

ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

ONE WEEK FROM SUNDAY

By Pastor Tom

According to our Church Constitution, St. Stephen is required to have a congregational meeting at least once a year. Over time, we've discovered that once is not enough! So, around July or August we gather to communicate a financial report to the congregation and to vote for Church Council members. From time to time, other heavy-duty business has been placed on the agenda for the midyear meeting.

Congregational Meeting



But not this year! I'm happy to report that this month's meeting (on the 16th, after church) will not require any major decisions. We have only one position on Council to formally vote on. (During the spring, Colleen Holdcraft was approved by the Council to fill the communications position. The congregation will vote on its approval for Colleen to continue.) And the financial report is more favorable than it's been in the last few years. (Our finance chairperson, Rudy Hehn, will deliver an update with Treasurer Jen Dritt and Office Manager Rita Ford present to answer questions.) We'll need at least 25 members to make a quorum. Thank you in advance for attending this meeting.

AND ON THAT SAME DAY...

By Pastor Tom

With great excitement I announce that we'll be accepting new members to St. Stephen on Aug. 16! You may recall that Zoe was baptized a couple of months ago, and now it's time for her parents to join as members, too! Along with the Zurbe family, we'll welcome Myrna Hoover and Brian Green as members! They've participated in worship with us for over a year. After worship on that day, we'll have a light reception to celebrate our new members with food – and then move to the congregational meeting mentioned above.



THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB

Once a year, our own Tom Buchanan and the other members of the Thursday Night Music Club invite everyone to FSU's Ruby Diamond Concert Hall for their Jazz Showcase. Those of us who've been there can testify that, man, you'll have a great time. Here are the details for this year's performance:

- Jazz Showcase at Ruby Diamond – 20 Years of Thursday Night Music Club.
- Thursday, Aug. 13.
- Show at 7:30 p.m.; doors open at 7 p.m.
- Tickets (\$17). Visit thursdaynight-musicclub.org.



IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T VOTED YET

Dave Suhrweir reminds us that voting is our sacred duty. Here in Florida, early voting begins this Saturday, Aug. 8, and ends Aug. 16. For those who don't vote early, election day is Tuesday, Aug. 18. If you live in Leon County

and want to double-check your eligibility or polling location, or view a sample ballot, visit

<https://www.leonvotes.gov/Registration/Check-Your-Info>.

Candidate information (nationwide) is available at Ballotpedia, https://ballotpedia.org/Main_Page. It's pretty amazing. If you type in your address, it'll show you your sample ballot. And in some cases, you can click for more information on particular candidates.

Because St. Stephen supports the LGBTQ+ community, Dave encourages us to consider the endorsements listed on the Equality Florida PAC website, <https://eqfl.org/electioncenter>. You'll recognize at least one of the endorsed

candidates: Jeremy Matlow, the guest speaker for our Ministry of Reconciliation Sunday in January. He's running for mayor of Tallahassee. Equality Florida also has endorsed three candidates running for seats on the Leon County Commission: Nick Maddox, Rick Minor and David O'Keefe. And it has endorsed two candidates for the Florida House from districts in the Tallahassee area: Gallop Franklin and Allison Tant. (As of Monday, the website reported that it had not yet made endorsements in Tallahassee municipal races.)

A NEW FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

By Pastor Tom

Last Sunday, during announcements, I referred to the altar bouquet (*pictured here*) as one that Rita Ford had made. She made it because there wasn't a "dedicator of flowers" for that Sunday. At other times when the flowers have gone undedicated (about 20 weeks a year, on average), the church has paid for them. Rita, aware of the bills that St. Stephen pays, asked me if she could create the bouquets for those Sundays when no one has dedicated the flowers. She said she'd buy the flowers for around \$15 and, with the help of others who supply the greenery from their yards, create the bouquet – thus saving the church the \$40-a-week burden.



I reached out to Linda Eshleman from the Worship and Music Committee. Last week at their meeting, the committee recommended to the Council (1) that Rita carry out this ministry; (2) that she be reimbursed for her out-of-pocket expenses; and (3) that on those Sundays, anyone who's interested in taking the flower arrangement home may do so by making a \$20 donation.

