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Office Hours:

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
from 8am—3pm

Office Closed:

Monday, May 27th in observance of
Memorial Day

Deadlines:

Bulletin: Wednesday by 8:00 a.m.
Newsletter: 2nd Thursday of the month.

Facebook:

Join us to watch a livestream service
every Sunday at 9am at
<https://www.facebook.com/wausausslc>

Worship Telecast:

Our Worship Services are telecast on
Spectrum channel 980/TDS channel 17
on Sundays at 12pm (this is the previous
Sundays' service), Mondays at 3pm, and
Tuesdays at 10am and 10:30pm.

DATE: MAY 2024
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THE DEACON'S SPIRIT

The newsletter of St. Stephen Lutheran Church



Mother's Day Slide Show

We will be having a slide show honoring mothers on Mother's Day which is Sunday, May 12th, during the announcements. Please submit your favorite photo of you and your mother and/or a photo of you and your children/grandchildren. Please, no more than one photo from each category. All photos (submitted electronically) must be to Nancy Henke by Wednesday, May 8th. If you would like to submit a photo electronically, email to nhenke@sslcwausau.com. It would be preferable to have electronic submissions in a jpg. format. Please include the names of the people in the photos with your submissions. **IF YOU SUBMITTED A PHOTO LAST YEAR, THAT PHOTO WILL BE USED.** If you have questions, contact Nancy at 715-845-7858.

Pastor Karoline Schwantes/Phone: 715-370-5514/Email: prkaroline@sslwausau.com

As I look out my window, I see buds on the shrub that is just outside. They are starting to turn green; signs of future growth. Signs of spring are everywhere. Lawns and fields are starting to green out. Buds on trees are getting visibly bigger by the day. Flowers are starting to emerge. Change is all around us and God's creation is beautiful.



God is inviting us into a new season at St. Stephen too. We've experienced some of these "buds" in the Lent and Easter season through shared worship and a deep look at our vision and who we are as the people of God. Changes will also be happening to our building soon, with the roof repairs, bell tower louvers, and tuck pointing projects set to begin soon. This may be maintenance, but it is a faithful step into the ways we use our facility for worship and for mission.

As we contemplate our next faithful steps, we are going to be taking a deep look at stewardship. Just as we see the beauty of God's gifts in creation and the gifts that God has instilled in us as a congregation, we have stories as to how God has equipped us to share these gifts, including our time, talents, and offerings.

We celebrate the gifts of those who have gone ahead of us in the faith and we celebrate the gifts that God is instilling in us.

Pastor Karoline

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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St. Stephen Calendar of Events					May 2024	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5 9:00 Worship 10:15 Special Congregational Mtg. 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	6 11:00 Staff Mtg. 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Bell Choir	7 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Task Force Mtg. @ GSLC 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	1 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 Combined Choir	2 8:30 Quilting 6:00 AI-Anon 6:30 Lenten Art Journaling Bible Study	3	4 9:00 Stephen's Angels
12 Mother's Day 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	13 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum MEMORIAL DEADLINE FOR MAY	14 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Council Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	15 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 Combined Choir	16 8:30 Quilting 5:30 Trust Fund Comm. Mtg. 6:00 AI-Anon 6:00 Special Olympics 6:30 Lenten Art Journaling Bible Study NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	17	18 Wausau East and Wausau West Graduation
19 Day of Pentecost 9:00 Confirmation at Good Shepherd 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	20 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 6:30 Property Comm. Mtg.	21 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	22	23 8:30 Quilting 6:00 AI-Anon 6:30 Lenten Art Journaling Bible Study	24 NO SCHOOL	25
26 The Holy Trinity 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	27 Memorial Day 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED	28 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	29	30 Last Day of School 6:00 AI-Anon 6:30 Lenten Art Journaling Bible Study	31	



Anniversaries

The following couples are celebrating their May Wedding Anniversaries.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

