



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

READY TO WORSHIP IN PERSON AGAIN?

By Beth Alexander, worship and music coordinator

With immense joy, the Worship Committee announces the resumption of live worship beginning this Sunday. We'll be following the updated guidelines that the CDC provided last week: It's safe for people who are fully vaccinated to resume activities without masks. What incredible news for St. Stephen. People who are not fully vaccinated still need to wear masks to protect against disease, since the virus continues to exist. We won't police mask-wearing, but we request that you follow the CDC guidelines.

What does that mean for St. Stephen? We'd like to take a cautious approach as we resume congregating. That includes asking everyone to wear a mask when we're singing together; having communion once per month rather than every week; waving at each other or bumping elbows rather than shaking hands or hugging during the Sharing of the Peace; forgoing the nursery and children's time temporarily; and using [SignUpGenius.com](https://www.signupgenius.com) to reserve a place for your in-person attendance – which will also allow us to arrange and assign seating for family bubbles. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c45a4a62ea7fbc16-sunday>.



We look forward to seeing everyone when you're comfortable. We'll continue to stream our live services for those not able or not yet ready to come to the sanctuary.

It's thrilling to anticipate corporate worship with each of you. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at bethalex411@gmail.com.

SPEAKING OF THE SANCTUARY ...

By Pastor Tom

As we wait for the engineer to specifically update blueprints, which hopefully will be completed this week, the Interior Design Team has made some important decisions. We met Tuesday with Tabitha from MLD Architects and her intern for two hours in the church. We began with the lighting engineer. Thanks to prior planning from Ann Hingst and David Butler, our team passed our wants to the lighting expert.

After that, Denise Bookwalter, Jim Sampson, David, Ann and I looked over varieties of flooring and paint colors. We asked for a quote to install carpet squares on the entire floor with vinyl wood laminate in the chancel area to match the communion rails. We also asked for a quote to use carpet squares throughout the long portion of the sanctuary and vinyl wood laminate in the “alcoves.” The second bid will be more expensive, but we wanted to know our options.

The Interior Design Team is proposing we remove the installation of ceiling fans from the original work order – for aesthetic and virus-spread-risk reasons. You’ll hear (and see) more when the Church Council has the chance to approve the sub-team’s selections.



By the way ... at the Council meeting Sunday, Treasurer Jen Dritt reported that St. Stephen (thanks be to God and you, God’s faithful givers) is receiving plate offerings that meet our budget requirements. Every separate financial gift given to the capital campaign remains secure for the repair and renovation work those gifts were meant for. What a great gift of generosity your donations have made to St. Stephen!

If you haven’t had an opportunity to make a gift or pledge yet toward the improvements in our worship space, please prayerfully consider doing so – and be sure to designate it to the Capital Campaign for the Sanctuary Project.



GREETINGS FROM THE GREELEY/BOOKWALTER HOUSE

By Mark Greeley

During this year of mostly remote worship, the newsletter has been trying to keep St. Stephen connected by seeking updates from a variety of members and friends. Many thanks to Mark for this glimpse of his family’s life.

All in all, life has been good with us for the last year. It’s amazing how easy it is to miss the forest for the trees. While we certainly long for travel and seeing people we care about, there is no way we would have gotten to spend this much time as a family in a normal year. It’s been a blessing to watch the kids grow, plant new gardens, binge shows together, and huddle around FaceTime to share milestones and interact with far-flung loved ones we miss dearly.

Violet and Ceilia started kindergarten at the School of Arts and Sciences on Thomasville Road in the fall. A good COVID protocol there let them go in person, which has meant so much for them. In the last year they both learned to read and ride bikes (in the church parking lot!), they love art and nature, and they started Brownie Scouts over the winter.

Denise rapidly transitioned printmaking classes to online for the school year, starting by teaching students to make their own printing press in Week 1. In April she got to visit her parents, which meant a lot. I've been busy at work throughout. The automotive sector is red-hot this year, and that has been a challenge for everyone.

The whole family has enjoyed spending more time at the coast, and we hope to keep that up. Summer plans are filling up with camps and some travel, and we can't wait to be back in person on Sundays.



THANKS TO YOU...

By Sharon Simmons, community outreach coordinator

Many thanks for your generous contributions and support of Going Places Street Outreach, a program of Capital City Youth Services. "Through your In-Kind donations and \$200 contribution, you have provided food, clothing and hygiene to the most vulnerable youth in your city and across the Big Bend," development director Justin Barfield wrote in a thank-you letter to St. Stephen. "Specifically, you have provided a sense of well-being to youth who visit Going Places' Drop In Center (DIC). Our DIC sees a wide variety of guests, including members of the LGBTQ+ community and parenting youth.... Through your last donation, 30 youth received critical resources to assist them on their journey." We'll continue to collect for Going Places. New items being requested for summer months are breakfast bars, shorts (male and female) and white T-shirts or tank tops.

In other Outreach Committee news, St. Stephen will be in charge of Manna on Meridian during June, August and October. Mike Martinez needs volunteers and backup for those months. Please contact Mike at 850-443-4498 or hondafitmartinez@gmail.com if you can help. Middle- or high-school students needing community-service points can earn them through this program.



The backpack/back-to-school program for the fall will begin to ramp up during July (public school starts in early August). Andrea Notley and Erin Kenney will provide details in a later newsletter.

BIBLE STUDY DOESN'T FIT YOUR SCHEDULE?

For those who'd like to take part in the weekly Bible study but have a schedule conflict, here's a link to the recorded meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/ksGY24vQKrsuKOqIEh05p_nktibLpcD51DuoKyeaRqwWl-Nm7XWqDj6kFQfYr_JC.YxtlQgkGrD6r-ujf



A CIRCULAR SWIRL OF NONSTOP COLOR

Perhaps the most dazzling stop in last weekend's tour of gardens benefiting Friends of Maclay Gardens was a colorful corner of Florida State University. FSU's labyrinth was created several years ago, but this year its plants have really hit their stride. One of the people responsible is Jake Hartung. He was on hand last Friday and Saturday to answer questions from roughly 200 visitors – and he took the photo above, which shows only about a third of the giant labyrinth.

“My role is to supervise the maintenance and planting of everything that goes into gardens on campus,” Jake said.



“I organize other crews to trim and pull weeds, but I really like to plant flowers; so I had my hands on everything that was planted at the labyrinth. This garden contains around 600 plants and at least 20 different varieties of plants.

“When it was created, soil was trucked in to create a raised garden and boulders were brought in by crane. I didn't get to draw the design, but I was involved with choosing the color palette and purchasing the flowers. These flowers are constantly updated and swapped out, just like at Disney – normally just a little at a time, but with major transitions in spring and fall. I love the creative vibes that flow through this garden,

and the fact that it provides a sense of peace and calm.” God's work, Jake's green thumbs.

Here's a link to Jake's 3-minute silent tour of the labyrinth:

<https://www.facebook.com/jake.hartung.92/videos/10159652597636967>

MISC.

- Congratulations to Caroline Collins, who passed her licensing exam for massage therapy this week.
- Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you would like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service and signing up for the 2021 Flower Chart located in the narthex. The cost is \$35, and you can place that 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

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



UPCOMING DATES

This Sunday:

10 a.m. - Worship, Day of Pentecost

11:30 a.m. - Refreshments in Fellowship hall

Wednesday, May 26:

Noon - Bible study (online)



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
2198 N. Meridian Road | Tallahassee, FL 32303

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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