

St. Stephen's United Church of Christ

2024 SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



Church Calendar

When clicking the link above you will be directed to our church calendar. Maria will be maintaining the calendar of all church activities. Please notify her of events that you would like posted and/or any revisions needed. Remember, schedules remain a moving target so always check for current updates. Thanks, Maria.

You can reach Maria at saintstephensucc@gmail.com

Updates of Current Church Activities

END OF AUGUST REMINDERS...

'Jesus at the Movies' series is concluding with the film *The Jesus Revolution*, on Monday, August 26th @ 6:30 p.m. in the church Garrison Room.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

- **First Fridays of the Valley**, Friday, September 6, 2024; beginning at 6 until 7 p.m. - Refreshments will follow.

The Spotswood HS Choral Department is excited to present our first community concert, *When You Wish Upon a Star!* From the classic tunes of Pinnocchio to the modern hits of *Wish*, this family friendly concert will showcase the timeless enchantment of Disney's music in a beautiful and entertaining way. We look forward to seeing you there!

Under the direction of Dr. Jordan Davidson, Spotswood High School Choirs strive to educate and entertain the Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County communities with high quality, diverse music performances full of energy and heart. Our purpose is to achieve a standard of excellence that instills confidence in ourselves and to create a positive environment that fosters musical growth and personal integrity. For more information on concerts and events, please visit our website at www.spotswoodmusic.weebly.com.

Other venues and events scheduled throughout downtown can be found [here](#).

- **Communion Sunday**, September 1st @ 10:30
- **Council Meeting**, September 15th @ 9:30 a.m.
- **Fifth Sunday/Church Picnic**, September 29th @ 10:30, hopefully in the church garden

Update & Schedule of Mission Outreach Projects

Please mark your calendars and become a part of the joy of giving. Contact DD Dawson with questions and opportunities in which to serve or contribute; dddawson63@gmail.com

Currently, we are accepting donations of school supplies on a rolling basis from now to the end of the year.

Saturday, November 2 - Community Lunch at our church. Hot meal being served at 10:30

Saturday, January 4 (2025) - Community Lunch at our church. Hot meal being served at 10:30

Also, this year the Department of Social Services has asked for donations of coloring books and crayons for their December Christmas party. In addition, our church will once again provide \$25 gift cards to be distributed to families for their holiday gift-giving season.



Prayers, Concerns and Praises



Let us continue to offer our prayers and well wishes to the following people in our church family and those associated with members of our church:

Frances Owens, Patti Rockhill, Allen Lee, Eric Ruple, Howard Pratt, Gerald Roddy, Ray Clary, and Ellen Hicks

Pastor Craig asked for “prayers for one of our own.” He couldn’t elaborate any further at this time.

Please share any updates as appropriate.



September Birthdays

Pamela Starick Smith - 7	Melissa Dawson - 10	Amanda Giddens - 11
Loretta Franz - 15	Nancy Cornwell - 17	Tinsley Janney - 18
Mary Monts - 22	Sarah Jones - 23	Kay Acker - 23
Steve Giddens - 24		

News from the Christian Education Committee...

Looking Ahead! Christian Education Update

Beginning September 29 and continuing through November 3, we will be meeting after the service for a study of *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I will be more than happy to order the book for you from Amazon (\$9.29, checks payable to St. Stephen's UCC). It is also available on Kindle for \$8.83. If you are ordering your own book, please let me know if you will be participating so I can create a group contact list.

Books for Fall, Advent and Lent are available for you to view in the office. And as always, if you have any suggestions, ideas, etc. for our studies, please feel free to let Christian Education or Pastor Craig know.

Our studies are open to one and all, if you can attend all or one, we welcome you. Please contact Maria Blair at saintstephensucc@gmail.com, or 540-434-6290 for more information.

Missions at St. Stephen's

At the core of the Christian faith is the call of Jesus to be servants in the service of others. At Saint Stephen's, our mission outreach extends to the community we call home. Among our missional efforts, there are several ministries to which we focus our attention.

Patchwork Pantry - <https://www.patchworkpantry.org/>

Alcoholic Anonymous - <https://harrisonburgaa.org/>

Community Counseling Center - <https://hbccc.org/>

Habitat for Humanity - <https://www.habitat.org/>

Open Doors - <https://www.valleyopendoors.org/>

People Helping People - <https://phpharrisonburg.org/>

DD brought to the attention of the congregation of a special collection currently underway for school supplies. She reminded us that most supplies are on sale now during the "Back to School" days. Please bring your contributions to church and DD will distribute them.

Rerun: 'A thin slice of Joy' ...

