



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

### GET READY FOR VISITORS THIS SUNDAY

By Dave Suhrweir

It's Ministry of Reconciliation Sunday, which is always memorable. In addition to a special worship service, we'll have a **potluck luncheon** and a guest speaker, state Rep. Shevrin Jones, whose topic is "Living Your Truth: The Life of a Pastor's Son."



Here are some things you can do to help our guests feel welcomed and comfortable at St. Stephen:

- To make sure our guests have adequate parking at St. Stephen, consider using the office parking lot behind the church property. The driveway is the one just beyond our exit driveway. There's an unpaved walking path between the back corner of that lot and the back door of our fellowship hall. Please note: The path requires some sureness of foot. (Alternative: Walk downhill alongside Pinewood.)
- Consider wearing your St. Stephen "All Are Welcome" shirt. We hope the weather will be warm enough.
- Wear your name tag.
- Guide our guests as necessary to the sanctuary, fellowship hall and restrooms (men's and women's off the fellowship hall and unisex restrooms off the lounge area).
- During the worship service, help those nearby with the bulletin and hymnal. Some of our guests may not be familiar with the liturgical style of worship.
- **Bring lots of food for the potluck luncheon!** Some of you should consider bringing items for those with certain food issues, such as gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan foods. Please come early (by 9:45 a.m. Sunday) to drop off your dishes in the kitchen so that the servers can get to the worship service in time.
- Proceed to the fellowship hall ASAP after the worship service. Encourage visitors to do the same.
- Intentionally sit by and visit with guests during the luncheon.
- Young children may not find our guest speaker as interesting as we do, so they may prefer to be active in the nursery. Consider spending some of your time in that area to help supervise them.

See you Sunday!

### NOISY OFFERING AND MORE

By Dave Suhrweir

Just a couple of other notes:

- This Sunday also will be our monthly Noisy Offering, when the children scatter through the congregation and invite us to send our coins crashing into their metal buckets – all for a good cause. Bring your coins and join in the fun. This month, the money will go to the LGBTQ Victory Institute (<https://victoryinstitute.org/>). It provides comprehensive, nonpartisan training to present and future LGBTQ candidates, campaign staff and community leaders at all levels of government to ensure a successful career in public service.



- We'll do more than just offer them coins, of course. During the luncheon, a jar will be available to receive your free-will offering. If you write a check, please make it payable to

["LGBTQ Victory Institute." It's a tax-deductible, 501\(c\)\(3\) charitable organization.](#)

## NOTES FROM OUR GET-TOGETHER

If you missed Sunday's congregational meeting, you missed a good update on congregational life. The official minutes should be posted in the fellowship hall by this Sunday. In the meantime, here are a few glimpses:

- Our sanctuary is needing some repairs. In fact, the Church Council has hired an engineer to go over it and make recommendations. The council will keep us posted when it's time to make decisions.
- In addition, our to-do list also involves the nursery, carpet cleaning, trees, our ailing roadside sign, lighting in the parking lot, security cameras, restroom rescues and more.
- Mike Martinez has finished his term as outreach coordinator on the council, and we thank him for his service. We also thank his successor, Martin Guttenplan, for stepping forward. Prepare to be invited to group discussions about what our mission can be. (Mike will continue to be our Manna on Meridian representative.)
- Isabel Barton, who was one of our representatives at last year's Synod Assembly, has offered to go again. Bless you, Isabel. Want to go with her? Check with Pastor Tom or President Val Sullivan.
- The recent Church Vitality session attended by some of our members has produced a new contemplative prayer group. Pastor Tom is inviting us all to participate – with the understanding that if more people show up, we'll start new groups. Think it over.



- The Safety Committee is doing its best to keep us all from harm. Along those lines, Ridy Hofer has donated an AED (automated external defibrillator) in memory of her late husband, Kurt. Soon we'll have sessions familiarizing us with its operation.
- Many, many thanks to all of our church volunteers – and particularly to our Church Council members. They devote their time, energy and prayers to work that goes on mostly unnoticed and often unappreciated. And maybe a special thank-you to Jennifer Dritt, who keeps our financial blood flowing so smoothly. God bless you all.