Good idea, declared the Council! So, for the rest of the year, on any Sunday when no one has signed up to dedicate altar flowers, Rita will create an arrangement and, after the liturgy, you may "buy" it (for \$20 ... or more, if you're able!) I'm thankful for Rita's desire to share her gifts, and for the new ministry opportunity that this Flower Team is nurturing.

PROFESSOR BARTON IS IN THE NEWS

If you're new to St. Stephen, you might not know that the man who plays the flute so fluently for our worship services is a big deal in the music world. Here are excerpts from an article that appeared last week in the Thomasville Times-Enterprise under this headline: "Barton to lead Thomasville Academy of Music."

Children in Thomas County and surrounding areas will soon have a new after-school activity to engage in, as Dr. Karl Barton is launching the Thomasville Academy of Music, based at the Thomasville Center for the Arts.

Former Professor of Music at Thomas University, Barton has nearly three decades of experience teaching music. While at TU, a partnership was formed with the Center for the Arts and the Thomasville Entertainment Foundation to present a Thomasville Performing Arts Concert (TPAC) and a scholarship opportunity for local high school instrumentalists, pianists, and vocalists.

"I became aware of this absence in instrumental music lessons in the community," Barton said. "Partly because those students who were applying for that program weren't as prepared as kids from other neighborhoods might be." ... The group lessons he will be teaching will be in piano and guitar. "Guitar and piano are the best ways to get that broader understanding of music," Barton said. "Piano, in my opinion, is the best because it literally lays it out in black and white."

To find out more, visit [Thomasville Academy of Music on Facebook](#).



LEARN ALL ABOUT 'HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK'

This Saturday at Native Nurseries, St. Stephenite Jake Hartung – an arboriculture design specialist at FSU – will lead a discussion on what's known as Homegrown National Park. It's a grassroots conservation movement founded by entomologist Doug Tallamy and Michelle Alfandari to combat biodiversity loss. The project encourages property owners to shrink lawns, remove invasive species, and plant native flora to turn private yards into connected ecological corridors. Not all natives are equal – and so-called keystone plants feed the most caterpillars, which feed the most birds. Jake will be discussing Tallamy's teachings on the relationship between plants, birds, caterpillars, butterflies, bees and

how to implement these practices in your landscape.

Registration is required. The talk begins at 10 a.m. There's a \$5 fee; your payment holds your spot in the class. Please call (850) 386-8882 to pre-register. Class size is limited to 25 people. No refunds on same-day cancellations. Please try to arrive on time. If you're running late, your seat may be given to someone on the waitlist. Native Nurseries is at 1661 Centerville Road. Please use the driveway next door to the nursery with the "Workshop Parking" sign seen from Centerville Road.



I'VE GOT A BOOK COMING OUT!

By Ron Hartung

The book is called “The Man in the Red Flannel Shirt (and Other Stories),” and its launch (as they say in the book biz) is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, right here at St. Stephen. I’ll read a few pages from this collection of essays – some of which I wrote for the newspaper (in my roles as Traffic Doctor and Grammar Man), some for St. Stephen publications (in my role as Lex Lutheran), and some just for fun. The book can be yours for a mere 17 bucks.

The publisher is Apalachee Press, based here in Tallahassee. Other Apalachee Press authors (including Mary Jane Ryals, Mary Ann Lindley, Susan Cerulean and Sharon Kant-Rauch) plan to be here for a fellowship-hall reception after my reading, so you can meet them and buy their books, too. And you’ll have a chance to buy Ruth Hartung’s book, “Longest Pet in the Neighborhood.” It should be fun. Please mark your calendar!



