

The Stewartsville Press

The Newsletter of Stewartsville Presbyterian Church
550 North Main Street, Stewartsville, NJ 08886
908-859-1399

www.stewartsvillepc.org

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Pastor's e-mail – rev.stephenchoi@gmail.com

February 2026

The Ministers: All the Members

The Rev. Stephen Park Choi – Pastor

The Rev. Jack E. Roan – Pastor Emeritus

Renée Herb – Office Manager

Brian Ballentine – Music Director

Sarah Sampson – Treasurer

Denise DeMasi – Choir Director

Laura Choi – Christian Education Director

Worship Service and Children's Sunday School are held at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday.

Adult Sunday School is held at 9:20 a.m.

**Holy Communion is celebrated during the
10:30 a.m. worship service on the first Sunday of each month.**

Please see page 5 for information on Zoom link.

Souper Bowl of Caring. We will be collecting canned soup for the Souper Bowl of Caring on Sunday, Feb. 8. We will also receive monetary donations throughout the month of February.

Since 1990, the Souper Bowl of Caring has raised \$163 million for almost 10,000 local charities around the nation and the world.

All donations we receive stay in our local community. Monetary donations will go to the NORWESCAP Food Bank, and donations of canned soup will go to the Catholic Charities Food Pantry in Phillipsburg.

There is a "Souper Bowl of Caring" envelope in your 2026 box of offering envelopes. If you would like to donate online, please go to the church website (www.stewartsvillepc.org), Give Now, Special, and specify "Souper Bowl" in Notes.



Catholic Charities Food Pantry. We continue to donate food and toiletries to the Catholic Charities Food Pantry.

At this time, the Food Pantry is in desperate need of toiletries and cleansers, such as shampoo and conditioner, bath soap, laundry detergent (pods preferred), and dish detergent, as well as grocery bags.

15 Years of Shared Ministry

Dear Church Family,

It's hard for me to believe that I have now been the pastor of the Stewartsville Presbyterian Church for fifteen years. My call to this congregation started on February 1, 2011.

In the Reformed faith, we confess that the Church belongs to Jesus Christ alone. Pastors come and go, but Christ remains ever faithful and present. Still, seasons matter, and fifteen years feels like an appropriate milestone to pause, give thanks, and reflect on what God has been doing in and through us.

Fifteen years ago, you welcomed me to be your pastor. At the time, none of us knew all that would unfold. We did not know the joys we would celebrate or the griefs we would carry. We did not know the changes that would come – in our lives, in the church, or in the world. What we did know was that God had brought us together and that God was calling us into a shared ministry.

For fifteen years, we have shared the Good News of Jesus Christ in worship – praising God together, listening for God's voice, and being shaped again and again by God's living Word. Together in worship, we have witnessed the breadth of God's faithfulness – celebrating 32 baptisms, rejoicing in 16 weddings, and commending 82 loved ones and beloved saints to God's eternal care.

Though pastoral ministry is most often visible on Sunday mornings, it is most deeply felt in moments of presence and pastoral care. And over the years, you have allowed me into the most holy and vulnerable moments of your lives. I have had the humble honor of praying with and for you, of standing with you at hospital bedsides and at gravesides, and of sitting quietly with you when there are no words.

I am grateful for the trust you have shown me in allowing me to walk with you and your families through all the seasons and transitions of life – from birth to life to death and to resurrection hope.

Anniversaries invite both reflection and gratitude, and so I would like to take this moment to thank you:

Thank you for allowing me to be your pastor.

Thank you for your confidence and trust in me.

Thank you for your grace and patience in forgiving my imperfections and shortcomings.

Thank you for your prayers.

And thank you for all the ways that you have loved me and cared for my family.

As we look to the future together, my prayer is that we continue to listen for Christ's voice, boldly follow where he leads, and trust that the One who has begun a good work among us will bring it to completion.

Thanks be to God for the great honor of serving as your pastor! Serving as your pastor has been one of the greatest joys and privileges of my life.

To God be the glory now and forever!

Pastor Stephen Park Choi

Reception of New Members



On Sunday, Feb. 1, we were excited to welcome the following new members into the life and ministry of the Stewartsville Presbyterian Church: **Eileen Gercie** and **Brittani Kopecki**.



From L to R: Clerk of Session Cindy Bowman; Brittani Kopecki; Eileen Gercie; and Pastor Stephen.

