

May 25, 2023



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



NOW WE'RE BETTER CPR-PREPARED, THANKS TO OUR GOOD INSTRUCTORS

A couple dozen St. Stephen people stuck around last Sunday for a brief demonstration of how to perform CPR, how to use an AED (automated external defibrillator), how to perform the Heimlich maneuver and even how to perform mouth-to-mouth (which, we learned, is not typically performed as part of CPR anymore).

Dr. Rudy Hehn was the lead instructor, assisted by Susan Hehn and Kirsten Ebbesen, and they were outstanding. Margaret Bowers made sure everyone got a quick lunch. Maybe, just maybe, one of these participants will help restart a heart someday. *(Photos by Susan Hehn)*



THIS SUMMER, AN 'OPEN FORUM'

Mark your calendar for July 30. The people of St. Stephen will get together, but it'll be more than just a congregational meeting. Pastor Tom and President Denise Bookwalter are calling it an "Open Forum," and it sounds like a good opportunity for our congregation.



"We encourage you to begin to consider, brainstorm and pray about where we are today and thoughts for the congregation's future," Pastor Tom said Wednesday. This is our chance to celebrate what we have together, tweak a few details, try something new, think big and bold – wherever the Holy Spirit calls us. Pastor and Denise urge us to watch for details in upcoming newsletters to help frame our time together on the 30th.

MORE CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATES

- The Council approved repairs to one of the sanctuary's air-conditioning units last week for \$1,942. Another unit needed an overflow switch, installed at a cost of \$353. The work was paid for with money already budgeted.
- On June 5-6, White's Plumbing will repair two breaks in our sewer line to North Meridian. Also, a section of cast-iron pipe that runs under the driveway to the parking lot needs replacing. Accessibility to the front parking lot will be affected. The cost for this project is \$10,275. We're blessed to be able to say that one of our members is paying for it.



A PASTORAL COMEDY OF ERRORS

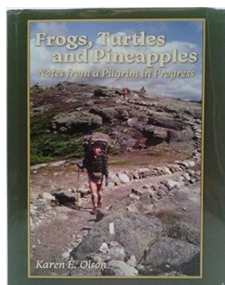
By Karen E. Olson (Excerpt from the Oct. 13, 1991, edition of the Tallahassee Democrat)

Talk about far-fetched expectations and superhuman endurance tests. In one grueling two-week marathon, the Rev. Austin Hollady preached 27 sermons, flubbed a wedding ceremony, nearly lost his own wife-to-be and wrapped up a major funeral service by marching into a broom closet – in full view of 250 mourners. All this, mind you, for a novice on his first foray into the ministry.

"I tell people I went through hell trying to give people a little bit of heaven during those two weeks," joked Hollady, 64, retired director of the Wesley Foundation at Florida State University.

The comedy of errors began in the middle of June 1953, when Hollady was 26 and fresh out of seminary. He had just been hired as associate minister of a 4,700-member Methodist church in downtown Orlando. He doesn't like to name it: "It might be a source of embarrassment, for a church to have had an associate pastor this dumb."

... Now, 38 years later, he gets invitations to tell his tale at church conferences all over Florida. Nothing beats a little humor, he concludes, when a minister is trying to scramble off the pedestal and function as a normal human being. "I guess it helps people to know that even preachers make mistakes," Hollady reflected. "By telling this story, I can get people to laugh. They understand we were meant to laugh and enjoy life. A minister doesn't have to stay dressed up in his robe all the time."



You'll find this and more of Karen's stories in the book "Frogs, Turtles and Pineapples: Notes From a Pilgrim in Progress," available at church or from Karen.

COULD GRETA ASSIST YOU?

By Greta Scavone

I've been a member of St. Stephen since Feb. 19, and I could use your help. I'm seeking an opportunity to perform menial tasks for individuals and/or families in their homes – tasks such as vacuuming, dusting, cleaning, laundry, dishes, organizing, pet care, child care and senior companionship. My highest education is a B.S. degree from Arizona State University with a major in family psychology and the psychology of aging. My work history consists of 50 years' experience in patient care and support roles in medical and mental health, including patient reception, medical records, medical transcription and senior caregiving. If you think I could make life easier for you in your home (or business), please contact me. Otherwise, should you know people who are looking for these services, please feel free to pass my contact information on to them: 575-373-5523;

msscavone.email@gmail.com; 1040 Riverview Road, Havana, FL 32333-4174.



