



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

*Marilyn Larson, one of the longtime beautifiers of our church grounds, has her hands full here with a bit of indoor beauty.
(Photo by Caroline Collins)*



GET SET FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

Our midyear congregational meeting is coming up June 26, right after the liturgy. You'll want to take part so you can get an update on our church financial picture and can elect Church Council members. "Actually, since we've made a few mid-term Council changes in the past two years, the only one needing to be filled is the Building/Grounds position," Pastor Tom said. "As of today, we don't have anyone showing interest, but we know that the Lord will provide! The meeting is also an opportunity to discuss other items in the hearts and minds of the congregation. Thankfully, we don't have any major issues on the agenda – like a Capital Campaign!"



MEANINGFUL MOMENTS AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY

By Sue Canning, one of our reps at last week's Florida-Bahamas Synod Assembly

This year the Synod Assembly was in person for the first time in 1,091 days. What a joy to be with almost 350 other members of the ELCA. Our major responsibility was to elect ministers and lay people to vacant synod-wide positions. Of the many meaningful moments, two stood out for Mark and me.

Keynote speaker Luis Torres, pictured right, addressed bias and prejudice. Christians, he said, must demonstrate how to challenge bias in ways that lead to discussions, not shouting matches. The first step is recognizing that humans have been inherently biased since prehistoric times – suspicious of those outside your immediate clan because they could pose a danger. Even now, each of us belongs to many "clans" or groups. The first step is recognizing which groups you belong to. Torres belongs to at least six: male, heterosexual, married, Puerto Rican, educated and Catholic. Being a member of a group can bring privilege to you, he said, or bring prejudice against you. "What happens when you call someone a racist?" he asked. The other person gets defensive, and all options for discussion are lost. He urged us to be agents for discussion in continually challenging bias in our communities.



The other meaningful moment? For that one you'll have to wait a few days. It's going to be part of Pastor Tom's sermon this Sunday. Pretty powerful.

By the way, Pastor Jenn from Grace Lutheran was elected to the Synod Council for our area. Also, Pastor Tom was elected to the synod Discipline Committee. The latter sounded pretty grim to me. Then I realized such a committee needed someone who could listen without judging, was compassionate and made decisions only after much prayer. Sound like someone you know?

P.S.: WOMEN'S RETREAT



Someone at the Synod Assembly passed along a card with this info: Women of the ELCA invite you to walk together at Lake Yale Retreat Center, Nov. 11-13. For more information, visit www.flwelca.com.

MARCHING FOR OUR LIVES

Terri Schmitt reminds us that the March for Our Lives rally begins at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Old Capitol. Below is the link for March for Our Lives events – where you'll see this message: "Show up, and demonstrate to our elected officials that we demand and deserve a nation free of gun violence." Wearing a St. Stephen shirt would be a good way to let folks know we support them and support reform around gun laws, mental health, background checks and so on. Making signs is a nice touch, Terri adds, but not necessary. Check the link: <https://marchforourlives.com/march22/>



WARDROBE WONDERS

By Sharon Simmons



Ever wonder what a high-school girl does when she isn't studying for two Advanced Placement courses and four Honors courses? Well, in the recent case of Blake Simmons, she designed and made her own costumes for last weekend's local Infinity Convention at the Civic Center. This year the rules for Saturday required the entrant to make 85% of the costume by hand, including armor, swords, helmets and hats.



The first picture shows Blake in her contest entry as Rian, from the Netflix show "The Dark Crystal." The second costume, which she wore Sunday, shows her as Snufkin from the Moomins cartoon. Her proud dad, Shane, and Oma Sharon provided only transportation and

monetary help in the obtaining of supplies. *(Blake gave her permission for these pictures to be shared in the newsletter.)*

WFSU: VOICES THAT INSPIRE

Every week, WFSU-FM provides an audio snippet from community members telling about ways they're inspired. Featured last week was St. Stephen member Mark Mustian. Here's what he had to say.

I'm Mark Mustian. I'm an author and president of the Word of South Festival. I'm



a lawyer, husband, father, resident of Tallahassee for 50-plus years. We moved to Tallahassee when I was 5, and I went to school here, went away to college and law school, came back about three years later and I've been here ever since. I've been fortunate enough to have had a few novels published. And the last one that was published, I got invited to these literary festivals around the country. I had never been to one, and I went and said, "God, these are great. We should do something like this in Tallahassee."

