

Our Stewardship of Attendance last week: (8:30) 125 (11:00) 154
Lenten Services: (12:30) 50 (6:00) 111

The Spirit of St. Stephen's Weekly for March 18– March 25, 2018

Our Stewardship of Offerings for 2018 and Debt Retirement:

Total Owed on Principal: \$2,205,000.00
Amount Due for 2018: \$229,775.70
Total Received Building Fund 2018: \$53,401.98

General Offering to date 2018: \$156,804.89
Expenses to date 2018: \$150,588.25

Our weekly offerings are about returning back to God a portion of what he has first given us. We are able to be generous givers when God is at work in our hearts.

St. Stephen's Activities for this week include:

TODAY	8:30 & 11:00AM: Worship Services-Council Installation Debt Retirement Meal 9:45AM: Sunday School for all ages 12:30PM Council Lunch/Meeting
Monday	9AM-12:00PM: Preschool (Monday – Thursday) 12:30PM: AA meeting (Social Hall) 7PM: Boy Scouts (Gym) 7PM: Lutheran Men (Social Hall)
Tuesday	6:00PM-8:30PM Volleyball (Gym) 4PM-10PM: O'Brien (Social Hall)
Wednesday	11:30AM: Prime Time Irish Feast (Social Hall) 12:30PM: Lenten Worship Service (Sanctuary) 5:00PM: Cherub and Children's Choir 5:15PM: Dinner 5:30PM: Intermediate Tone Chimes 6:00PM: Lenten Service (Social Hall); Tone Chimes 6:30PM: Hand Bells 6:45PM: Wings of Worship 7:00PM: Adult Choir 7:30PM: AA/AI-Anon meetings (Social Hall/Parlor)
Thursday	9:15AM: Prime Time Trinity Cathedral Tour 6:00PM-8:30PM: Volleyball (Gym) 7PM: AA meeting (Social Hall)
Friday	
Saturday	9AM: Crossroad PB&J Ministry (Kitchen)
Sunday	8:30 & 11:00AM: Worship Services-Palm Sunday 9:45AM: Sunday School for all ages 12:30PM: Feeding the Hungry-Finlay Park 12:30PM: First Communion Class

Congregation Council approved causes to be featured monthly. Special offering envelopes are located on the literature table in the narthex. **March Love Offering: Operation Inasmuch** Operation Inasmuch is a national nonprofit that employs proven models to motivate, train, and equip churches to move more congregants out of the sanctuary seats and into the streets to serve the neediest in their communities. A day is selected each year in the SC Synod in the month of April on which to mobilize Lutherans around the state in completing projects that will serve the "least of these" around us. All love offering donations in March will go towards helping to finance the projects we undertake on that special workday. To find out more please see Pastor Jason.

LICS Mobile Food Pantry is also a special initiative we will focus on in March. The \$601.86 that was collected during our Souper Bowl of Caring in February has been earmarked for the LICS Mobile Food Pantry. This is a ministry that LICS is providing in the rural community. It costs \$2000 a month to cover operating expenses and St. Stephen's is committed to providing funding for the month of March. If this is something that you'd like to donate additional money to, please make checks out to St. Stephen's and note that they are for LICS Mobile Food Pantry. So far we have collected **\$1,020.86** (this total includes Souper Bowl of Caring)

Hospitalized: Sharron Reams, Home! Chuck Billings, Palmetto Richland Heart Hospital

Christian Sympathy is extended to Ramona Steele and Debra Bachman and family upon the death of their husband/father, Herb Steele. May the peace and comfort of God's Word be with this family assuring them of the knowledge and truth of the Resurrection.

Council Installation today for the 2018-19 St. Stephen's Church Council. We appreciate all each of you do for our church! The council president for 2018-19 is Andy Marchant and vice-president is Adam Tworzyanski. Our secretary is Suzanne Robinson and Mary Keisler will continue to serve as treasurer.

Don't forget....Our 2018 ***Flower Calendar*** is available for sign up and there are open dates including June 24th, July 8th and August 12th. Please find the calendar on the bulletin board outside the Men's Sunday School Classroom.

Join us for the Wednesday Lenten Service held at 12:30PM in the Sanctuary and 6PM in the social hall, to enhance your weekly worship experience and to share God's Word in a unique, shortened, but spiritual time of worship. **March 21st "Some Greeks"**

Debt Reduction Lunch TODAY by Nurture and Outreach featuring Mr. Ron's famous chicken bog, lima beans, yeast rolls, assorted desserts and iced tea. Debt retirement meals are held each month September - May. All proceeds go directly to retire the debt. Meals are ready for take-out or eat-in after the 8:30 & 11:00 services.

First Communion Class will be offered March 25th at 12:30PM. If you have any questions please contact Pastor Jason.

Lutheran Men will meet March 19th at 7PM in the social hall. All men are invited to come learn about the new federal tax code recently approved by congress. Our own Eddie Howard will be our speaker.