Ordination and Installation of Officers on Sunday, Feb. 1



Church Officers, Class of 2028: Elder Judy Melchore; Deacon Bob Hurte; Deacon Luke Muentener; Deacon Lisa Muentener; Elder Nancy Sampson; Elder Linda Williams; and Pastor Stephen. Not pictured: Deacon Laura Diacopoulos, who will be ordained and installed on Sunday, March 8.



Elders and Deacons in the congregation were invited forward to lay hands on the new church officers while Pastor Stephen prayed.

Celebrating 15 Years as Our Pastor!



Sunday, Feb. 1, marked Pastor Stephen's 15th anniversary as our minister! We celebrated with a delicious cake during the Pot Luck Luncheon after the Annual Congregational Meeting.



Madelyn Duckworth, a long-time member of our church, passed away Saturday, Jan. 17. She and her late husband, Richard, were active in the church before moving to Florida. Madelyn was the mother of Ann Viebrock. Her Memorial Service was held on Monday, Feb. 2, in our sanctuary.

Camp Johnsonburg.

Camp Johnsonburg, a ministry of the 4 New Jersey Presbyteries, offers summer programs for children and youth entering 1st through 12th grade.



There are a variety of exciting programs for each age group.

You can view the brochure and available camp sessions at www.campjburg.org

Camp Scholarships are available through our church. Please speak with Pastor Stephen or the church office if you are interested in taking advantage of this great opportunity.



Needlecraft Group. The Needlecraft Group will meet from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Fridays, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27 in the library.

This is an opportunity to gather together and work on your own projects, while having lively conversations!

For more information, call Sue Gruver at 573-999-7014.

Texts and Emails from Pastor Stephen.

If you receive texts or emails from Pastor Stephen asking for money, these are scams. Please do not reply to them.



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| 3 | Louisa Miers |
| 4 | Don & Louisa Miers – Anniversary |
| 5 | Laura Diacopoulos |
| 7 | Mary Lou Gary |
| 9 | Joe Lubinski |
| 10 | Robert & Barbara Hurte – Anniversary |
| 13 | Morgan Banghart
Jake Muentener
Alan & MaryLou Deak – Anniversary |
| 18 | Betty Patton
Bob & Laura Morris – Anniversary |
| 19 | Alice Jessen |
| 20 | Rodney Rountree |
| 21 | Bessie Sinclair |
| 24 | Bill & Carol Nixon – Anniversary |
| 26 | Peggy Smith
Garrett Loyle |
| 27 | James Ballentine |

Birthday/Anniversary List. Are we missing your birthday or anniversary? Please let the office know, either by calling 908-859-1399 or e-mailing office@stewartsvillepc.org We don't want to miss your special day!

Aluminum Can Tabs. Reminder: We are still collecting aluminum can tabs for Ronald McDonald House Charities. There is a container on the table in the back of the sanctuary where you may put them.

Elders on Call

Pastor Stephen did not take his full sabbatical in 2025.

He will be taking this month, February, as part of his unused sabbatical.

If you are in need of pastoral care while he is away, please contact the following

Elders on Call:

Feb. 1-14: Cindy Bowman at 908-619-8697

Feb. 15-28: Kathy Montgomery
at 908-674-0654

SUNDAY ZOOM WORSHIP

The Zoom worship service is held at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday. It is broadcast live during the in-person worship service.

Holy Communion will be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. Please be prepared with bread and juice/wine.

Please join us every Sunday morning by using the link below or by calling with the Meeting ID.

The great thing about Zoom is even if you do not have a computer or smartphone, you can still phone in to listen to the service.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at office@stewartsvillepc.org or call the church during our regular office hours, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94418910396?pwd=WlQwMHByZHZUMy9sTFpQaThEMkRvdz09>

Dial by your location

1-646-558-8656 (New York)

Meeting ID: 944 1891 0396

Passcode: 08886



Adult Lunch Group. "Grazing with Grace," our Adult Lunch Group will meet on Thursday, Feb. 12, at 11:30 a.m. at Tic-Toc Family Restaurant, 2510 Northampton St., Easton, PA.

We had 19 people attend the January luncheon, and we collected \$29 for the NORWESCAP Food Bank. Each month we encourage participants to bring a can of soup or \$1 to the luncheon to donate to the Food Bank.

