



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

'NONES,' 'DONES' AND US

By Pastor Tom

The Florida-Bahamas Synod Assembly in Kissimmee was a workshop assembly. There was business to deliberate and vote on, but there were also breakout workshops and a phenomenal keynote speaker who taught us in worship and lecture. His name is the Rev. Dr. Rafael Malpica Padilla, and he serves as executive director of global missions for the ELCA.



He spoke about the realities of church decline and began by pointing to the “nones” and the “dones.” We all know about the numbers of people who describe themselves as “nones.” Those are the ones who say “none” when asked what faith tradition they belong to. The “dones” are those who grew up or spent a large part of their life in a congregation – until something happened, and they left. They’re “done” with the church. We all know of people who fit in each category.

Through a study of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, the Rev. Malpica Padilla encouraged us to work on church health. To look at the ways our congregation is, or is not, open and inclusive. To consider the ways that the mission of Jesus is (or is not) the mission of the congregation and then let the mission of Jesus Christ define our church. This is foundational to church health.

You may feel that St. Stephen is in good health according to the points our guest speaker made, but we too have challenges in the new landscape of the church. Our mission is not to simply get people into the pews, but to bring good news to the poor. What are the things we should deconstruct? What boundaries might we cross with compassion? How is Jesus disturbing our comforts? Most of us know what a special place St. Stephen is. It shouldn't be kept a secret.



Those toiletries you donated for the Synod Assembly's service project were loaded into this truck for distribution to the people who needed them at the Orlando Union Rescue Mission.

WORTH CELEBRATING

Here's what Jennifer Buchanan looked like Saturday when her husband, Tom, surprised her with an original song celebrating her upcoming retirement. The song debuted at the Buchanan home, where friends had gathered to toast Jen.

“Jen's official last day is July 5,” Tom said. “She's been at FSU for 35 years. We moved here for her to take a job at the university in 1982. She took a break when the boys were born, then worked a few years at Apalachee Mental Health. She returned to FSU and has been there since.”



As Jen departs, her job title is associate vice president at the Office for Faculty Development and Advancement. Pretty impressive, eh? As for her immediate post-retirement plans, Tom summed them up in the song ... when he had Jennifer dreaming aloud: “I'm just going to sleep! Sleep! Sleep! Maybe for a week! Sleep! Sleep!”

We asked Dr. Buchanan herself for her thoughts: “I am grateful for the many opportunities I've had at FSU to do good work with wise and creative people. And (after getting some rest!), I look forward to how God will call me to use my gifts as a retiree.”

Congratulations, Jen. (Photo by Caroline Collins)

LATEST NEWS FROM OUR FOOD PANTRY

By Cassandra White

- Hello, St. Stephen! Here are some updates from Manna on Meridian.
- We're welcoming Caroline Collins aboard to help with Manna duties for St. Stephen.
- Volunteer opportunities now exist on Sundays and Fridays as well as the Saturday distribution. Friday is set-up, and Sunday is bread-and-baked-goods distribution, which is really popular.
- Manna is now tracking volunteer hours to help with grant applications.
- Some items that Manna specifically needs donated are:
 - ◇ 16- to 18-ounce boxes of cereal (something on the healthier side, like corn flakes or Cheerios).
 - ◇ Basic canned soups (tomato, vegetable, chicken noodle), especially those with pop tops.
 - ◇ Canned tuna.
 - ◇ Brown grocery bags.
- Here's the distribution calendar for the rest of the year (please notice that next month is our month):
 - ◇ July - St. Stephen/Unitarian
 - ◇ August – Saint Paul's
 - ◇ September – Faith
 - ◇ October – Grace
 - ◇ November – St. Stephen/Unitarian
 - ◇ December – Saint Paul's



OUTREACH UPDATES

By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator

Pastor Tom's Justice and Mercy Fund needs Publix or gas-station gift cards that we use to help our neighbors. You can place them in your offering envelope or loosely in the collection plate.



Our Outreach Committee friend from Seminole Manor Neighborhood Pantry says that they need women's sanitary supplies, toothpaste and toothbrushes, and deodorant. Bring them to the church and give them to me, please.

Our friends on the Care and Hospitality Committee are collecting snack foods – such as crackers, energy bars and small applesauce cups – to be placed in the “hunger cabinet” in the narthex. When the need arises, the ushers can show members and visitors where the snack food is. Many, many thanks for your generosity.



BEFORE YOU GO...

- There probably won't be a newsletter next week.
- *If you have an anniversary, birthday, special memory or special St. Stephen person or program you'd like to honor, celebrate by sponsoring the altar flowers for our service. Sign up on the flower chart, out by the nametags, or ask Lori to sign you up. Include the \$40 with your regular offering. And then take the flowers home*



UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS



Susan Hehn - 06/11

Billy Oates - 06/14

Tim Larson - 06/16

Martin Guttenplan - 06/19

Ruth Hartung - 06/23

Steve Kunst - 06/23

Sandy Davis - 06/28

COMING UP

Today:

Noon - Al-Anon meets in fellowship hall (FH)

7 p.m. - AA meets in FH

This Friday:

9:30 a.m. - TOPS meets in FH

This Sunday:

9 a.m. - Book study

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

4 p.m. - Congolese Christian worship in FH

Monday, June 10:

5 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH

7 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH

Wednesday, June 12:

10 a.m. - Friendship Star Quilting Group meets in FH

5 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH



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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