



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

JOIN US FOR EASTER!

Sunday, April 9

Pancake Breakfast, 8:45 a.m.

Kids' Easter Egg Hunt, 9:15 a.m.

Worship, 10 a.m.



HOLY WEEK IS NEAR

It's the most meaningful time of the church year, a marathon for pastors and church musicians, a collection of gripping stories, heart-rending moments and ultimate triumph. This is our schedule as we welcome April:

- April 2, this Sunday – Palm Sunday, when we gather outside, raise our palm branches high, and proceed into the sanctuary while singing “All Glory, Laud and Honor”
- April 6 – Maundy Thursday healing service, 7 p.m.
- April 7 – Good Friday, 7 p.m.
- April 9 – Easter! Pancake breakfast, 8:45! Easter egg hunt, 9:15! Liturgy, 10 a.m.!



CONSIDER THE LILIES

Will you help us fill the altar area with Easter lilies? The cost is \$10 each, and we'll have the dedication in the Easter bulletin. The deadline is this Sunday.

CONSIDER A HAT!

After conspiring with worship-neighbor Sharon Simmons, Caroline Collins has written this important Easter announcement.

BACK-ROW BABES BRING BODACIOUS BONNETS BACK: Dapper dudes and dames are encouraged to don festive headwear of any kind for the Easter celebration. If you have hats to give away, bring them to the fellowship hall this Sunday. If you need a hat, peruse the designated donation-hat station and help yourself to one. If you're looking for a new one, try Upscale Resale, Kohl's or Bealls Outlet.



THEY COUNT EACH DOLLAR YOU GIVE

Recently we've provided glimpses into the roles of the Altar Guild and the assisting ministers, and invited you to consider yourself in those roles. Today, a new question: Do you feel called to be one of our counters? Maybe you've never considered it. It's an unsung way to serve, and an essential one. Here's our current lineup of dedicated counters: Janet Barber, Margaret Bowers, Kirsten Ebbesen, Patricia Handschy, Debee Meyer, Audrey Post, Billie Reardon, Rob Schiffer and Susan Warren.

Office Manager Lori Zengel, who schedules them, says counting the offerings after the liturgy usually takes about 30 minutes. She estimates you'd be "on the job" once every six to eight weeks. And she assures you that rookie counters are paired with seasoned counters and trained for as long as they need.



"Because of 'rusty skills' and health concerns, I was reluctant to volunteer as a counter," Debee said. "My fears were relieved, though, as Margaret patiently trained me on every part of the process and graciously accommodated my absences due to illness. I say this to encourage anybody who might feel likewise unqualified to count."

Now, Debee said, she looks forward to serving in this way. "The satisfaction I get from using my God-given love of all things numerical and my skills at using them in a financial way comes directly from my understanding of stewardship, as explained to me by Pastor Emory many years ago," she said. "My choice to use the time, talents and treasure that God has entrusted to me is just one way that I can express my gratitude to Him for all that I've received."

"In addition, I get a lot of joy and encouragement from seeing how this plays out in my co-workers. For example, I'm delighted by the way that Patricia took her spreadsheet skills to create a beautiful one in Excel to account for (and provide a wonderful set of checks and balances of) the various forms of offerings received each week."

Patricia guesses she's been a counter for maybe six years. "I like to count at St. Stephen because I used to do something like accounting before I retired," she said. "To me, when the counting finishes, I feel satisfied that a job was done. After the Excel started, it is more like my work at jobs and is much easier and satisfying for me."



Maybe you'd find it satisfying, too. If you're curious, talk to Pastor Tom or any of these conscientious counters.

DAISY DAYS

The grass is greening up. Bumblebees are returning to the purple salvia. Tiny leaves are sprouting from the crepe myrtle. And when we look out our living-room window, this backyard daisy is one of the smiling faces we see. Thank you, God, for spring.



'OUR EASTER VICTORY': EXCERPT FROM PASTOR'S SERMON

... When we boil it all down, we find that our Christian faith is based upon the truth that God has overcome death. Not ignored it, taken it away or sugar-coated death. This is the hope we have that Christ has plowed through death and revealed to us that death is not ultimate; not the end, but a passageway to what comes next ... resurrection and (in the end) life!

It's an assurance only God can give, and it is our statement of faith when we entrust loved ones to God's unfailing care. Where else would we go in that last hour but to the burial place carrying nothing but part of the third article of the Creed: "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

We'll say those words this morning, but maybe say them with a little more meaning ... feel them more in our bones, because this is our Easter victory!

'AN EVENING IN TUSCANY'

KidSafe (of Lutheran Social Services of North Florida) is having a Dinner/Cooking Class at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 20, at Aprons. Tickets are \$100 per person, and the menu has a Tuscan theme (Linguini Carbonara, for example). For more information or to make reservations for this fun fundraiser, email info@lssnf.org. By the way, Aprons Cooking School is at the Publix at 3521 Thomasville Road.



Executive Director Dottie Hinkle is proud of KidSafe's new website. You can reach it at either lssnf.org or kidsafebigbend.org. She hopes you'll check out the family stories and register to receive the KidSafe newsletter/updates as an email.

COMING UP



- April 21: Camping trip
- July 30: Congregational meeting
- Oct. 29: Bishop Suarez visits us on Reformation Sunday

MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- We could use more Publix or gas gift cards, for our Justice and Mercy Fund – which assists people in need who show up at church. (Place them in the offering plate, or send them to Lori in the church office. You can also make a monetary donation to Justice and Mercy instead.)



- Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you'd like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service. Sign up on the flower chart in the narthex. The cost is \$35, which you can place in the offering plate.
- Have any questions for our Church Council members? They're listed on our website, <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/about-us>.
- Have anything to add to a future newsletter? Email Lori at sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com or call 850-385-2728.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS



Davis Holdcraft - 04/01
Gordon Fleischer - 04/06
Colin Hackley - 04/06
Vicki Guttenplan - 04/07
Beth Alexander - 04/11
Rudy Hehn - 04/12
Donna Schiffer - 04/13
Erik Robinson - 04/14
Elizabeth Halvorson - 04/15
Cassandra White - 04/16
Colton Allen - 04/17
Terri Schmitt - 04/17
Tyler Notley - 04/18
Russell Reardon - 04/26
Colleen Holdcraft - 04/29

IN THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday, April 2:

9 a.m. - Book study
9:30 a.m. - Choir practice
10 a.m. - Worship, Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday

Wednesday, April 5:

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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