



ST. STEPHEN
Evangelical Lutheran Church

Congregational Communication
Congregational Communication
Reverend Joel Petruschke

Our Mission: We respond to Christ's love by feeding those who hunger in body, mind, and spirit.

Date: February 5, 2025

Wednesday, February 5
6:00pm – Youth Program: EMS Game Night

Thursday, February 6
4:30pm – Community Assistance
Meal
6:00 – Cub Scouts

Sunday, February 9: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
9:30am – Sunday Church School
11:00 – Worship Service (Hybrid)

Monday, February 10
6:00pm – Roller Skating Party w/St. Mark
@Olympic Skating Rink, Enola
7:00pm – Boy Scouts

Tuesday, February 11
7:00pm – Council Meeting

Thursday, February 13
6:00pm – Cub Scouts

Saturday, February 15
5:00pm – Dinner with Friends

Sunday, February 16: Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
9:30am – Sunday Church School
11:00am – Worship Service (Hybrid)
1:00pm – Youth Program: Fuse

Monday, February 17
7:00pm – Boy Scouts

Thursday, February 20
4:30pm – Community Assistance Meal
6:00pm – Cub Scouts

Sunday, February 23: Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
9:30am – Sunday Church School
11:00am – Worship Service (Hybrid)
12:30pm – Bible Study and Light Luncheon

Monday, February 24
7:00pm – Boy Scouts

Thursday, February 27
6:00pm – Cub Scouts

This week, we welcome Pastor Elaine Dent to lead us in Worship.

Dear Siblings in Christ,

By now you have already probably heard that the prognosticator of all prognosticators (Punxsutawney Phil) has predicted that winter will continue for six more weeks. I know that for many people, this is not good news. Of course, for some kids, this means there is hope for more winter snow and a few days out of school! But whether we greet this prediction with dread or hope, Groundhog's Day ties us to a Church tradition which always delivers good news and hope.

The date of Groundhog's Day always coincides with the date of Candlemas. Since the 5th century AD, this has been a festival of candles. For many years, churches often blessed all the candles they planned to use in the coming year on this day and still many churches bless candles for church and home use on this day. Candlemas is celebrated on February 2 annually because that is the date of the Presentation of our Lord. As we observed on Sunday, this is the time when Jesus was brought to the temple by Mary and Joseph to be dedicated to God. According to Luke unlike other dedications, two seniors at the temple that day proclaim clearly that Jesus is the one to redeem Israel, the promised Messiah. So, a great Epiphany occurs this day for all who gather in the temple, and we clearly hear who Jesus is from both Simeon and Anna.

Even though there seems to be no connection between candles and groundhogs, there actually is a connection. For many European countries, Candlemas was a day for weather predictions. For some this date, right between the winter solstice and the equinox was celebrated as the beginning of Spring. Because agriculture was so central, these predictions were important. The Germans looked to see if a badger cast a shadow or not that day for their predictions. But when many Germans moved to the new world, there were no badgers to be found, so the tradition of using a groundhog took shape. Even today we celebrate the Presentation of our Lord with Candlemas on Groundhog's Day.

As Simeon sings that day, Jesus is a light to the world. Whether Phil sees his shadow or not, we continue to use candles for worship. Every time we light a candle, we have a sign of hope reminding us that the eternal light is still with us. When we use candles for worship, we remember that Christ is with us. When you light a candle at home, remember that Christ is there with you. Even in the darkness of winter, Christ is with us always offering hope!

May the Light of Christ be with you always!

Pastor Marleen

Youth Corner

Attention Families! St. Stephen Church, New Kingstown, will be holding their **Fuse Meetings** on the **3rd Sunday of each month, at 1PM**. A lunch meal is always served. Bring a side dish to share! This meeting is for kids of any age, 0-18, and a supportive adult in their life, in whatever form that is (parents, grandparents, neighbors, friends, older siblings, extended family, etc.). You don't need to attend St. Stephen Church to attend Fuse! Anyone is welcome! We will have a meal, do some activities and learn a lesson. So come Fuse with us!

EMS Game Night! Youth in **Grades K-12** are invited the **1st Wednesday of each month**, from **6-8pm**, to come play board games with various local EMS personnel in the Fellowship Hall! Fill out a mixer sheet to get to know a little about them, choose from a large collection of games, and have a night of fun, friends, and socialization! All different game levels for different age groups! Are you up for the challenge? Adult sign in required for non-teens.

We are invited again this year, to St. Mark's **ROLLER-SKATING PARTY for all ages**, on **February 10!** Join us at **Olympic Skating in Enola**, from **6:00 pm—8 :00 pm** for an evening of roller skating. Bring your own skates or rent them for **\$3**. Skating admission is free and friends are welcome!

The Youth will be baking cookies to donate to Meals on Wheels for February. If you would like to help teach the Youth to bake your favorite, simple, cookie recipe, please contact Jenny so we can set up the date to bake!

Easter Egg Coloring: April 12, 2025- 3PM Fellowship Hall, St Stephen Church

Please register to participate in our free Public Easter Egg Coloring Day for all ages! Whether you are an adult or child, you are welcome to come socialize and color eggs! Light refreshments provided.

Start talking to your families now to spark interest in coming in for the afternoon, to color eggs together as a group! Each participant gets a dozen eggs to color and take home!

Register at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZN5F2FD>

Lessons and Legos!

