



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



### GET YOUR GLOVES ON

An open letter to St. Stephen’s weeds: “Weeds” is such a harsh word, isn’t it? Let’s just say that you’re plants living in what we consider to be the wrong places. This Saturday, starting at 9 a.m., Sandy Lamb-Daniels has invited us to bring our hats, gloves and tools to church and prepare for battle. The weather forecast is looking better. Weeds, we’re coming after you.

### SPEAKING OF SATURDAY MORNING...

Caroline Collins points out that a plug for Manna on Meridian might be timely if Saturday morning’s weeding workday gets rescheduled because of rain. “Manna’s distribution day (rain or shine) could satisfy hearts set on service,” she writes. According to organizer Carolyn Pardue, here are tasks that will need to be done by the 8-10 a.m. shift:



- Putting brown bags together for April.
- Sorting boxes for cat people and for Native Nurseries.
- Breaking down boxes for recycle.
- Keeping all areas cleaned and picked up.
- Putting together double brown bags.
- Jobs for kids: attaching toothpaste and toothbrushes, tearing handles off grocery bags, breaking down smaller boxes (jumping on them seems to be the favored method).

### THIS QUILT COULD BE YOURS

Barbara Ehlmann has a pocketful of red raffle tickets she’d love to sell you. If your ticket is drawn, you’ll be the owner of a beautiful quilt, cross-stitched, hand-quilted, donated by the quilters group at Grace Lutheran. It’s 95 by 95



inches, fit for a queen- or king-size bed. For \$5, you get one ticket. For \$20, you get five tickets. That’s five for the price of four. Such a deal!

Even if your ticket isn’t drawn, you’ll be supporting KidSafe, a program of Lutheran Social Services of North Florida. As you’ll recall, KidSafe distributes child safety seats to families who otherwise

couldn’t afford them. “This has been a particularly busy week,” Executive Director Dottie Hinkle said the other day, “with 15 child safety seats being delivered for infants and children living in vulnerable families in our hometown. Some are arriving to begin a new life after enduring unbelievable situations around the world; some are local soon-to-be parents; and others are transitioning to a forward-facing safety seat because their toddlers have outgrown their ‘baby’ seat. All are extremely grateful for this assistance as they struggle to provide the basic necessities.”

You have until Sunday, March 24, to get your tickets. For more information, look up Barb in the handy church directory.

## NATHAN'S LOVING SERENADE

*Saturday, the sanctuary was filled with family and friends celebrating the life of Don Dowd, who died last month. Many thanks to the St. Stephen people who led worship, decorated, cooked, cleaned, played music, ushered visitors through an ungodly downpour ... and more. Everyone was praying for Don's life partner, Nathan Basford, as he rose to speak. Would he be able to keep his composure? He not only spoke from the heart but also sang beautifully. Here are excerpts.*

When I first met Don, he invited me to come to church, this church, over 40 years ago. And you know, as I attended that Sunday morning, I knew I had been out of church too long. For I found it very hard to even say the Lord's Prayer....



We had many great memories here at St. Stephen. We had cantatas. I remember one time Don was supposed to say "Feed my sheep" and he said "Feed my feet." The show went on! Of course, he loved the talent shows. And decorating. We decorated with members of the church here so many years – Christmas and Easter.

... His last few days here on earth, I would read the Bible to him every night ... and I would sing to him. [Nathan sang the chorus of "Coming Home," then asked everyone there to sing it with him.] I think it would just be a nice way to honor Don. 'Coming home, coming home, never more to roam. Open wide thine arms of love, Lord, I'm coming home.'

## CALLING ALL CAMPERS

By Mark Greeley

The annual church camping trip is scheduled for April 19-21 at St. George Island State Park. This is a great event every year. Here are the details.

- We have enough sites for everyone.
- The leaders handle the food. We don't eat fancy, but it's warm and filling and we cook it for you.
- Whether you want to stay 2 nights, 1 night or 0 nights, you're welcome to come on out and spend time with the group. There are friendly faces around all the time from Friday morning to Sunday afternoon.
- If you need camping equipment, talk to Colin Hackley or me.



It's a fun weekend at a beautiful spot. Questions? Ask Colin ([colin@colinhackley.com](mailto:colin@colinhackley.com)) or me ([markhoffmangreeley@gmail.com](mailto:markhoffmangreeley@gmail.com)).

## SO THAT'S WHO'S ON THAT MOTORCYCLE

By Caroline Collins

After last Sunday's service, my eye was drawn to Carol Santos' biker outfit, topped off with a stylish butterfly-adorned helmet bought for her by her son Matthew, pictured below driving. With Mother's Day and Father's Day coming up, I wonder what other common interests and activities are enjoyed by our church's families.



## A HOUSEWARMING FOR TARRANCE

By Pastor Tom

We're thankful that St. Stephen's friend Tarrance is now in an apartment. Last October, I went to pick him up from Monticello when he could no longer stay at the motel there. Thanks to giving from St. Stephen, we sheltered him from November until late January. After that, he was able to cover his own motel expenses with his Social Security Disability funds that were restarted after six months. Now, let's help Tarrance get settled into his apartment with some housewarming gifts. Some of his needs are broom/dustpan, trash can for kitchen and bathroom, silverware, coffeepot, mop, two patio chairs, baking dish, deep fryer, large pot for chili, crockpot. If you'd rather donate money, please make a note on your check or envelope and I'll use your money to buy things on his list. Thank you for your gifts and prayers.



## CONGRATULATIONS, BALTHAZAR!



Last week we told you that Blake Simmons' latest puppet, Balthazar, is on display at LeMoyne Arts through March 30. Well, Friday we found out that Blake and Balthazar had won the 2024 LeMoyne Arts Scholarship!

Here's the ribbon: Senior Portfolio Award Winner. A sign above it at LeMoyne says Leon County Schools Scholarship Winner. You might recall that Blake learned earlier this year that she's been accepted into the puppetry program at West Virginia University.



Balthazar looks stunned by all this news, doesn't he? The exhibition is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at LeMoyne, 125 N. Gadsden St.

## TOMORROW IS YOUR DEADLINE

By Cheryl Stuart

At the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, the body directed the Churchwide Council to form the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC). The CRLC was charged with reconsidering the statements of purpose for each of the three expressions of the ELCA (churchwide, synod and congregation) and the principles of its organizational structure, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism. The CRLC is to bring recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. I was appointed as one of 35 people on the commission. As part of this work, the CRLC is seeking input via an online survey. It is important that the commission hear from a wide range of people, especially laypersons. Please go to [www.elca.org/CRLC](http://www.elca.org/CRLC) to find the survey. The deadline is Friday (tomorrow). Your voice matters; please don't hesitate to share your thoughts. Thank you in advance for your participation.

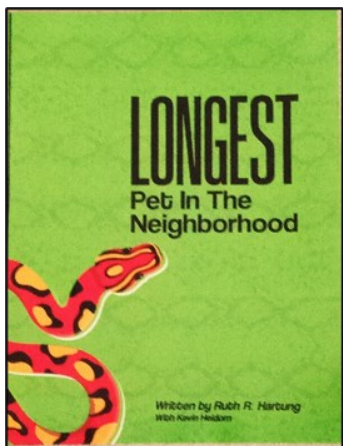


## 'CRYING OUT': EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM'S SERMON

... There comes a time for all of us when we humbly accept who we are. And at that moment, we may cry out to the Lord. Crying out is different from complaining. When we complain, we make it seem as though we could do better than God or know more than God knows. But when we cry out, we accept who we are and we recognize the wildness of the world. We make clear that we know our place and stay in our lane when it comes to God. That God is God and we aren't. It is then that the Holy Spirit might come and startle us with healing....

## 'LONGEST PET IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD'

Back when she was a grad student at the FSU College of Education, Ruth Hartung (then Ruth Dorsey) had a class assignment to write a children's story. She didn't have to look far for inspiration: Her nephew Kevin Heidorn, who lived in Thomasville, had a boa constrictor for a pet.



Ruth wrote a sweet, simple story titled "Longest Pet in the Neighborhood" and earned an A-plus. Fast-forward about 40 years. Kevin's parents just happened to dust off Ruth's homemade book and read it to Kevin's 6-year-old son, Max. They told Ruth, "You need to publish this story!" The self-conscious author wasn't so sure. But her husband explored the possibilities. Finally they signed on with a self-publishing company. Today, Ruth bashfully announces that her colorfully illustrated 20-page book is now available on Amazon and other sites – in Kindle, paperback and hardcover versions. No book tours. No talk shows. But we hope to have some copies to bring to church soon, so you can get a glimpse.

## BEFORE YOU GO...

- Jonas Holdcraft was part of Lincoln High's nine-member mock-trial team in Orlando last week for state competition. "The mock trial was three rounds at the Orlando Courthouse," Pastor Tom said. "They did well in all three, and each round was challenging. They don't have some of the results back from the competition yet, but the Lincoln team won the Professionalism Award!"



- "God & Country," a documentary produced by Rob Reiner, spotlights the dangers of Christian nationalism. The Tallahassee Film Society is screening it, and a group from St. Stephen plans to attend the showing at 5 p.m. Saturday 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 these links to view the trailer and buy tickets ahead of time:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30kUQ7Sav30>  
<https://www.tallahasseefilms.com/film/god-country-516/>
- 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!



## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

- Chris Gossman - 03/19
- Stephanie Leitch - 03/27
- Davis Holdcraft - 04/01
- Gordon Fleischer - 04/06
- Colin Hackley - 04/06
- Vicki Guttenplan - 04/07
- Beth Alexander - 04/11
- Donna Schiffer - 04/13
- Rudy Hehn - 04/14
- Erik Robinson - 04/14
- Elizabeth Halvorson - 04/15

## 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:

**7:30 a.m.** - Manna distribution

**9 a.m.** - Yard cleanup workday

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

**5 p.m.** - *God & Country* documentary at All Saints Cinema

### This Sunday:

**9:00 a.m.** - Book study

**9:30 a.m.** - Choir practice

**10 a.m.** - Worship, Fourth Sunday in Lent

**4 p.m.** - Congolese Christian worship in FH



### Monday, March 18:

**5 p.m.** - TIMA meets in FH

### Wednesday, March 20:

**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](mailto: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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