May 4th

Ben & Peggy Roble

May 5th

Allen & Susan Brouchous

Nick & Becky Hebda

May 20th

Gregory & Kim Grau

Elroy & Faye Schalow

May 22nd

Christopher & Beth Eiden

May 25th

John & Connie Schneider

May 29th

Joseph & Jessica Strand

May 30th

Edward & Shirley Schwede

May 31st

Everett & Bev Schmidt



Birthday Blessings

The following people are celebrating May Birthdays

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

May 2nd

Jerelyn Weinke

Seth Wiskow

May 3rd

Allen Seymour

May 4th

Raymond Schirmer

May 5th

Elizabeth Lenoble

John Seehafer

May 7th

Matthew Otradovec

Rachel Tordsen

May 9th

Patricia Pippenger

Jessica Strand

May 10th

Sylvia Seiler

May 13th

Jessica Dabler

May 14th

Jennifer Burish

Jane Seubert

May 15th

Susan Flaker Johnson

Amy Robinson

Randy Van Natta

May 17th

Davis Kole

Terry Lyon

May 18th

Pastor Karoline Schwantes

May 19th

Debra Zahrt

May 21st

Joan Ninnemann

Gary Tilkens

May 22nd

Julie Cheyka-Sawyer

May 23rd

Shane Woller

May 26th

Delores Hilmerhausen

Nancy Schwede

May 27th

Darlene Yolitz

May 28th

Melissa Peters

May 30th

Alexander Mohr

May 31st

Andrew Nielson

Kristie Schneider

I Can Do
ALL THINGS
through
Christ
who
Strengthens Me
PHILIPPIANS 4:13

bibleversestogo.com

Aspirus Lifeline Services

Aspirus Lifeline services are back to being installed in area households. Lifeline is an easy-to-use, 24-hour service that provides quick assistance whenever it's needed. Subscribers are able to live more independent, active lives at home because Lifeline's professional staff is ready to provide assistance if needed. Subscribers are free to go about their daily activities with more confidence and less worry, even if they live alone. Aspirus Lifeline also offers Auto Alert, which is advanced technology and provides an added layer of protection: 1) Offers access to help with or without the push of a button if a fall is detected 2) Is an easy-to-wear pendant-style button that is comfortable and waterproof 3) Is the ONLY medical alert pendant with breakthrough technology that, if it detects a fall, will automatically call for help even if you can't push the help button or are unable to ask for help. Learn more by going to: www.aspirus.org/lifeline or call 715-847-2781.

Community Dinner

The Good Stewards Committee is planning for the Community Dinner on Sunday, April 28th. We are asking congregation members to help out by either baking or buying cookies for us to include with the meals. Please bring the cookies to church with you on Sunday, April 28th. We will have a place in the back of the Sanctuary for you to leave the cookies. We also need volunteers to help prepare and serve the dinner. If you would like to help, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway across from the office. If you have any questions, please contact Shauna Robinson. Thanks!

Dine to Donate Sundays

Want an easy way to donate money to St. Stephen Lutheran Church? Just eat at Texas Roadhouse in Wausau on Sundays!!! This is how it works: dine at Texas Roadhouse on Sunday and present our church bulletin for 10% of your food bill (not including alcohol, taxes, or gratuity) to be donated back to our church. Not valid with any other offers or on holidays. Dine in ONLY. One per table, per visit. This is a weekly, on-going program that takes place EVERY Sunday. A check will be sent to the church once a month. It's that simple!!! So, go enjoy a great meal and give back to St. Stephen.

Faith In Action

Faith in Action is a Non-Profit Organization which offers quality services at NO COST, for seniors to live in their homes, as long as feasibly possible. All services are provided regardless of income, religious belief, or ethnic background. If you or a neighbor needs help getting transportation for medical appointments, grocery shopping, or running any other errands please call Faith in Action at 715-848-8783 Monday thru Thursday from 9 am to 2 pm. Their office is located here in Wausau at 630 Adams Street.

