal Birthdays

1/1 Tom Davis
 1/1 Dave Haddix
 1/1 Herb Hoehing
 1/1 Pat Hoehing
 1/1 Nancy Pfau
 1/1 Tom Pfau
 1/3 Elliot Huddleston
 1/22 Libby boldt
 1/25 Jayne Pratt

1/2
 1/3
 1/5
 1/7
 1/9
 1/12
 1/14
 1/25
 1/26
 1/28
 1/30
 1/30
 1/31

Birthdays

Patti Pearson
 Elliott Huddleston
 Libby Boldt
 Samuel Aldrich
 Megan Cook
 Kathy Ziegler
 David Davis
 Vivian Johnson
 Jim Boldt
 Mary Ann Klimesch
 Barbara Davis
 Sandra Markin
 Max Gerber

1/7
 1/18

Anniversaries

Aaron & Janet Ziegler
 John & Debbie Lock

Bible Quiz Answer:
 C. The first Christian martyr

Volunteer Celebration

	January 1, 2016	January 8, 2016		January 15, 2016	
	10:00 AM	8:30 AM	11:00 AM	8:30 AM	11:00 AM
Counter	Marilyn Scuralli	Herb Hoehing		Herb Hoehing	
Council Person	VOLUNTEER	Beth Thomsen	Marilyn Scuralli	Bryan Huffman	Joe Kahl
Lay Assistant	VOLUNTEER	Rod Hochstetler	Marilyn Scuralli	Shawn Murphy	Dave Haddix
Acolyte	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER
Altar Prep	Cathy Gustafson	Pat Hoehing	Kathy Ziegler	Cathy Gustafson	Tricia Kunkel
Greeters	VOLUNTEER	Carol Brown	Joyce Cunningham	C&D Gustafson	VOLUNTEER
Ushers	T&J Kunkel	Carol Brown	K&L Tefft	C&D Gustafson	T&J Kunkel
	January 22, 2016			January 29, 2016	
	8:30 AM	11:00 AM	8:30 AM	11:00 AM	
Counter	Rod Hochstetler			Rod Hochstetler	
Council Person	Libby Boldt	Kristi Shepler	Beth Thomsen	VOLUNTEER	
Lay Assistant	Cathy Gustafson	Bob Rieck	Marilyn Scuralli	Joe Kahl	
Acolyte	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	
Altar Prep	Mary Ann Klimesch	Nancy Rieck	Pat Hoehing	Joanne Johnson	
Greeters	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	H&P Hoehing	VOLUNTEER	
Ushers	VOLUNTEER	D&J Haddix	H&P Hoehing	D&C Haddix	

Altar Flowers

The flower sign up sheet is on the volunteer sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. You may also contact the church office with your flower gift wishes.

Service Assistants

Service assistants are an important part of our worship. The 2017 volunteer sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board for each month. Call Cathy Gustafson (419)882-6106 with questions.

Reminder

If you are unable to serve on your day, it is your responsibility to find a replacement and call the church office with that information.

January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>Noisy Offering 10AM Worship Service</p> 	2	<p>3</p> <p>3:45PM Girl Scouts</p>	4	5	<p>6</p> <p>7:00PM Epiphany Bonfire</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:45AM Saturday Morning Coffee</p>
<p>8</p> <p>8AM Prayer 8:30AM Traditional Worship 9:45AM 5th & 6th Graders 9:45 AM Spiritual Growth 11AM Contemporary Worship</p>	9	<p>10</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>11</p> <p>1:00 PM Women's Day- time Bible Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:30PM Brownie Scouts 6:30PM Girl Scouts</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:00PM Game Night</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:45AM Saturday Morning Coffee</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Bring a Friend Sunday</p> <p>8AM Prayer 8:30AM Traditional Worship 9:45 AM Spiritual Growth 11AM Contemporary Worship 5PM Big Screen Indoor Movie</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Martin Luther King Day</p> <p>6:30 Council Meeting</p> 	17	<p>18</p> <p>1:00 PM Women's Day- time Bible Study</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7PM Book Club at Haddix's</p>	20	<p>21</p> <p>9:45AM Saturday Morning Coffee</p>
<p>22</p> <p>8AM Prayer 8:30AM Traditional Worship 9:45 AM Spiritual Growth 11AM Contemporary Worship</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:30 AM Quilting</p>	24	<p>25</p> <p>1:00 PM Women's Day- time Bible Study</p>	26	27	<p>28</p> <p>9:45AM Saturday Morning Coffee</p>
<p>29</p> <p>8AM Prayer 8:30AM Traditional Worship 9:45 AM Spiritual Growth 11AM Contemporary Worship</p>	30	31				