In addition to the 5 promises during life's transitions from the August 2024 newsletter, I want to give you some questions to think about over your morning coffee or tea, when you read your daily devotional, sit down for lunch, or as you watch the sunset to close the day. Beyond, "Can I trust God again?", here are a few questions to ask yourself and

questions to ask God during the significant changes you face.

From Youth to Young Adulthood

Questions to Ask Yourself:


1. Who am I, and what do I want to become?
2. What are my core values and beliefs?
3. What career paths interest me?
4. How do I build meaningful relationships and friendships?
5. How can I balance independence and responsibility?

Questions to Ask God:

1. What is your purpose for my life?
2. How can I recognize your plans for my life?
3. How can I grow spiritually and stay strong in my faith?
4. Who are the right people to surround myself with?
5. How can I trust you more during this uncertain phase of my life?

From Young Adulthood to Middle Age

Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. How can I advance in my career while maintaining work-life balance?
 2. How do I nurture the relationships that are important to me?
 3. What are my long-term financial and personal goals?
 4. How do I deal with the pressures and stresses of adulthood?
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5. What legacy do I want to start building?

Questions to Ask God:


1. How can I fulfill my roles and responsibilities according to your will?
2. How do I maintain a healthy balance between work and family?
3. What steps should I take to grow in my relationship with you and others?
4. How can I trust your provision and guidance?
5. How can I make a positive impact on those around me?

From Middle Age to Retirement

Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. How do I adjust in healthy ways to my changing family dynamics?
2. What is the next step in my career or potential retirement?
3. How can I stay healthy and active as I age?
4. What contributions do I want to make to my community and society and church?
5. How do I plan financially for retirement and beyond?

Questions to Ask God:

1. How can I serve you and others in this stage of my life?
 2. What are your plans for me in this “sandwiched” experience?
 3. How can I trust you with the uncertainties of aging and health?
 4. How can I use my experiences and resources for your glory?
 5. How can I find peace and purpose in the changes I am experiencing?
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From Retirement to End-of-Life

Questions to Ask Yourself:


1. How do I find purpose and fulfillment without a career?
2. What legacy do I want to leave for my family and community and church?
3. How can I maintain my physical and mental health as I age?
4. What are my wishes for end-of-life care and planning?
5. How can I enjoy and make the most of my remaining years?

Questions to Ask God:

1. How can I continue to grow in my relationship with you?
2. How can I find peace and contentment in this season of life?
3. What ways can I serve you and others with my time and wisdom?
4. How can I trust you with the fears and uncertainties of aging and death?
5. How can I prepare spiritually for the end of my earthly journey?

I hope you can tell from these questions how much I care about your whole self and not just whether you attend worship on Sunday morning. I've had a great privilege to accompany thousands of people across all ages and backgrounds to reflect on their lives with a hope for the future. Some of those conversations were chaotic, some were calm and reflective, some were cathartic, but many of those conversations were times of great clarity.

You might read the questions and decide to revisit some from an earlier time in your life;



as long as you're not dwelling and beating yourself up, go right ahead. It's never too late to think about where you've been, to understand where you are, and to seek God's direction for where you're going. Whether you're in a season of change, facing new challenges, or simply looking to understand God's will for your life, these questions can provide important insights.

God cares about every aspect of your life and desires a relationship with you that encompasses all of you - your doubts, your hopes, your struggles, and your joys! So, invest some time to engage with these questions, hold fast to the 5 promises from 2 Samuel 7, and let me know how I can support you.

Love,

Pastor Craig Janney

“Tell me something Good...”

This reminder brought to you from Maria.

CONSTITUTION Week

September 17 – 23

The Massanuttan Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution remind you that the week of September 17 through 23 commemorates the signing of the Constitution of the United State of America. The Constitution was signed 237 years ago on September 17, 1787!

Message to All:

We invite you to share your personal activities/events/joys/memories under the 'Tell Me Something Good' section. Please send it to me, at kay.acker@comcast.net in a PDF file. Pictures are welcomed but need to be in a jpeg or png format.

To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please contact Maria at saintstephensucc@gmail.com; or respond accordingly to this email.

Serving St. Stephen's UCC in 2024 ...

- Nancy Cornwell, President
- Tom Dawson, Vice President
- Jane Garber, Secretary
- Patti King
- Kay Acker
- James McHone, Treasurer
- DD Dawson, Financial Secretary
- Craig A. Janney, Pastor
- Maria Blair, Church Secretary

Minutes of Council Meetings can be found posted in the Garrison Room. (Current Minutes are subject to approval and acceptance at the following Council meeting)

When you make something out of nothing - that word is called redemption.

Rejoice, our Redeemer Lives!