## THE SPIRIT BEHIND OUR BUDGET

Before Sunday's meeting, we all got three handouts. One of them was a two-pager that we didn't have time to read before the meeting. Thinking that maybe you still haven't read it, we're presenting excerpts here. Written by Pastor Tom, this outline for the 2020 Mission Budget gracefully transforms our spending plan from a bunch of tiny numbers into a ministry roadmap. "The Spirit of Christ is changing lives for the better in our midst," the first paragraph reads. "Let us celebrate this truth and recognize all that has brought us to this moment. We give thanks to those before us who have laid the faithful foundation. We know God has great things in store for us as the journey continues. Join us and see all that is being made new by God."

This document divides the budget into three parts:

- A. "We believe out loud that God's mission for us is to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call."
- B. "Nurturing persons in our faith community for their faith journey."
- C. "We witness our faith in service beyond ourselves."

Then it explains how each budget line contributes to one or more of those emphases. Here are some examples:

- “Our music at worship continues to be second to none. Katharine Gossman masterfully juggles a growing choir while appreciatively engaging the talents of expert musicians who donate their gifts to enhance worship. We can expect new music at worship as the choir strengthens and more talent from the worship community that willingly share musical gifts and talents.” 
- “The average number at worship for 2019 was 79. With your Office Manager and gifted worship team led by our Music Director, we hope to grow to an average attendance of 90 at worship in 2020.”
- “We have a vision for seeking what God is calling St. Stephen to be. This congregation has never been satisfied with the status quo, and we truly believe God is at work among us. For these reasons we spend a lot of time being sure there are plenty of opportunities to grow in faith. Our adult Sunday School class  has grown in depth of relationship as we studied God’s word in ‘The Story’ and shared interpretations with each other. Children gather for Sunday School opening and morning class, and the result is more children and youth participation during worship and Children’s Time.”
- “As we focus on growing and nurturing our faith in this community, we find ourselves drawn out of the building and into the community around us. Faith is again strengthened and deepened. St. Stephen opens her doors to various nonprofit groups who do good things in Tallahassee. We share God’s blessings upon us with others.”
- “St. Stephen is conscious of Jesus’ call to go out into the world. As a longtime supporter of Reconciling Works, we continue to participate in Pride Week and celebrate Ministry of Reconciliation Sunday. Our relationship with Manna on Meridian continues, and ties with Lutheran Social Services of North Florida grow.” 
- “Due to our location and proximity to the Capitol, your pastor is active in meeting with state senators and representatives to remind these officials of their responsibilities in leadership. To remember the poor and marginalized and to pass legislation that is just and ethical. Your pastor also is connected to the interfaith clergy in Tallahassee. As 2020 begins, we look to growing the participation we have above and perhaps look to having groups travel with our synod to Guyana, Cuba and the Bahamas.” 
- “The total needed to fulfill the mission and ministry of St. Stephen as Christ’s Church for 2020 is \$247,800.”

And that’s the budget we approved. It’s a good time to be part of St. Stephen.

## ‘A GREAT MAN’

*Many, many St. Stephen members gathered Saturday to help family and friends celebrate the life of Ol’ Bill Taylor, who died last week at age 103. Pastor Tom demonstrated that even though he had known Bill for just over a year, he got to know him well – and appreciated him as an unmatched storyteller, a tireless stewardship advocate and “a great man.” Many thanks to everyone who pulled together for this service. Here, for the record, is the obituary that appeared in the Democrat.*



William E. “Bill” Taylor, 103, passed away on January 15, 2020, in Tallahassee, FL. Born in Jacksonville, FL, on April 5, 1916, Bill moved to Miami as a youth and graduated from Miami Senior High. In 1936, he married Frances Melsom, with their son, William H., born in 1937. Bill served in the U.S. Army during WWII in the coastal defense battalion in Connecticut; and then as a combat engineer in Europe and the Philippines. Upon his discharge in 1945, he returned to Miami and his job in the U.S. Postal Service, where he remained until his retirement in 1972. Bill and Frances relocated to Tallahassee in 1974.