DEADLINE IS JUNE 4

By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator

The Florida-Bahamas Synod will meet in assembly June 8-10. Each year, the Synod chooses a nonprofit to support by asking delegates to bring donations from their congregations. This year, Harbor House of Central Florida has been chosen. Harbor House provides an emergency shelter and domestic-abuse call center. The Outreach Committee is asking the congregation to please bring donations by June 4. Items needed include:



- Strollers (the umbrella type can be found at Walmart for \$18).
- Baby wash.
- Diapers (sizes 5 and 6 are needed most).
- Pull-ups (sizes 2 to 6).
- Baby wipes.

There's a Harbor House tub in the fellowship hall for donated items.

EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM'S SERMON

... The setting here is Jesus' farewell speech to his closest followers. The feet are washed, meal served, the ... denial and betrayal have been predicted. [All of the disciples except Judas] gather ... for this farewell prayer and Jesus says, "And this is eternal life."

Everything, right there and in that moment, with Jesus and his imperfect followers, is eternal life – because in that instant there's a communal experience with openness and honesty, and there's a making-known the presence of God: Word, Meal, Service. A glorification that comes in the present moment.

This - is - eternal - life.

Eternal life is that presence of the way a parent hugs their child. It's not a "bro hug" or one of those half-hugs (that's appropriate for personal space and respect), but the one from God is a full embrace that wraps the child protectively and holds on extra long. Even when we want to draw away, God holds on.

Jesus' prayer describes the relationship between him and the Father and entrusts the community to God's tender care. This is the Jesus Way for motivation....

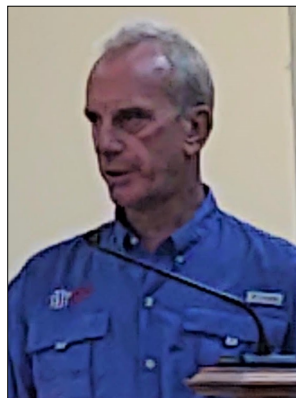
COMING UP

- June 13: Live music at Lake Ella, 7:30 p.m., a St. Stephen evening outing!
- July 30: Congregational meeting and Open Forum
- Oct. 29: Bishop Suarez visits us on Reformation Sunday



MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- Don't forget that the Noisy Offering is this Sunday. The cacophonous coins will go toward Sleep in Heavenly Peace, a group that was featured in last Sunday's Ministry Minute. Guest speaker John Cousins succinctly stated its motto: "No Kids Sleep on the Floor in Our Town." Nothing complicated – volunteers get together and build bunk beds for families that don't have beds. Our Outreach Committee is exploring whether St. Stephen can help sponsor a build day next year. Meantime, we can support that work financially, starting this Sunday. Bring your Noisy Offering. Bless you.
- Wear **red** this Sunday. It's Pentecost!
- St. Stephen is gaining two new members pretty soon. If you're not yet a member but would like to be, see Pastor Tom.
- Sharon Simmons reminds us of the Unity in the Community event at 3 p.m. Sunday at Allen Temple CME Church, 849 Kissimmee St., followed by what she promises will be a "delicious" meal. Want to carpool? Ask Sharon and she'll help arrange it.
- 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

Jake Hartung - 05/25
Blake Simmons - 05/25
Bevin Reardon - 06/03
Billie Reardon - 06/03
Susan Hehn—06/11
Billie Oates - 06/14
Tim Larson - 06/16
Martin Guttenplan - 06/19
Ruth Hartung - 06/23
Steve Kunst - 06/23
Sandy Davis - 06/28



IN THE WEEK AHEAD

This Sunday:

9 a.m. - Book study
9:30 a.m. - Choir practice
10 a.m. - Worship, Day of Pentecost, Noisy offering



The office will be closed on Monday, May 29, in observance of Memorial Day.



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