Graduates

Are you or a member of your family graduating? Please let us know so St. Stephen can help you celebrate this milestone! Please notify Pastor Karoline, prkaroline@sslcwausau.com

HELP Closet

What is HELP Closet? It is our local Health Equipment Lending Program. Items usually available are: hospital beds, wheelchairs, commodes, shower seats, standard walkers, canes, and crutches. There is a minimal charge to use an item from this closet. For instance, to rent a wheelchair short term (6 months) is \$30. To purchase is \$100. The closet is located at 1106 Fifth Street in Wausau, 715-843-5985.

Benevolence

Through your support of St. Stephen in the month of March 2024, we were able to contribute to the following ministry:

ELCA National & Synod Support \$773

This is the second month of our unified budget in which we now give four and one half percent (4.5%) of our current expense receipts and loose plate offerings for benevolence. The above amount is based on the income of \$15,696 for March.

St. Stephen Family Checkbook

For the month of March 2024 and the year to date, the St. Stephen family checkbook looked like this:

March 1—31, 2024

What we received.....	\$25,452.
What we spent.....	(\$24,899.)
Our balance.....	\$ 553.

January 1—March 31, 2024

What we received.....	\$64,069.
What we spent.....	(\$69,964.)
Our balance.....	(\$ 5,895.)

Order of Importance of Memorials and Other Special Offerings

Primary Funds: Building Improvement/Maintenance Fund, Current Expense Receipts, and Sustainability Trust Fund.

Secondary Funds: Bell Choir Fund, Brick Maintenance (tuck pointing), Choral Fund, ELCA Scholarship Fund, Good Neighbor Fund, Library Fund, Organ Fund, Quilters Memorial Fund, Parish House Alarm, Technology Fund, and WELCA Clean Water Fund.

Other Funds: Confirmation/National Youth Gathering, Faith Enrichment Fund, Major Church Improvement, Missionary Sponsorship, Rooted in Faith (Crossways Capital Improvement) Fund, Seidel/Meyer Scholarship, Seminary Scholarship, and World Hunger.

Little Free Pantry

The Good Stewards Committee is asking for food donations for the little free pantry outside of the church. We can use things like canned meat, peanut butter, pasta, hamburger helper, cereal, etc. We just ask that it not be in a glass container or contain carbonation. There are two plastic containers in the chapel area labeled for food donations. If you have any questions feel free to reach out to Shauna Robinson or anyone else on the Good Stewards Committee. Thank you!

Office Closed

The office will be closed starting Friday, May 24th until Monday, June 3rd as Nancy Henke will be on vacation. If you have a pastoral emergency during this time, please call Pastor Karoline Schwantes at 715-370-5514.

St. Stephen Trust Fund

St. Stephen Lutheran Church established a Trust Fund in 1988 as an investment in our future. There are two funds invested through Financial First Advisors in Wausau. The Trust Fund Committee is responsible for these funds and uses only a percentage of the earnings for the designated projects. The Wider Mission Fund is to support the wider mission of the Church in our community and globally. Examples would include: The Neighbors' Place, Faith in Action, Open Door, the Wausau Warming Center, Homeless Kids Fund, Lutheran World Relief, and others. The Building Preservation Fund is for the preservation of our church buildings. In the past this has included fixing the elevator, parsonage updates, and organ repair as well as other repair projects. St. Stephen is known for its generosity. Because only the interest earned on each fund is used in our outreach missions, it is important to maintain a solid investment balance. Please keep the St. Stephen Trust Fund in mind when doing your estate planning. You can designate a specific fund or project, or make a general reference to the Trust Fund.

Shoe Drive

We have been invited to participate in a Shoe Drive to raise funds for youth attending the Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Donations of gently worn, used and new shoes will be accepted. We will be collecting shoes from now until May 2, 2024. For more information, please see the bulletin board near the church office, or ask Pastor Karoline or Shauna Robinson. The donation bin will be outside the church office next to the bulletin board! In the US alone, over 600 million pairs of shoes are thrown away per year. The materials used to manufacture a pair of shoes are created from chemical compounds that will create health hazards if left to disintegrate openly or in landfills. By donating your gently worn, used, and new shoes, your shoes are given a second chance to make a difference. All donated shoes will be redistributed to microenterprise partners through Funds2Orgs, a for profit social enterprise, and used in developing nations for impoverished people to start their own businesses.

