



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



Cruising down the Wakulla River in our kayak, we look up – and what do we see, way off in the distance? A nest full of eager yellow crowned night heron chicks. Welcome to God's world, little guys. (Photo by Jake Hartung)

THE TRAVELING TANGERINE TREE

By David Butler, building/grounds coordinator

Wonder where the Sugar Belle Tangerine tree from the church courtyard went? You don't have to look very far. It's now the centerpiece for the newly expanded pollinator garden located at the southwest corner of the property, where the classroom building and fellowship hall meet. Its spring bloom was quite beautiful and fragrant. It now shares its blossoms with a variety of pollinating plants that attract butterflies, bees and hummingbirds.

You'll also notice the beginnings of a new garden on the north lawn (near Pinewood Drive). Curved benches will serve as the centerpiece for the garden. This work-in-progress will be home to many of the typical plants seen around the church grounds. Two medium-sized trees (TBD) will be planted to provide shade from the scorching summer sunshine.

Bear with us as we continue to cultivate these two new gardens. So the next time you're on the grounds, take a stroll through the many gardens created and maintained by volunteers and donors. Many thanks to Master Gardener Emily Jennings, who gives of her time and talent to ensure that proper plants are used in each space.



Want to volunteer? We need people to dig, weed, water and pray. Contact Emily or me for volunteer information. (See church directory for contact information)

THANKING ISABEL

(Isabel, please don't read this. Thank you.)

When they write the history of St. Stephen & The Pandemic of 2020-21, they'll note that the pastor performed magnificently, as did the music director, the flute accompanist, the Altar Guild and more. But they'll also note that the one everyone talked about was the one who stepped forward specifically because of the pandemic – because we suddenly needed a cantor to lead the singing and chanting for a congregation now worshipping from home via a computer screen. And historians will note that this super-volunteer was (no offense, Isabel) just a high-school kid. But, man, what a high-school kid.



Isabel Barton, youngest member of the storied Barton Musical Clan, made history this past year as our cantor. Even if she were a so-so singer, we'd still be raving about her commitment, reliability and selflessness. But her voice is breathtaking, mask or no mask. Even if you're all alone in your pajamas, worshipping remotely with an iPad in your lap and a cracker for communion, a far cry from how you previously defined "church," Isabel's majestic voice makes everything OK. She sweeps up your puny voice with hers. She makes it presentable as a gift to God.

So what is our gift to Isabel? As you probably know, she's leaving in August to attend college in Pennsylvania. We're inviting St. Stephen people to contribute what they can toward a going-away check that Isabel can use in her transition to campus life. Please just add it to your offering and designate it "Gift for Isabel." Bless you.

THE TALENTED REECE BOYS

Graham and Elliot were both in performances at Young Actors Theatre this spring. Graham was the pirate Brown-beard in the show "Pirates 2." He made a great left-handed swordsman! Elliot was Col. Haithi, leader of the elephants, in "The Jungle Book." The links to watch the performances are below.



"Pirates 2": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R64qLk1LtlE>

"The Jungle Book": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ji1fnC60pu0>

'YOU GIVE US HOPE': EXCERPT FROM SUNDAY'S SERMON

In his sermon about the Holy Trinity, Pastor Tom added this and other material to "The Letter to Nicodemus," by Claudio Carvalhaes.

"... Our world now is one that loves guns, money and selfish power more than it loves God. And our water is drying up, too. All of these things have happened because we have turned our backs on the Spirit of God.

"Yet we are like you, Nicodemus, and we do not give up on pursuing a relationship with Jesus. You came back to Him and became a public follower who took risks for the sake of the Gospel. You give us hope that we can do that, too – hope that a new birth is about to begin in our world.

"And people are coming together to stand up with the righteous power to change hurtful policies and sideline corporate greed. You see, we know that the people have the power, and many are becoming open to believe again in an active and loving God who desires us to know we are born of the Spirit...."

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/1ttwDGm9ztLqBhWbkR7L-43ddldS3FT6Nw8EMG5CpYSqWyfpu_6l4SnXCMiiOY-j_IR2HrsS_VP7cC2D9

MISC.

- 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 2021 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

Bevin Reardon - 06/03
Billie Reardon - 06/03
Billy Oates - 06/14
Tim Larson - 06/16
Ann DelRossi - 06/19
Martin Guttenplan - 06/19
Ruth Hartung - 06/23
Steve Kunst - 06/23
Stephanie Barber - 06/26
Sandy Davis - 06/28

UPCOMING DATES

This Sunday:

10 a.m. - Worship, Second Sunday after Pentecost

Wednesday, June 9:

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>.

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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

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