Begins **March 12**, from **5:30-7:30pm**, and will occur the **2nd Wednesday of each month** afterwards! Youth of all ages are invited to come and listen to a short lesson story and then build a Lego creation of their imagination and choosing, pertaining to the lesson story theme, to be displayed for the month within the church! Parents welcomed!

2025 Winterfest pictures are available to view!

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15_ohhRzd8ETKO1BuINOKx6hQzx5_FSaD?usp=sharing

And as always you can check out our other past activities at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17u419t0rghXyaSaLEnujWKp6FZzW7xJT?usp=sharing>

Other Announcements:

Paulette Krewson's new address is:

2323 Walnut Bottom Rd.
Carlisle, PA 17015

Grace Stoner has not been at church for a few weeks and would love to have some company at her home. If you would like to visit, her address is:

6 Dewalt Dr.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

LENTEN BREAD AND BROTH SUPPERS

Come share a soup meal with your friends at St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg PA, in our **Fellowship Hall from 5:30 to 6:30pm every Wednesday evening in Lent (March 12-April 9)**. After each meal, we hope you join us in the sanctuary for an **interactive service and study time at 6:45pm** as we explore the Bible's "metanarrative." There will be separate special activities for kids during each weekly session in the parlor. Soup will be provided by members of St. Mark Lutheran Church, but you are welcome to bring a dessert or side dish to share. St. Mark is at 117 W. Keller Street, Mechanicsburg. Parking is in the back of the church. Enter church through the back-alley door with the ramp.

Sunday worship begins at 11:00am

This is hybrid worship, meaning that we worship both in person and online at the same time. If you worship online, please introduce yourself to others online and greet other folks that you aren't familiar with. We also invite those worshipping online to provide their own elements of bread and wine/grape juice in order to participate in communion.

Accessing worship online

You can attend online worship by clicking this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/410597064?pwd=b31Ea2hnbmtxU2kvYVhxUGN6ZWdoUT09>

You can also call: 1-929-205-6099. Once connected, just enter the Meeting ID: 410 597 064 and the password: 779080.

Or, you can find the direct link on our church webpage: www.ststephenlc.org. Scroll halfway down to the link that says, "Join us online." Click the link and you'll be connected to the Zoom session.

Worship Assistants

DATE	SUPPLY PASTOR	USHER/GREETER	CANTOR	LECTOR	ASSISTING MINISTER	ALTAR GUILD	AV SUPPORT	COUNTERS
02/09/25	Rev. Elaine Dent	—	Lynne Immell	Lloyd Sheaffer	Lynne Immell	Maxine Montgomery/ Becky Rensel	Cheryl & Randy Neidig	Roger Immell Cheryl Neidig
02/16/25	Rev. Patricia Snyder	—	Lynne Immell	Roger Immell	Lynne Immell	Maxine Montgomery/ Cheryl Neidig	Cheryl & Randy Neidig	Roger Immell Cheryl Neidig
02/23/25	Rev. Carol Bowman	—	Lynne Immell	Carol Clelland	Lynne Immell	Maxine Montgomery/ Becky Rensel	Cheryl & Randy Neidig	Cheryl Neidig Le Ewell
03/02/25	Rev. Elaine Dent	—	Lynne Immell	Pat Gilmore-Lee	Lynne Immell	Maxine Montgomery/ Cheryl Neidig	Cheryl & Randy Neidig	Roger Immell Cheryl Neidig

Prayer Requests

Date	Name	Connection	Request
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Chronic or Long-Term Requests

6/9/24	Roger Myers	Member	Roger is undergoing cancer treatment.
10/22/24	Pat Gilmore-Lee	Member	Please continue to pray for strength, healing and courage for Pat who has received a cancer diagnosis. If you would like to send her a card, please use the following address: 325 Wesley Dr. Apt. 201 Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
11/14/24	Joan Wiest	Member	Joan is now home. If you would like to visit, you can call her at home: 717-697-2577.
12/09/24	Tom Burson	Member	Tom is recovering at Country Meadows. Please continue to pray for Tom and Kathy.
12/23/24	Roger Immell	Member	Roger was diagnosed with Parkinson Disease and is participating in treatment through several programs and therapies.

Temporary Requests

01/24/25	Marian Reed	Member	Marian has returned to Celebration Villa Personal Care Facility.
01/25/25	Juan Carlos Sanchez	Friend of Lloyd Sheaffer	Please pray for Juan Carlos as he has had a set-back in his struggle with cancer. He developed pneumonia and cannot continue his chemotherapy. Also pray for his family that has remained at his bedside throughout this latest struggle.
01/26/25	Ida Sponsler	Member	Ida has been dealing with reoccurring nose bleeds since she returned home and will be scheduled for surgery soon in an attempt to stop the issue.
01/29/25	Bob Smith's daughter, Mandy		Mandy has COVID and cares for Bob's older granddaughter, Lily, who has Ehlers Danlos and is immune compromised.
01/29/25	Dave Burns' daughter, Karen	Friend of Tom Burson	Tom has asked that we pray for his good friend Dave's daughter, Karen. She is being treated for brain cancer.
01/30/25	Rich (Bubba) Sanchez	Son of Brenda & Richard Sanchez	Please pray for Bubba and the Sanchez family. Bubba was admitted to the hospital for surgery on his foot and possible amputation.