Special Congregational Meeting

A Special Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 5th immediately following the worship service to discuss facility improvements and funding. On Sunday, April 28th we will have a Capital Committee discussion on building improvements during the Coffee Hour.

Women's Bible Study Luncheon

The Women's Bible Study Group will meet at Applebee's on Wednesday, May 8th at 11:30am for a luncheon. There will NOT be a Bible Study after lunch as in the past. Any women in the congregation who would like to attend are WELCOME! Please call Jane Seubert to RSVP at 715-675-3644 by Monday, May 6th. Thank you!

HOME OF THE FREE
BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE

HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY

*Thank you to our brave service members and their families
who have sacrificed so much to protect our freedoms*



APRIL 2024 MEMORIALS

In loving memory of Jane Stotmeister

Current Expense Fund -- \$312

Family & Friends

Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund

In loving memory of our Mother, Phyliss Ament –
Lyle & Caroline Ament

In loving memory of our Grandma, Jane Stotmeister –
Angel Fremming and Hanna Rhyner

In loving memory of my Husband, Roger on his March 4th Birthday Anniversary and my Sister,
Lucille Bedish – Darleen Fust

In loving memory of Bill Lonsdorf, Lucille Bedish, and Elaine Hoppe –
Shirley Kasten

In loving memory of Lucille Bedish –
Mary Beth Tolley

In loving memory of my Nephew, Kevin Prieve and my Parents, Harold Prieve and Loretta Prieve
Lodholz – Mary Beth Tolley

Current Expense Fund

In loving memory of my Sister, Deb Johnson, who passed away on April 25, 2023 –
Jane Seubert

Seidel Meyer Pastoral Ministry Fund

In loving memory of Harold & Sue Kratwell, Kenneth & Sadie Borth, and Norman & Bertha
Zietlow – Sandy & Ron Borth and Family

World Hunger

In honor of my family members –
Shirley Kasten

If you would like a memorial placed in the May bulletins and June newsletter, it needs to be to the office by Monday, May 13th. Thank you!

PROPOSED 2024 PROPERTY REPAIR UPDATED RESOLUTION

Resolution #1

An opportunity has arisen to address the failing alley pavement in conjunction with our neighbors to the North of the alley as they plan for parking lot repairs adjacent to the alley. The pavement is heavily sunken due to years of use and large vehicles. The slope of the alley due to this condition prevents rainwater/snow-melt from draining away from church foundation and in the past has caused water intrusion. The work involved would be to remove the pavement and road base, re-build the road base, and add 2 layers of pavement with grading to divert water away from the church foundation. Costs would be shared with our neighbors and expected to not exceed \$12,000.

Be it resolved that St. Stephen Church work with neighboring properties to have the alley rebuilt with a cost to St. Stephen not to exceed \$12,000.

Resolution #2

Today we stream our Sunday services on Facebook and later post them on our website and have them run on local access television for our shut-in's and members that cannot make services. We routinely have 75+ views of our weekly service from our website. Our current video streaming equipment is approaching 15 years old. The cameras are standard definition and today we attempt to upscale the picture to near HD however the clarity is not very good. We would recommend upgrading the 3 PTZ (Pan/tilt/zoom) cameras, the controller, and the computer to support HD and 4K video streaming to our viewers. The expected cost is not expected to exceed \$10,000.

Be it resolved that St. Stephen Church purchase new HD cameras and associated equipment to improve the video quality of our broadcasts for our members viewing services externally. Costs not to exceed \$10,000.

Resolution #3

In February's Annual Meeting, the congregation approved repairs to the building (roof, tuckpointing, parapet caps, fascia, louver replacement, and brick sealing, with costs expected to be \$203,700. A motion was made and carried to adjust the approved costs to \$215,000 allowing for possible overruns. The resolution called for utilizing \$26,000 from the Building Improvement Fund and \$24,000 from Building Preservation Trust Fund to reduce the borrowing cap to \$157,300. Minutes reflect borrowing to not exceed \$215,000, not an adjusted value of \$165,000.

