

April 27, 2023



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



BY THE CAMPFIRE'S LIGHT

Wherever we are, God is there. Even on a church camping trip at St. George Island State Park, with a marshmallow on the end of a stick, suspended over a campfire, turning from white to golden brown to crusty black. These photos by Colin Hackley capture where some of our St. Stephen friends encountered God last weekend – when the campers “went to church” in a sanctuary with no walls, gentle tides and a rising sun as a backdrop.

“We had several new campers and day campers,” Colin said. “New day camper and cook: Margaret Bowers and grandchild on Friday. Margaret went above and beyond and prepared a heaping stack of breakfast burritos for Saturday breakfast, even though they were unable to stay.

“Also, new overnight campers on this trip were Pastor Tom and Colleen for Friday night; for Friday and Saturday, there were the Allen family (Tami, Fred, Colton and Lila) and Dwight (Beth Alexander's spouse). Saturday day campers included the Reece boys (Chris, Graham and Elliot).”

Here's how Colin summed up the annual camping adventure: “It was a good trip in a beautiful place with a mix of familiar and new faces, good food and bug bites for everybody!”

As for next year, Colin said the 2024 dates will be announced soon. “We may return to camping at Cape San Blas,” he said, “if that campground reopens this summer and we can secure reservations.” Stay tuned.



PIZZA & CRAFTS

What are Rita Ford and Margaret Bowers up to now? Well, they're planning an evening of crafts and pizza at 6 p.m. Friday, May 12. Bring your kids, or drop off your kids, or come if you don't have any kids – everyone is invited! Just let Rita or Margaret know. You'll find their info in St. Stephen's Instant Church Directory – or you can ask the church office. (If you don't have the church directory, Office Manager Lori can fix you up.)



HEY, OWLS – LUNCH AND A GUEST SPEAKER

The OWLs are the older, wiser Lutherans who gather monthly for lunch and conversation. Coming up soon is their final date before summer – and everyone's invited, whether or not you're retired or old or especially wise. Organizer Margaret Bowers says, "We're hoping to have a special guest, Tom Buchanan,

talk about what happens at 7:30 Tuesday nights at the American Legion on Lake Ella." Tom is a member of the Thursday Night Music Club, also known as "Tallahassee's Community Big Band." So come hear



THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB

what he has to say. This OWLs lunch will be at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 9, at The Egg Cafe & Eatery (on Austin Davis Drive, off Capital Circle Northeast). Please let Margaret know if you plan to attend.

STILL TIME FOR YOUR NOISY OFFERING

Last Sunday's Noisy Offering was less noisy than usual – in part because our camping friends were worshipping on the beach. So if you missed out, here's your second chance. The proceeds will go to the IRC. (The group's rep, Karen Duncan, spoke to us two Sundays ago about how the IRC welcomes refugees to their new home.) Cash, check, Venmo, whatever – your contribution is welcome.

To learn more about the IRC, visit <https://www.rescue.org/united-states/tallahassee-fi>, check the display that's (usually) in the narthex, or ask Sharon Simmons for Karen's contact information. Speaking of the IRC...



OFF THEY GO, TO FILL A NEED

By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator



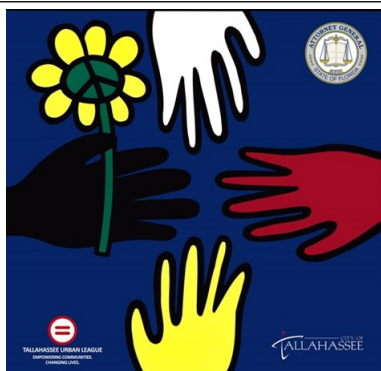
Ever wonder what happens when you leave donations for the IRC in the fellowship hall? They make their way to the IRC center on Monday morning.

The IRC continues to need cleaning supplies and personal-care items for new residents. These can be placed in the IRC tub in the fellowship hall. The IRC also needs children's summer clothing.

If you have furniture that may find a new life with new Tallahassee residents, talk to me to see if the items are needed. I'm listed in the directory.

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY

Brenda Christie, outreach coordinator at New Mt. Zion AME Church, invites St. Stephen members to the third annual Unity in the Community program. It's scheduled for 3 p.m. Sunday, May 28, at Allen Temple CME Church, 849 Kissimmee St. City and county commissioners and school officials are expected to be there.

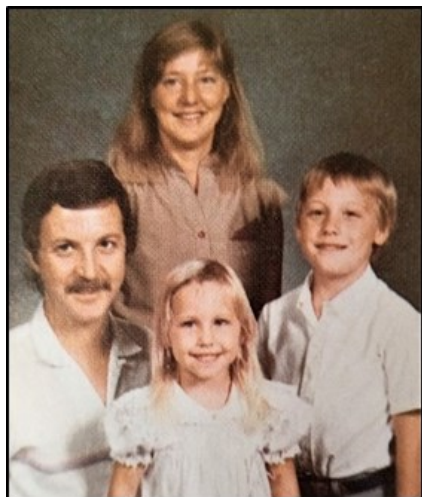


'HEARTS BURNING': EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM'S SERMON

... What does God have to do with the ins and outs of the everyday life and challenges of people at the local level? When we say, "Alleluia, Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!," we [as Thomas Long put it] "must be warned that the Easter celebration is not genuine unless it touches the private wounds and the tragedies near-at-hand." In other words, Easter will only have its traction when it comes to us at the local level, in community, and we feel our hearts burning....

ALTAR GUILD TRAINING

Want to join Altar Guild? There is a training this Saturday at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary to obtain the mad skills it takes in setting up for worship service. Just show up or contact Beth Alexander for more information.



RETRO LUTHERANS

Some people go camping for fun. Others leaf through old church directories ... and love to find familiar faces from yesteryear. Recognize this handsome family from the 1992 directory? Yes, it's the Larsons: Tim and Sandy, with kids Gabe and Hannah. Mighty cute.

You'll be thrilled to learn that there are lots more directory photos where this one came from. So keep an eye out. Your own picture might show up here one day soon.

COMING UP

- May 9: OWLs luncheon.
- May 28: Pentecost (choir's last anthem until after summer)
- July 30: Congregational meeting
- Oct. 29: Bishop Suarez visits us on Reformation Sunday



MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- **CALLING ALL GRADS!** Each year we try to list all of the St. Stephen people who are graduating from high school, college or any other program. We want to celebrate with you, so please send us your name, where you're graduating from and what your next steps are.
- Many thanks to the "older kids" who came forward Sunday with Astrid van der Mark to give Pastor Tom an audience for his children's sermon.
- 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

Colleen Holdcraft - 04/29
Julia Bonfanti - 05/03
Emily Jennings - 05/07
Eva Mustian - 05/08
Claire Claussen - 05/09
Eunice Muchuruza - 05/16
Jennifer Dritt - 05/21
Paxton Oates - 05/23
Sandy Larson - 05/24
Jake Hartung - 05/25
Blake Simmons - 05/25

IN THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday, April 30:

9a.m. - Book study
9:30 a.m. - Choir practice
10 a.m. - Worship, Fourth Sunday of Easter

Wednesday, May 3:



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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