Retiring to Bill meant traveling the country, initially for the Lutheran Laity Movement, and then for pleasure. He was always proud to say that he could travel across the country and never have to pay for a motel room. After Frances passed away in 1980, Bill continued to work on behalf of the Lutheran church. Along the way he met Virginia Ruprecht; they married in 1989, and lived in Chuluota, FL, until Jinny's death in 1998. Bill then returned to Tallahassee to be nearer to his family.

Bill is survived by his daughter-in-law, Connie Taylor; grandson, Jon Taylor (Jen); granddaughter, Kate Stratton (Scott); 5 great-grandchildren, Emma, Will, Isabelle, Nathan, and Benjamin; nieces Marguerite Tooley and Muriel Johnstone; nephew Larry Johnstone; and dear friend Louise Korta. Bill's family is very grateful for the care and compassion shown to him by the staff of Allegro Assisted Living.

## MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- Make sure to check one of the church directories in the narthex to make sure your contact information is correct. The new directories will be available in early February.
- Nathan reports that 21 people showed up for Tuesday's OWLs lunch! Watch for updates on where the OWLs will flock in February.
- The St. Stephen Talent Show is ... Feb. 23! Start dusting off your talents!

## KAHLUA MUDSLIDE BROWNIES

Recipe from Emily Jennings (from Kahlua cookbook)

13 x 9 pan (Grease pan with Pam baking spray or line with waxed paper)

Oven 350 degrees

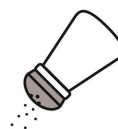
Bake 25 minutes

Sift together:

2 cups all-purpose flour

½ tsp. baking powder

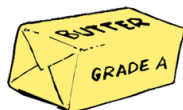
½ tsp. salt



Melt together:

2/3 cup butter

4 oz. unsweetened chocolate



Combine liquors:

4 tbsp. Kahlua

2 tbsp. Irish Crème

1 tbsp. Vodka



Beat together until light:

1½ cups sugar

3 eggs



¾ cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Beat in dry ingredients alternately with chocolate and liquors, fold in nuts.

Bake 25 minutes. Cool in pan. Spread with glaze. (1¼ cups confectioner's sugar and 3 tbsp. Kahlua)



# ST. STEPHEN'S VALENTINE SOCIAL

By Terri Albrecht-Schmitt



Friday, Feb. 14 6:15-8:15 p.m.: Decorate valentine cookies. Make paper valentines. Enjoy time with St. Stephen folks and bring your valentine! Bring a friend to share the love! (Eating of cookies will not be monitored.) Get to know your church family better or reacquaint yourself with your old pals. It's sure to be a sweet deal. Lots of cookie toppings and valentine-making supplies provided. Let your inner sweetness out and share some love with us. All ages welcome. Contact me to RSVP:

(850) 933-6173 or [tjalbrechtschmitt@gmail.com](mailto:tjalbrechtschmitt@gmail.com) . Dietary restrictions? We can accommodate you!!

## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS:



Rashida Martin - 01/24

Sandy Ness - 01/24

Gladys Kane - 01/28

Jennifer Buchanan - 01/29

Graham Hackley - 01/30

Collin Schiffer - 01/30

Jayden Schiffer - 01/31

Warren Schave - 01/31

Gabbi Oates - 02/02

Barb ODonnell - 02/05

## UPCOMING DATES

### This Sunday:

8:45 a.m. - Sunday Church School/Gardening Day

9 a.m. - NO Adult Study

10 a.m. - Worship, Ministry of Reconciliation Sunday, Noisy Offering

11:30 a.m. - Potluck followed by guest speaker

### Wednesday, Jan. 29:

7 p.m. - Choir practice

## SERVING THIS SUNDAY:

**Pastor Tom**, Presiding, Preaching; **Kirsten Ebbesen**, Assisting Minister; **Susan Warren**, Cup Minister; **Gladys Kane**, Welcoming; **Mark Warren**, Walkways; **Douglas Bagnall & Gladys Kane**, Greeters; **Barb ODonnell**, Lector; **Beth Alexander & Rita Ford**, Altar Guild; **Hector Quinones & Susan Warren**, Counters; **Val Sullivan**, Announcements



If you have news or photos to share, please send them to Lori at [ststephentallahassee@embarqmail.com](mailto:ststephentallahassee@embarqmail.com).

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

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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

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