



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



### WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?

*Here's a jewel of a photo we ran across in the photo archives. Colin Hackley took this picture in 2010, when the Rev. Marda Messick was our pastor. The earnest-looking youngsters studying our anniversary quilt here are Graham Hackley and Isabel Barton, who both now are only days away from heading off to college – one in Missouri, one in Pennsylvania. God bless them both. (There's more news about Isabel below.)*

## GODSPEED TO OUR FAITHFUL CANTOR

We knew this day would come. Isabel Barton, our COVID cantor, freshly graduated from Leon High, is heading off to Duquesne University. Lifelong member Isabel has contributed to the life of St. Stephen in many ways, but her No. 1 claim to fame is that during the pandemic her voice turned our livestreamed liturgy into something special. One worshipper who regularly tunes in – and isn't even a St. Stephen member – recently said that she doesn't sing along during the service ... because she doesn't want to do anything to prevent her from hearing Isabel's voice.



This Sunday is Isabel's final liturgy as our official cantor. In earlier times, that would have called for a full house of worshippers, a standing ovation, a special cake and teary-eyed speeches in the fellowship hall. Thanks to COVID, our farewell to Isabel will be more subdued – but no less heartfelt. If your mask is ready and your health circumstances will allow, maybe you can join us. Pastor Tom will have words of thanksgiving for her. In addition to her usual musical duties, Isabel will be performing in a duet (with Jake Hartung). Plus we'll serenade her with a special song.

Our worship coordinators are busy recruiting future cantors. The words "tough act to follow" spring to mind, don't they? We thank God for these new cantors as we continue to offer livestreamed services to God's people in Tallahassee and beyond. Most of all this week, though, we thank God for Isabel's gracious sharing of her gifts. Godspeed!

## THE LIVESTREAM-PLUS OPTION

By Doug Mann

The pandemic has had an impact on all the members of our church. It appears like it will not be over soon. It has been over a year and a half since I have been to church at St. Stephen. I am one of those livestreaming members with health issues that require I take extra precautions. Therefore, I have not been able to attend church or see our church community. I miss that aspect of being a member.



I was thinking there could be a solution. What if the church offered a livestream-plus option? It's rather simple. On Sundays, those livestreaming members who want to could park their cars at St. Stephen, listen to the church service via Facebook Live, then receive communion when offered. Most importantly, at the end of the service they could get out of their cars and – following CDC protocols – see those members who were physically attending.

Prayers, for when we can all be present again.

*Editor's note: Pastor Tom loves Doug's idea. "We are looking at starting this the last Sunday in August [communion is still scheduled for the last Sunday of each month unless otherwise communicated] and continuing into the fall. If people wish, they can come to listen to the livestreamed service while staying in their car and then receive communion in their car or standing outside of it. There will also be an opportunity for people to meet and catch up outside after church if they want." (If you want to try out the parking-lot strategy this Sunday, you can stick around to wish Isabel well!)*

## THANK YOU, ST. STEPHEN

By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator



Once again, the members of St. Stephen have shown their generous hearts. Ten cases of bottled water were donated and joined with the contributions from New Mt. Zion AME Church for delivery to the Kearney Center. Brenda Christie, of New Mt. Zion AME, sent her thanks to all of us. We look forward to future collaborations.



## CLOSER TO HOME

By Colin Hackley



I got a call last week from friend of St. Stephen Frank Meyers, who learned a month ago that the Vietnamese government was no longer issuing visas to U.S. retirees living in their country – and that he had 30 days to pack up and leave. After quickly clearing a number of logistical hurdles, Frank left Vietnam and is now living in Lakeland – in a property made available by former St. Stephen interim Pastor Leroy Stackpole. Frank said that it would be fine to share his contact info and that he hopes to visit St. Stephen in the coming months.

**Frank Meyers**  
863-667-8596  
841 Lakehurst St., Lakeland, FL 33805





## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Doug Mann - 08/06  
Sharon Simmons - 08/09  
Caroline Collins - 08/14  
Val Sullivan - 08/17  
Marilyn Larson - 08/22  
Jerry Harrison - 08/24  
Andrea Notley - 08/26  
Susan Warren - 08/26  
Melissa Barton - 08/27



## UPCOMING DATES

### **This Sunday:**

10 a.m. - Worship, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost/Blessing of the backpacks

### **Wednesday, August 11:**

Noon - Bible study (online)



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

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