If you plan to attend the luncheon, please call Louisa Miers at 908-763-3861 by Monday, Feb. 9, to make your reservation.

Women's Circle. The Women's Circle will meet on Thursday, Feb. 26, at 6:00 p.m. at Stone Tavern, 1304 Route 22, Phillipsburg.

All women are invited to join us for a meal, good conversations, and the opportunity to encourage one another.

For more information or to make a reservation, please call Linda Williams at 908-454-8104.

Women's Spring Retreat. The Women's Spring Retreat will be held from Friday, April 24 to Sunday, April 26 at Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center. You may also attend the Saturday session only.

Registration is now open and is predicted to fill up quickly. For more information, go to

www.campjburg.org

Scholarships are available through our church.

If you are interested in attending, please speak with Linda Williams. For information on scholarships, please speak with Pastor Stephen or the church office.

Thank You Note. We received the following thank you note from the Rev. Jim and Sue Biller. We sent them a Christmas ornament, sold by the Greenwich Historical Society, commemorating SPC's 175th anniversary.

"Dear Friends at SPC, It was so nice of you to think of us this Christmas season. The anniversary ornament is beautiful. The timing of its arrival was impeccable. It came on Christmas Eve day and was the gift first opened Christmas morning. Immediately it took a place of prominence on our tree and will continue to do so in years to come. Thank you for your kind and thoughtful generosity. May God richly bless you in 2026.

Session Notes – January 28, 2026

- We opened our meeting together with the lighting of the Christ candle and devotions led by Elder Michael Morton.
- Eileen Gercie and Brittani Kopecki were approved for membership by reaffirmation of faith and will be received as new members on Sunday, February 1.
- Kathy Montgomery was reelected as Moderator/President of the Corporation of the Stewartsville Presbyterian Church for 2026.
- Sarah Sampson was reelected as Treasurer for 2026.
- Judy Melchore and Laurie Winans will serve as the Session representatives on the Nominating Committee; Rosie England will serve as the Deacon representative.
- Cindy Bowman was elected to be our Ruling Elder Commissioner for the Presbytery Meeting on Tuesday, February 24.
- Approval was given for a Rummage Sale in 2026 with half the profit going to support The Village NJ.
- Approval was given to Stewartsville Grange #121 for the use of Roan Hall on Saturday, April 25 and Saturday, May 2.
- Upcoming Pulpit Supply Schedule:
 - February 8, 15, 22: The Rev. Dr. Jan Nolting Carter
 - March 1: The Rev. Scott DeCaro
- Our next Session meeting will be on Monday, March 23.
- Treasurer's Report:
We ended the 2025 year with a deficit of \$8,620 in our General Fund Budget.
- As we concluded our meeting, we committed to praying for one another and our church, lifted up our joys and concerns, and closed with the Lord's Prayer.



One Great Hour of Sharing. The "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering will be received throughout Lent and Easter. We will receive this offering from Sunday, Feb. 22, through Easter, April 5.

The Presbyterian Church USA divides the gifts received almost equally between three programs: Self-Development of People, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

A special envelope is in your 2026 offering envelope box, or you may write a check noting "OGHS" on the memo line. If you are giving online, go to the church website (www.stewartsvillepc.org), Give Now, Special, and then OGHS.

Capital Campaign. As of Jan. 31, we have received \$15,173.76 for our Capital Campaign. Our goal is to raise \$30,00
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Stewartsville Presbyterian Church – February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:20 am Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Sunday School Reception of New Members Ordination and Installation of Church Officers Annual Congregational Meeting Pot Luck Luncheon 6 pm AA	2	3	4 7 pm AA	5 7 pm AA Men's Group	6	7
8 9:20 am Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Sunday School Youth Choir Rehearsal after Worship 6 pm AA	9	10	11 7 pm AA	12 11:30 a.m. Adult Lunch Group, Tic-Toc Family Restaurant	13 9:30 am Needlecraft Group	14 10 am Samplemakers
15 No Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Sunday School Youth Choir Rehearsal after Worship 6 pm AA	16 Church Office Closed for Presidents' Day	17	18 7 pm AA	19 7 pm AA Men's Group	20	21
22 9:20 am Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Sunday School Time for Fellowship after Worship Service 6 pm AA	23	24	25 7 pm AA	26 6 pm Women's Circle, Stone Tavern 7 pm AA Men's Group	27 9:30 am Needlecraft Group	28