



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



Gosh, remember these days? When we'd all cram into the fellowship hall, amid Ruthie's decorations and everyone's cooking, with decibel levels high enough to leave cracks in the paint? Ah, it was grand. We're not quite ready for potlucks yet – but how does a church picnic sound? We've got one coming up May 21. Read about it below. (File photo by Colin Hackley, Reformation feast, 2017)

A CLOSER LOOK AT OUR NUMBERS

By Pastor Tom

St. Stephen's financial report to close out 2021 revealed positive ministry activity. The congregation took in a total of \$380,766. That figure includes regular giving and designated giving, along with dividends and the columbarium. Let's dig in a little further:

- Designated giving for the property and building fund in 2021 was \$145,280.
- Seed money for a Mission Endowment Fund was given to St. Stephen in the amount of \$25,000 – and our endowment team is working with the ELCA Foundation to get those funds invested, so they can be used for peace and justice ministries.
- We collected a little over \$5,000 for Manna on Meridian and over \$6,000 for the Pastor's Justice and Mercy Fund, for a total of \$11,102. The Mission Outreach (including Manna, Lutheran Social Services of North Florida, and Justice and Mercy) spent a penny under \$15,010. We went over our budgeted and collected funds for these ministries by \$1,408.
- Mission support to the Florida-Bahamas Synod totaled \$18,550.



Total expenses for 2021 were \$392,985. As noted at the top, we took in \$380,766. That means we finished the year in the red by \$12,219. Yes, at first glance that deficit for 2021 may appear concerning. But listen to this: The deficit was *absorbed* by the collections we received the *previous* year. That is, we ended 2020 with a large surplus in the funds we collected for the sanctuary renovation. We're working to finalize past financial statements so we can provide year-to-year comparisons for total income and expenses.

As always, the Church Council and I thank you for your stewardship and trust in using your financial gifts for God's will and God's purposes in Tallahassee and beyond.

SAYING GOODBYE TO DAVID

By Pastor Tom

Last Sunday we bade farewell and Godspeed to David Butler. With hugs, handshakes and some tears, we tried to follow the Good Shepherd's example and open the gate for Christ's sheep to come and to go. David texted me later to say the day was wonderful. He was humbled and said he knows that he was drawn to St. Stephen for a purpose that helped him find himself. He also said that his work on the grounds and property was meditative and peaceful, giving him the boost he needed from God.



Among many smaller things, David was a great asset in managing the sanctuary building project. He worked closely with Oliver-Sperry and the subcontractors. He envisioned the north garden, the pollinator garden and the front juniper-and-rock landscaping. Thank you and Godspeed to our brother in Christ!

MOTHERS AND THEIR DAY

Chatting after church Sunday, Cheryl Stuart brought up something she had just read about the true origins of Mother's Day. Not the early-20th-century version,

the one that has turned into an industry built on flowers and sentimental cards (all of which our blessed moms deserve). Decades earlier there was *Mothers' Day* (plural, contrary to what this illustration suggests), organized by women who were fed up with the violence and wars that were maiming and killing their husbands and sons. It was a cry for peace. It's a fascinating history and a cause worth reviving. If you want to find out more, search online for Mothers' Day and Julia Ward Howe. And thank Cheryl for passing it along.

*"Arise, then, women of this day!
Arise all women who have hearts, whether
our baptism be that of water or of tears!...*

*We women of one country will be too
tender of those of another country to allow
our sons to be trained to injure theirs.
From the bosom of the devastated earth a
voice goes up with our own. It says
"Disarm, Disarm!" The sword of murder is
not the balance of justice."*



*~Julia Ward Howe, 1870
From her Mother's Day
Proclamation for Peace*



ST. STEPHEN'S ANNUAL PICNIC!

Join us for fellowship and fun Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m., at church. You bring lunch and a chair. We'll supply fruit and veggie trays, drinks, chips and paper goods. We'll have games there, too: cornhole, croquet & bocce ball. RSVP to Margaret Bowers, ambowersfl@gmail.com, 407-921-8671.



EXCERPT FROM SUNDAY'S SERMON

"Everything behind the scenes of this section of John's Gospel [10:22-30] hinges on the temple leadership's response when Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath. They were unwilling to 'see' the miraculous event of a man who physically could not 'see' but now does. The healed blind man sees with his eyes and sees who Jesus is and then becomes a follower. In other words, some who could physically 'see' remained blind to Jesus' identity. Irony makes for a meaningful story.

"You know what else is ironic? Some people's understanding of Revelation – that the book is to be decoded to tell us what's going to happen in the future. The truth is that the letter we call 'Revelation' was written to seven churches along the western coast of Turkey.... [It] speaks to every church of every generation that requires encouragement to stand apart from Christian nationalism, racism, and supremacist behavior."

BANS OFF TALLAHASSEE



SATURDAY MAY 14

**FLORIDA HISTORIC
CAPITOL MUSEUM
@ 11 AM**



**JOIN PLANNED PARENTHOOD, TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE,
FLORIDA COALITION FOR TRANS LIBERATION, POWER UP PEOPLE, FL NOW,
AMERICAN ATHEISTS, DREAM DEFENDERS, TALLY SDS, & FRSO AS WE COME
TOGETHER TO FIGHT FOR BODILY AUTONOMY**

FYZICAL THERAPY



YOU ARE INVITED!