As financing has not been finalized for the originally approved resolution, we would like to combine the financing of the 3 projects, which would result in an amount borrowed not to exceed \$190,000.

Payment of financed loan would be raised by a capital fund raising program within the congregation and utilizing funding from internal sources, such as the Building Improvement Fund, Building Preservation Trust Fund, and bequests/memorials as Council deems appropriate. Our goal would be to ensure that said bequests/memorials and trust accounts are not depleted and can continue to provide growth opportunities and coverage for unforeseen future events.

Be it resolved that St. Stephen Church finance the combined 3 projects for no greater than \$190,000 and at its discretion throughout the life of the loan, utilize existing Building Preservation Trust Fund and bequests/memorials monies in accordance with appropriate bylaws and giving guidance, to cover portions of the loan.

COUNCIL MINUTES ~ APRIL 9, 2024

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Present: Pastor Karoline, Kathy Robinson, Sue Holster, Dick Holster, Verlyn Oelke, Vicki Romang, Shauna Robinson, Jeff Blomquist, Sarah Lonsdorf, Lynn Deffner, Darrin Koehler, and Jacque Schremp.

Absent: Nancy Prigge

The meeting opened at 5:30 pm.

A motion was made and passed to accept the March 12, 2024 Council minutes.

Pastor's Report: A written report was provided. Pastor Karoline discussed changes that have been happening at many churches since Covid, attendance is down by two-thirds, online attendance is growing, and the tone of the census was that of hope. Council discussed what they find hopeful. What do you find hopeful in your life?

President's Report: No written report was provided. We were all very happy with the great turn out of people at worship during Lent.

Treasurer's Report: Our General Fund currently has a balance of \$14,272.

A motion was made and passed to accept these reports.

Committee Reports:

Good Stewards: No written report was provided. We have been participating in a Shoe Drive to raise funds for ELCA youth attending the Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Donations of gently worn, used, and new shoes will be accepted from now until May 2nd. Contact Shauna Robinson with any questions.

Property: A written report was provided. If we partner with Dick Holster's property (formerly YWCA) and the law firm behind the church, the church will save approximately \$920 annually for garbage disposal (includes recycling). The dumpsters will be located across the alley. We have an opportunity to have the alley behind the church building blacktopped by Tito Excavating, with an estimated the cost of \$10,000. This item will be brought to the congregation for a vote. A special congregational meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 5th. Temporarily, speakers have been added in the church, one on each side. The speakers were donated. It was also mentioned that the office computers should be provided with a UPS backup in case of power outages.

Worship: No written report was provided. The committee did not meet in March. Their next meeting is Thursday, April 11th.

Trust Fund: The committee approved a request for \$400 for the Good Stewards Committee for the Community Dinner in April.

A motion was made and passed to accept these reports.

Old Business:

- Memorial Fund Order – There is no change to the order this month. Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund remains at number one, Current Expense Fund at number two, and Sustainability Trust Fund at number three.

New Business:

- **A motion was made and passed** to approve March bills.
- Safety Committee – If you are interested in becoming a Safety Committee member, please contact Kathy Robinson.
- Capital Campaign – Krause Konstruktion has been contracted to complete the repairs to the roof. This will be discussed with the congregation in May. There are two financing possibilities, one suggestion is to borrow the money from the Trust Fund or borrow the money from an external source.
- Task Force update – The Task Force is interested in what members of St. Stephen feel are our greatest values. Three of the values discussed were care of the congregation, care of the church and property, and help within our community.
- Annual Rummage Sale – The 2024 St. Stephen Rummage Sale will be held on April 27th and 28th. Donations are currently being accepted. No large furniture will be accepted. Please contact Lynn Deffner or a member of Stephen's Angels for more information.
- Church Directory – The last directory was completed in 2017. Further discussion of a new directory will be held in 2025.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for May 14th, 2024 at 5:30 pm.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Romang, Council Secretary