I was on the City Commission then, and I decided I needed to get off [the commission] to do this, and I did. We decided to start this festival that combined books and music. We called it Word of South. It started in 2015, and it rained all weekend long. There was enough there that we decided to keep it going, and now we'll be in our ninth year next year. I want to keep doing sort of innovative stuff. It's great to bring national-level people to Tallahassee, but if that's all we're doing, that's not as much as we could do. So I'd like to do more stuff like the Adderley tribute that we did this year. One of the things we're going to do with the festival is also showcase the talent that is currently here. So the beauty of that whole program is we had national-level people come from all over the country to play, we got national-level people here that they played with, and a tribute to some people from Tallahassee that are absolute legends in the jazz field.

I think Tallahassee in a way is sort of like a little European community where people are willing to invest in the community, they're willing to invest for nice public things. I think we have a vibrant park community, we have a vibrant music community, and we have a vibrant intellectual community. It's a great place to live. (To hear Mark's voice, visit <https://wfsu.org/radio/voices-that-inspire/mark-mustian>)

BACKPACK TIME ... REALLY?

By Andrea Notley

I know it seems too soon to think about heading back to school, but in two

weeks Erin Kenney and I will be receiving the names of 20 students for the annual backpack drive. Please consider participating, because every child wants to have a new outfit and backpack to start school. There are two ways you can help. You may adopt a student by getting info from Erin or me; buy a backpack; and fill it with two outfits, socks and underwear. Or, if you don't have the time (or skills) to shop yourself, you may donate money. Watch for more information soon!

BACK TO SCHOOL

CLOTHING DRIVE

ECHO



We need you!

Our Kids are headed back to school in August.

Would you join ECHO in providing clothing and supplies?

Contact Us for additional details to help us NOW!

phone: 850-224-3246 ext. 207 or kpride@echoth.org

HAIKU CORNER

By Lex Lutheran



IN ANCIENT TIMES

When I was in school,
backpacks were for mountaineers,
not second-graders.

SCENT OF CRAYOLA

When I was in school,
the day supplies arrived was
crayon-fragrant bliss.

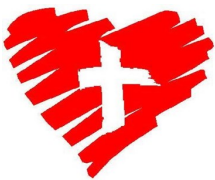


GUNS

When I was in school,
kids might get punched but, dear God,
no one would get shot.

MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- The Celebration of Life service for Bobbi Schiffer is scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday in the sanctuary. A reception will follow in the fellowship hall.
- The OWLs' next lunch outing is set for 11:30 a.m. Tuesday at Panda Buffet, 3507 Thomasville Road. This will be the last one until the fall. RSVP to Margaret Bowers at ambowersfl@gmail.com or 407-921-8671.
- Calling all gardeners! We'll have a weed- and vine-pulling day Saturday, June 18, beginning at 8 am. Please bring gloves, a hat and a water bottle. The focus will be on the azaleas and trees along North Meridian Road.
- Pastor Tom says "Thank you" for welcoming our musical and pastoral visitors when he was gone last Sunday. Guest Pastor Tom Miller told our pastor that he was warmly welcomed and that he looks forward to supplying again at St. Stephen.
- Want some free agave plants? Janet Barber has a dozen or so in quart-sized pots. Please note: She says their "mommy" is over 7 feet tall.



- Outreach Coordinator Sharon Simmons received a letter thanking her committee, and the whole congregation, for supporting Lutheran Social Services' KidSafe Program. In particular, Executive Director Dottie Hinkle thanked us for donating \$250 to the program, which provides new child-safety seats for families who can't afford them. She pointed out that U.S. motor-vehicle crashes take 13 children's lives every week.
- Have any questions for our Church Council members? They're listed on our website, <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/about-us>.
- 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

Billy Oates - 06/14
Tim Larson - 06/16
Martin Guttenplan - 06/19
Ruth Hartung - 06/23
Steve Kunst - 06/23
Sandy Davis - 06/28

UPCOMING DATES

This Sunday, June 12:

9 a.m. - Book study

10 a.m. - Worship, The Holy Trinity



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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