



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

The St. Stephen Mardi Gras Talent Show added a new chapter last Sunday, with songs, acrobatics, karate, magic, a musical travelogue, goofiness, emotional storytelling and more, presented to the most gracious audience around.



Orange-belt karate student Bastian Stover showed us his best moves. Black-belt karate expert Terri Schmitt demonstrated her prowess – and her pretend-villain-for-the-day, good-sport-assistant Patrick Kennell, escaped without a scratch. Sisters Ceilia and Violet Greeley impressed us with their balance, strength and coordination.

One of the main takeaways from the show: Our pastor can dance! He teamed up with veteran dancers Rita Ford and Colleen Holdcraft for a lively rendition of the “Banana Boat” song. Ruth Hartung channeled Barbra Streisand in her affectionate ode, “Lutherans.” (After the show, Pastor Tom echoed a line from the song when he told her that “I really am the luckiest pastor in the world.”)





Singers Rudy Hehn, Karl Barton, Kirsten Ebbesen and Susan Hehn harmonized on “All Things Bright and Beautiful” – accompanied by Katharine Gossman on piano and by a slideshow of the Hehns’ bright and beautiful photos from their travels. Karl later appeared solo and played his new recorder. Putting aside the zaniness we’d come to expect from past shows, he shared heartfelt words about

the support he has felt over the years from the people of St. Stephen.

Judi Duffy brought tears to our eyes as she and friend Jim Weems lip-synched the Cat Stevens family-conflict song “Father and Son.” And, of course, Judi couldn’t pass up a chance to revisit Chuck Berry, with the help of the Greeley girls on “Sweet Sixteen.”



Jen and Chris Reece told the story of their journey to Tallahassee via the Beatles’ “Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da.” Their sons, Elliot and Graham, along with Violet and Ceilia helped Dave Suhrweir perform magical wonders when The Amazing Zing returned to the stage.



Along the way, we sang a couple of new songs about St. Stephen – one to the tune of “If God Were an Eagle,” the other to “Beauty and the Beast.” Look at the smiles below, in the photo of the audience. Such fun!

Thank Colin Hackley for these excellent pictures. In fact, he’s making them available to all of us on his website. You’ll find the link and password in the email that Office Manager Lori sent to deliver this newsletter to you. Also, efforts are underway to make a video version available to members. Stay tuned.



A SPECIAL THANKS

We greatly appreciate the effort that Lex Lutheran (a.k.a. Ron Hartung) makes to facilitate the Mardi Gras Talent Show and to serve as the gently humorous emcee and creative song lyricist this year and in the years past as far back as memory extends.

(We added this while the newsletter editor wasn't looking.)

MINISTRY MINUTE

By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator

Sunday's sweet celebration after church is a way for you to satisfy your sweet tooth while learning about an opportunity to host a foreign exchange student for six weeks during the summer. Lo Starke, from Education First, will join us in the fellowship hall to explain the program. This is the second Ministry Minute we've hosted outside of the sanctuary. Please plan on staying to hear this presentation.



IRC Volunteer Opportunities

Also by Sharon Simmons



- The IRC (International Rescue Committee) needs volunteers for an inventory audit TODAY (Feb. 15) and Friday. Available? Call Leah Costigan, 407-543-4407.
- The IRC also is looking for volunteers to help with cultural orientations once or twice a month, on Wednesday mornings, to help set up the room and keep clients' children busy. Contact Haley at 407-543-4407.
- Additionally, volunteers are needed to support the financial coach with taking IRC clients to the bank, helping them set up bank accounts so they can work on financial literacy and self-sufficiency. Contact Nick at 407-543-4407. So many opportunities to serve our community neighbors.

WANT TO WATCH THIS MOVIE WITH US?

"God & Country," a documentary produced by Rob Reiner, spotlights the dangers of Christian nationalism. The Tallahassee Film Society is screening it soon, and a group from St. Stephen plans to attend the showing at 5 p.m. Saturday, March 16, at All Saints Cinema, 918½ Railroad Ave. If you'd rather not drive by yourself, carpooling will be available. We'll meet at the church at 4:30 p.m., Pastor Tom said. Please use the links below to view the trailer and buy tickets ahead of time.



LUNCH BUNCH

The OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans) gathered for lunch Tuesday, and Chief OWL organizer Margaret Bowers took this photo. From left: Jan Harrison, Loraine Sundberg, Sharon Simmons, Billie Reardon, Pastor Tom, Ron Hartung, Jim Christianson, Audrey Post, [Janet Barber had left this spot moments before the photo was taken], Ruth Hartung, Judi's friend Jim Weems, Judi Duffy, Barbara Sullivan, Emily Jennings and Sandi Ness.

NOT SO FAST: EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM'S SERMON

...There's a sending-away practice that is still done in Judaism. If you were to turn up at a synagogue and say you wish to convert to Judaism, the rabbi is supposed to send you away three times. "No, Judaism is hard, go and do something easier, like not being Jewish." It's only if you persist past these three times of being sent away that they will prepare you to convert.

There's something quite lovely about that, isn't there? A faithfulness is revealed and a persistence to be sure you know what you're getting into....

BEFORE YOU GO...

- Here's an offer from embroidery wizard Margaret Bowers: "Bring your own shirt, jacket, bag or apron and get the St. Stephen logo embroidered for only \$5. Our fabulous Council President Denise came up with the idea of rainbow colors. Bring in your item and \$5, then drop off in fellowship hall – so you can promote our wonderful church. Questions? Call Margaret at 407-921-8671."
- If you have an anniversary, birthday, special memory or special St. Stephen person or program you'd like to honor, celebrate by sponsoring the altar flowers for our service. Sign up on the flower chart, out by the nametags, or ask Lori to sign you up. Include the \$40 with your regular offering. And then take the flowers home!
- Take one last look at our first family.



UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

- Chris Reece - 02/15
- Patrick Kennell - 02/18
- Tami Allen - 02/21
- Lisa Medley - 02/25
- Jackie Mustian - 02/25
- Judi Duffy - 02/27
- Rob Schiffer - 02/28
- Jan Harrison - 03/02
- Jim Christianson - 03/03
- Will Allen - 03/08
- Victor Muchuruza - 03/13



IN THE WEEK AHEAD

Today:

Noon - Al-Anon meets in fellowship hall (FH)

7 p.m. - AA meets in FH

This Friday:

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

This Saturday:

10 a.m. - Sew for Hope meets in FH

This Sunday:

9:00 a.m. - Book study

9:30 a.m. - Choir practice

10 a.m. - Worship, First Sunday in Lent

11:30 a.m. - Sweetest Sunday Tea Party

4 p.m. - Congolese Christian worship in FH

Monday, Feb. 19:

Church office will be closed for President's Day

5 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH

Wednesday, Feb. 21:

5 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH

7 p.m. - Choir practice



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