THE OPPOSITE OF ‘NOT IN MY BACKYARD’

Caroline Collins wants us all to know there’s a meeting of Strong Towns Tallahassee at 6 p.m. Tuesday (Aug. 11) at Fermentation Lounge. It’s a chance to learn more about how a new Florida law (the “Yes in God’s Backyard” law) could open new doors to affordable housing. One of the organizers was quoted saying: “We’ll have both City Planners and Housing Advocates (and hopefully some church folks!) attending, to help provide real info on what this new legislation can do to help with the housing crisis right here in Tallahassee!” The Facebook page for Strong Towns Tallahassee describes it as “A bottom-up revolution to make Tally more financially resilient, safe, equitable, and beautiful.”



INTERESTED IN GRIEF GROUP?

By Jennifer Buchanan

This past fall, Pastor Tom facilitated a Grief Group to help us process thoughts and feelings about losing people close to us, and he asked me to offer another small group this fall. The book “Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief” (along with the companion workbook) by David Kessler will be used to stimulate exploration and discussion. The loss does not need to be recent to benefit from participating, and both members and friends of the congregation are welcome. The group will meet for six weeks, at a time that works for everyone. Please let me know (jennifernewtonbuchanan@gmail.com) if you have questions, and let me know by Aug. 15 if you’re interested in taking part.



BEFORE YOU GO...

- Those ravenous OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans) will meet at 11 a.m. Tuesday (Aug. 11) at Carrabba's on Capital Circle, next to Esposito's. Please let Barbara Sullivan know whether you plan to be there.
- It's not too late to contribute toward our monthly Noisy Offering. The proceeds are going to our members who are teachers – and who dig into their purses and pockets regularly to provide what their students need. You can bring cash to church Sunday and drop it into the offering plate as you enter the sanctuary, or visit <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/giving>.
- Reminder: Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the U.S. and around the world. If you're able to give, visit www.elca.org. Or call 800-638-3522.
- Here's the official policy on altar flowers: If you have an anniversary, birthday, special memory or special St. Stephen person or program you'd like to honor, you can celebrate by sponsoring the altar flowers for our service. Sign up on the flower chart, out by the name tags, or ask Rita to sign you up. Include the \$40 with your regular offering. And then take the flowers home!
- And pictured here is the newsletter editor's latest suggestion, in case the Church Council votes to provide him with a company car. It's a 1941 Jeep. As the cowpoke pictured in this ad says: "What a honey ... just right for a ranch." Or a church. God, watch over us as we drive through life.



COMING UP

Today:

Noon - Al-Anon meets in Pastor Emory Hingst Memorial Fellowship Hall, aka Hingst Hall (HH)

7 p.m. - AA meets in HH

7 p.m. - Outreach zoom meeting

This Friday:

9:30 a.m. - TOPS meets in HH

This Sunday:

9:00 a.m. - Bible study

10 a.m. - Worship, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Monday, August 10:

5 p.m. - TIMA meets in HH

Tuesday, August 11:

11 a.m. - OWLS Lunch at Carrabba's

6 p.m. - NA meets in HH

6 p.m. - Confirmation for adults

Wednesday, August 12:

5 p.m. - TIMA meets in HH

Thursday, August 13:

10 a.m. - Bible study

SERVING THIS SUNDAY

Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Preaching and Presiding; **Colleen Holdcraft**, Assisting Minister; **Loraine Sundberg**, Cup Minister; **Karen Elizabeth Olson**, Lector; **Simone Schuster**, Cantor; **Caroline Collins and Colin Hackley**, Tech Team; **Susan Warren and Rita Ford**, Altar Guild; **Margaret Bowers and Loraine Sundberg**, Counters; **Bob Eshleman and Jacob Nallapu**, Ushers; **Denise Bookwalter**, Announcements.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Sharon Simmons - 8/9
Monty Mortensen - 8/13
Caroline Collins - 8/14
Marilyn Larson - 8/22
Greta Scavone - 8/23
Jerry Harrison - 8/24
Andrea Notley - 8/26
Susan Warren - 8/26
Melissa Barton - 8/27
Jacob Nallapu - 8/28
Amanda Clause - 9/6
Martha Marky - 9/8
Greta Langley - 9/9
Bryon Ehlmann - 9/11



If you have news or photos to share,
please send them to Rita at
sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com.

Don't forget our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/ststephentallahassee>.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church, ELCA