LICS FOOD REQUEST: LICS is in URGENT need of the following items: Beef stew, Pork and Beans, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Canned Chili and Canned Fruit. Remember, **even one can of food will feed someone who is hungry.** Our Lenten Food Drive continues with **1,837 lbs.** collected and will run through Easter Sunday. Our yearly total is **2,646 lbs.** If you wish to make a cash donation toward purchase of food, please make a check out to St. Stephen's and mark it for **LICS FOOD PANTRY PURCHASE** and give it to me personally or put it in my Council Box. I will purchase the food and take it to LICS. Please keep those cans coming. Donating canned goods to LICS is a good way to be the hands, feet, and the face of Christ to someone you will probably never meet. Place your food donations in the LICS boxes in front of the Men's class or the box in front of Tonya's office. **The hungry in Lexington continue to depend on you and they thank you!!** Thank you again for your support. Point of contact: Ron Redd 359-6363 or Rredd7848@gmail.com

Yard Sale on April 14th! Our youth that are attending the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, TX will be hosting a church wide yard sale in the gym. All proceeds will go towards our 2018 trip. As you are beginning your "Spring Cleaning", please keep us in mind! We will **not** be collecting shoes, clothes, or old TV's. Donated items can be placed on the stage in the gym (behind the blue curtain). If you have questions, please see Shannon Burnett.

Prime Time:

Irish Feast - Wednesday, March 21st at 11:30 AM

Our group will be enjoying corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, and beer bread. A love offering will be taken up to defray the cost of the food. Please sign up on the clip boards across from the Men's Classroom

Trinity Cathedral Tour - Thursday, March 22nd

We will plan to leave at 9:15 AM and begin our tour at Trinity at 10 AM. We will have lunch at California Dreaming before we leave Columbia. Cost is \$5 (donation will be given to Trinity). Lunch is on your own.

WELCA INVITES all women of the church to **Pie and Prayer Pail Event** on Sunday, April 15th from 2:00pm until 4:00pm in the social hall. EAT! LOVE! PRAY! Come join us! #LUTHERANCHICKSROCK

Boston Roast Fundraiser: Boy Scout Troop 306 and St. Stephen's Lutheran Men are accepting orders for Boston Roasts. You may order your Boston Roast today after the service. Cost is \$45.00 for prepaid or \$50.00 on the day of pick up. You will have a choice of Carolina Rub, Salt and Pepper or plain. We will also be taking orders during the Wednesday evening meal. Point of contact Ron Redd: Rredd7848@gmail.com 803-360-0241. **Make Checks payable to St. Stephen's Lutheran Men.**

Don't forget!!! All children age 18 months-4th grade are invited to join us Saturday, March 31st for the Easter Eggstravaganza! Please join us in the gym at St. Stephen's at 10AM! Bring your own basket-we'll supply the rest!

7th-12th grade Youth Events:

Sunday, March 25th: Help Feed the Hungry at Finlay Park. We will depart from the church at 12:30pm and head for the park. Each youth is invited to bring something to share with the hungry that gather. Please put your dish in a disposable pan and bring a serving utensil. The meal will start at 1pm. We will get lunch on the way back to Lexington and have an hour of open gym once we return!

Saturday, March 31st - Easter Eggstravaganza! Please come help Ms. Shannon pull off the Easter Egg Hunt! She needs to know who can help by March 28th. 5th and 6th graders are encouraged to help!

In April we will once again participate in Operation Inasmuch, a yearly service workday out in the community. This year members of St. Stephen's will volunteer with Homeworks on Saturday, April 7th and St. Bernard Project on Saturday, April 21st. The opportunity to RSVP for April 7th has closed, but you can still RSVP for the April 21st workday through Wednesday, March 21st. On these days we will be working to improve the homes of various people out in the greater Columbia area, so please consider this opportunity to serve those in need around us. If you need more information you can contact Pastor Jason, Shannon Burnett, or Barbara Harmon.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, March 31st - Easter Eggstravaganza (18 months-4th grade)

Saturday, April 14th - Church wide Yard Sale

(Proceeds benefitting ELCA National Youth Gathering)

Wednesday, April 25th - Blood Drive (2:00pm-7:00pm)

Saturday, May 5th - Ladies Spring Luncheon

Sunday, May 6th - Matt McCall's Concert

Saturday, May 12th - Scouts & Lutheran Men Boston Roast Sale

Friday, May 18th - 2018 Relay for Life at Lexington High School

Sunday, May 20th - 8th Graders Confirmed

June 11-14th - Preschool Jr. Engineer's Camp

June 17th-23rd - Campfirmation with Pastor Jason (Lutherock)

June 24th-30th - Campfirmation with Pastor Pat (Lutheridge)

June 27th - July 1st ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, TX

July 8th - 12th VBS

July 16th - 20th Lutheridge Day Camp & Preschool Christmas in July Camp

Will Berry, an 8th grader from St. Stephen's is collecting items for "Project Golden Egg". This is Will's 8th grade service project and he is hoping his church family will help him in his mission to collect Easter Basket donations for the children at Chris Myers' Children's Place. Will is asking that all donations be turned in by March 25th so he can sort the items and get them to the children by Easter. He is asking folks to donate goodies for Easter baskets including (but not limited to): coloring books, crayons, small Easter toys, small stuffed animals, bubbles, chalk, play dough, etc. There is a box located outside the Men's Classroom labeled "Project Golden Egg" where the donations can be dropped off! Thank you in advance for your support!