GRAND OPENING CELEBRATION!

May 14, 2022, Saturday ★ 10 am - 2 pm

1660-3 N. MONROE ST. TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32303
(By Lake Ella Plaza and close to Publix)

RSVP: 850.656.3163 ★ Tally@fyzical.com

FOOD, PRIZES, GIVEAWAYS

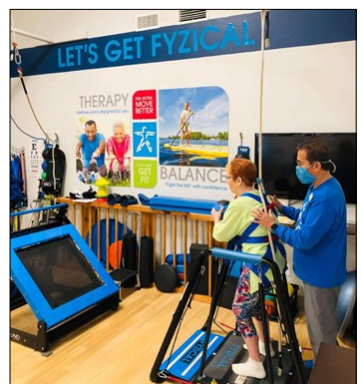


BALANCE IS CORE TO YOUR WELLNESS

You are invited to a Grand Opening of FYZICAL Tallahassee's new state-of-the-art Physical Therapy and Balance Center this Saturday, May 14, 10am-2pm. Conveniently located in the Lake Ella Publix Plaza, at 1660-3 North Monroe Street, FYZICAL is a holistic practice with a broad range of expertise and a laser focus on fall prevention strategies. Come meet the staff and check out their specialized equipment for evaluating and safely treating a wide range of balance issues. Enjoy refreshments and win prizes! Fight the Fall with confidence at FYZICAL.

Caroline Collins will be giving free massage samples throughout the celebration. These Friends of St. Stephen are also associated with the business: developer Bill Wilson managed the custom building project, and client Michele Hartson is pictured here in a promotional photo.

More information about the practice:
www.FYZICAL.com/Tallahassee



HAIKU CORNER

By Lex Lutheran

LET'S BUY SOME MORE

Those new umbrellas
at church are the best thing since
shade was invented.



STUMPED AT THE STORE

"Any weekend plans?"
asked the nice Publix cashier.
I thought, and I thought...

'RON' SOUNDS TOO MUCH LIKE 'ROB,' 'BOB,' 'TOM,' 'DON'

Next time I order
takeout food, I want to hear
them shout, 'Ronaldo!'



REMEMBER THIS SONG FROM 2016?

O SOME OF US DON'T SING SO WELL

*(Sung to the tune of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" by brave participants
in the talent show)*

When some of you hear music play, you instantly start to sing.
A blessed sound floats all around, like nightingales on the wing.
You take your voice for granted. You think all are so blessed.
But that's not true. We envy you. We can't sing. We're depressed.

We hesitate to sing too loud, for fear you'll be alarmed.
Yes, tests have shown that when we drone, small children can be harmed.

We know which notes to aim for. Alas, our aim's awry.
We make B-flat B-"what-was-that!" You giggle, but we cry.

St. Stephen welcomes everyone. Can you accept us, too?
We love each tune that you all croon. May we be crooners, too?
For when you stand beside us, your voices lift ours high'r.
Then God can hear, and knows that we're a part of Earth's great choir!

To see more songs, visit <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/songs-of-st-stephen> .

SUPERNAL ANTHEMS

Last Sunday, all of us sang this line from our opening
hymn: "O friends in gladness let us sing, supernal
anthems echoing: 'Alleluia! Alleluia!'" Did that word
"supernal" stump you as you barreled your way
through? I had to look it up. Webster's New World
College Dictionary explains it like this: "of, from, or
as though from the heavens or the sky; celestial,
heavenly, or divine." Next time you see Katharine, tell
her that her latest prelude was simply supernal.



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.
- Have any questions for our Church Council members? Ask them! They're all listed on our website, <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/about-us>. Or you can ask Pastor Tom. Or, if you're bashful, you can ask me, your newsletter editor. I'll try to get an answer and, if appropriate, share it with everyone in the newsletter. Just send your letter to Lori, whose contact info is below.
- Have any classified ads you'd like to place in the newsletter, free? You know – items you'd like to give away or sell, items you'd like to acquire, that sort of thing. If so, send them to Lori. Her contact info is below.



- 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 2022 Flower Chart in the narthex. The cost is \$35, which you can place in the offering plate.
- Have anything to add to a future newsletter? Email Lori at sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com or call 850-385-2728.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS



Eunice Muchuruza - 05/16
David Butler - 05/18
Jennifer Dritt - 05/21
Paxton Oates - 05/23
Sandy Larson - 05/24
Jake Hartung - 05/25
Nicholas Oliveri - 05/25
Blake Simmons - 05/25
TJ Oliveri - 05/28
Pepper Stewart - 05/29
Bevin Reardon - 06/03
Billie Reardon - 06/03
Billy Oates - 06/14

UPCOMING DATES

This Sunday, May 15:

9:00 a.m. - Book study

10 a.m. - Worship, Fifth Sunday of Easter

11:30 a.m. - Council meeting.



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>.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church, ELCA
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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

*Edited by Lex Lutheran. Designed by Lori Zengel, office manager, sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com.
Website: <http://www.ststephenlutherantally.com/>*

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