



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



During children’s time recently, Pastor Tom invited the kids to give each other the blessing that all of us receive at baptism. Here we see Graham Reece tracing a cross on the forehead of Jakob (Susan and Rudy Hehn’s visiting grandson) while saying: “You are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.” Looking on with Pastor are Ceilia and Violet Greeley. *(Photo by Susan Hehn)*

## A WEEK FROM SUNDAY...

By Pastor Tom

We have a congregational meeting coming up at 11:30 a.m. Aug. 11. Here’s the agenda.

- Review our financial report and update the congregation on the new software and accounting standards report.
- Elect Graham Reece onto the Church Council to hold the seat of Youth Representative.
- Present a Continuing Resolution to the congregation for vote and approval:



*The Congregation of St. Stephen, on the advice of the Church Council, recognizes the need to revise the Buildings & Grounds position on the Council: that is, for one Council representative to be assigned to Buildings ministries and a separate member assigned to Grounds ministries. Each elected member will have voice and vote on the Council as a continuing resolution and not conflicting with the constitution or its bylaws.*

- Elect a member of the congregation to the Council to fill the vacancy resulting from the above resolution.
- Continue the Open Forum discussions for ministries inside and outside of St. Stephen.



# WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

This Sunday, the members of the Stover family are scheduled to become official members. For quite a while now, they – particularly outgoing sons Armand and Bastian – have enlivened our liturgies. Next week, we’ll plan on publishing a photo of St. Stephen officially welcoming the boys and their parents, Emily and Andrew.

Speaking of new members: In June, we reported that Anita Sawh and Carol Santos had officially joined our congregation. Now we have their bios, so here’s



your chance to learn a few things you might not have known.

Anita, who also goes by Nita (and is on the right in this photo by Colin Hackley), is Rita Ford’s sister and has worshipped with us for years. She owns a family day care and, when she’s not

working, she stays active with gardening, walking, running, volleyball – and even cricket. At St. Stephen, you’ll often find Anita helping to clean or decorate. “The church is very welcoming,” she says. “The members are very warm, and Pastor is a wonderful person. I’m very happy to be with them as a family.”

Carol Santos, too, has a Rita Ford connection: Carol’s daughter is married to one of Rita’s sons. When Carol’s husband passed away, Rita suggested St. Stephen for his funeral – and that funeral is where Carol came to appreciate Pastor Tom. Ever since, she has helped behind the scenes at church in many and various ways. And she has been a regular worshipper.

Carol is a former nurse’s aide, and a former Catholic, whose hobbies include painting, sewing, knitting, crocheting, woodworking and decorating. “Thank you to everyone for being so welcoming,” she says. “I’m glad to be a part of the family and happy to help out.”

You’ll find contact information for each of them in our online church directory, or you can ask Lori in the church office.

# IT’LL BE A THURSDAY NIGHT TO REMEMBER

A special concert is coming up next week, and our own Tom Buchanan is taking part. It’s the annual summer concert of the Thursday Night Music Club, of which trumpeter Tom is a member. This year’s concert happens at 7:30 p.m. next Thursday, Aug. 8, at Ruby Diamond Concert Hall.

You can buy tickets at the group’s website: <https://thursdaynightmusic.club>. They cost \$15, with a small purchasing fee, plus tax. Take it from those of us who’ve attended in years past: You’ll love it.





THURSDAY NIGHT  
MUSIC CLUB



\$15

August 8, 7:30pm  
Ruby Diamond  
Concert Hall



# A BUNCH OF BEAUTIFUL BACKPACKS

By Andrea Notley, organizer of our annual back-to-school backpack drive

I thank everyone who adopted a child and picked out (or donated money for) school clothes for financially struggling families in our town. St. Stephen



amazes me more every year! After taking care of the needs of all the kids on this year’s list, we actually had money remaining. That’s money we can roll over to next year. And next year I’ll “adopt” more children for us to assist with back-packs stuffed with

clothes. My heart is so happy. Thank you so much!

## ‘WATCH WHAT WILL HAPPEN’: AN EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM’S SERMON

... Jesus ... looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him and saw the way they needed food.... I’d have asked Jesus, “Why not turn the rocks into bread and feed them?” The tempter asked a question like that, too, but Jesus asked a different question when he turned to Philip and asked, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” Jesus asked a “where” question and Philip answered the way we so often answer Jesus – with a “we don’t have enough” response.

So Jesus, even though he’s tired and in need of rest and prayer, takes the time to teach the disciples something that we also need to learn. That is, when situations we hadn’t expected present themselves, the first person we turn to is Jesus! This physical challenge, feeding the large crowd, could not have been solved without having a spiritual implication.

And the only way I feel comfortable putting that into words ... is that it was magic. The Jesus in you (and me) presents itself to the hungry, the lost, the grieving and the displaced. The Jesus in you presents itself to people who are spiritually hungry, too. Jesus could have turned the rocks into bread and fish, but instead chose to work his magic through people. And in this case, through a small child ... whose mother, earlier in the day, made him pack a lunch.

... Our church, community, state, and nation must always be reminded that Jesus, through people, can make an abundance out of small things. Magically, the least become the greatest. And when the Philips around us (or even when I am the Philip!) say, “That’s too big for us,” we need the Andrews (or Andreas) to say, “Look, there’s a child here with five loaves and two fish.” And then look to Jesus and say, “But what are they among so many people?” If – no, when – we present them to Jesus ... then watch what will happen. Out of the little we offer, Jesus creates an abundance to share. I can’t explain how ... it’s just magic. We sit in wonder of it all, but not for long – because this Jesus draws us deeper into God’s mission of feeding and providing for those who are hungry, both physically and spiritually.

What miracle does God have in store for this small congregation? We are watching for it. Praying for it and presenting what we have to the Lord....

## BEFORE YOU GO...

- It’s not too late to contribute to the Noisy Offering for July. As you’ll recall, those proceeds are going to St. Stephen’s teachers – to help them get their classrooms ready for school to resume.
- 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

**Astrid van der Mark - 08/02**

**Doug Mann - 08/06**

**Sharon Simmons - 08/09**

**Caroline Collins - 08/14**

**Marilyn Larson - 08/22**

**Greta Scavone - 08/23**

**Jerry Harrison - 08/24**

**Andrea Notley - 08/26**

**Susan Warren - 08/26**

**Melissa Barton - 08/27**

## 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 Saturday:

**10 a.m.** - Sew for Hope meets in FH

### This Sunday:

**9 a.m.** - Book study

**10 a.m.** - Worship, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

**4 p.m.** - Congolese Christian worship in FH



### Monday, August 5:

**5 p.m.** - TIMA meets in FH

**7 p.m.** - TIMA meets in FH

### Wednesday, August 7:

**5 p.m.** - TIMA meets in FH



If you have news or photos to share,  
please send them to Lori at  
[sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com](mailto:sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com).

Don't forget our Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ststephentallahassee>.

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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor