



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Here are excerpts from the minutes of the Aug. 11 congregational meeting.

By unanimous voice vote, Graham Reece was elected youth representative to the Church Council. Congratulations, Graham!



A continuing resolution passed unanimously, separating the Building and Grounds position into two positions. Building and Grounds coordinator Sandy Lamb-Daniels will now be building coordinator. Former Church Council member Rob Schiffer will be returning to the Council, this time as grounds coordinator. *(Photo by Colin Hackley. That's Graham on the left, Rob on the right. And, yes, the average age of our Council members just got much lower.)*

Treasurer Jen Dritt reviewed the most recent financial report. Jen, Office Manager Lori and Pastor Tom are working on the financial software conversion to Power Church. Questions were asked and discussion ensued. Rudy Hehn said he believed the financial folks were acting in an ethical manner but would like to see the financials back five years once they're all input into the new software. Karen Olson also praised the good work from Lori and had questions about various accounts and expressed concern that funds were missing. Jen and Pastor are confident the numbers are correct, though some "minor corrections" are still being worked out. Anyone with additional questions can contact Jen, Pastor or President Denise Bookwalter.

(This week, Pastor Tom elaborated: "I am hopeful that previous years' income and expenses will be clarified from 2018 to present, but it will take an undetermined amount of time to input those figures. I am most focused on getting the 2024 report accurate, scheduling accounting-procedure recommendations, and reconciling transactions and bank statements with an outside expert, as recommended by the synod. I am impressed with the clarity of our new reports, and we recognize that there are a few tweaks still needed to be done to be sure 2024 is input correctly.")

AND THE FORUMS, TOO...

Here are some notes from the Aug. 11 conversations around the Open Forum theme of "Journey to Mission."

I. Interacting with people outside of St. Stephen

- Encourage more participation in community activities related to social justice.
- Wear St. Stephen shirts while serving at Manna or in other community activities.
- Place stickers on collected items informing the public that they were donated by St. Stephen.
- Investigate and share resources about every-day ministries.



II. Interacting with people inside St. Stephen

- Intentionally connect with visitors.
- Encourage more participation in Bible study (lay-led or pastor-led).
- Continue potlucks and fun nights.
- Connect the gifts and passions of the worship community with ways to put them into action.

III. Compiling our own video testimonies

- Complete St. Stephen YouTube page.
- Have volunteers briefly answer a question or two on video about why they love St. Stephen and/or what keeps them coming back.
- Link videos to the St. Stephen website.
- Provide short clips from Sunday worship to YouTube page with links from our website.



A TRIBUTE TO MR. NATHAN

Jim Treanor recently made a donation toward one of our building needs – and added a dedication. We got his permission to make this public.

The reason I donated the money to help repair the water damage to the Sunday School was to help financially in general, but more personally to lift up Nathan Basford. When you are a young kid, God is a concept and the Bible is another book adults tell you that you need to read. Nathan brought that book to life. He was so expressive and fun, I know my kids loved being with him. And when you love your teacher, you listen and learn. My daughter Grace loved Jonah and the whale in particular.

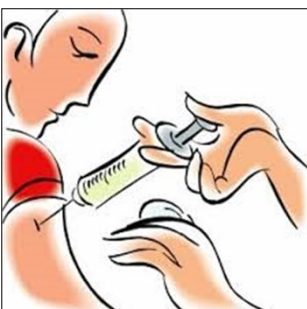
I'll never forget our camping trips every year to Cape San Blas. Mr. Nathan would drive the kids around in his convertible and then show them the coolest tent at the campsite with his twinkly lights and green tiki glasses (juice for the kiddos, stronger stuff for the adults). He was such a great influence on my family.

My kids and I now live in four different time zones. When I tell them I saw Mr. Nathan at church, it brings a smile to everyone's face!! *(Photo by Colin Hackley, from Easter 2012)*

FLU SEASON IS COMING

By Lawana Lamb-Daniels, care and hospitality coordinator

Members of St. Stephen, Publix Pharmacy has started a new program where



they can come to your place of business, school or church to provide flu shots. The CDC recommends that you get the flu shot in September. There is no cost to you, but proof of health insurance will be needed, along with filling out their forms. When filling out the form, there are other vaccines that you can request, and they can add them to your profile. Once the forms are filled out and returned to Publix, they will give us a date. I will have the necessary forms on Sunday, and I ask that you return them to me the following Sunday. If

this works out, Publix Pharmacy can do this every year for us.

JONAS' LAST YOUTH GATHERING

By Sharon Simmons, feature writer

What should 16,000 ELCA youth and chaperones do during a hot July week? Go to New Orleans for fellowship, fun, worship, learning and service. The triennial ELCA Youth Gathering, July 16-20, provided such an opportunity. Jonas Holdcraft and his parent chaperones represented St. Stephen in New Orleans.

Youth participants were divided into groups according to their synod. Each group spent half a day working in the community or learning important information on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. On Friday booths were opened for participants to learn about various human-service agencies.



Jonas reports that he particularly liked viewing and discussing the documentary “The Whole Gritty City.” The movie profiled New Orleans band directors who teach and organize student bands and prepare them to march in one of the Mardi Gras parades. It’s an inspirational tribute to teachers and the importance of music in our lives.

This was Jonas’ last year of being able to attend the Youth Gathering. He’ll be too old next year. It’s open to students in the summer before ninth grade through 12th grade. That’s right – Jonas will be graduating from high school in the spring and off to college next fall. Perhaps some recent confirmands might be interested in following in Jonas’ footsteps as a youth leader. Well done, Jonas! *(The next Youth Gathering will be in 2027 in Minneapolis.)*



THE ART PARK NEEDS YOU ... TODAY!

By Cassandra White

I’m coming to you with an opportunity for activism within our community! Today (Thursday, Aug. 22), there’s a Community Redevelopment Agency meeting at City Hall. One issue on the table is getting the city to buy part of Railroad Square, including the properties devastated by tornadoes earlier this year. A group of businesses and nonprofit organizations in and around the square support this measure because we have donors willing to help us build an Urban Art Park. This will be much easier (funding especially) if the city owns some of the property.

The ask for you is this: Attend the meeting, wear a black shirt (buttons will be given out), bring others, and stand up to acknowledge your support when asked! If you have a black St. Stephen shirt, all the better! You do not have to speak; there’s a big list of speakers already. Plan to arrive at 4:45 p.m. The address for City Hall is 301 Adams St. Hope to see you there!

REACHING OUT

By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator

Be sure to check the Outreach Bulletin Board in the fellowship hall for the thank-you notes you've received for the work you've done in our community.



Continuing Needs: The International Rescue Committee urgently needs laundry detergent, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, toothbrushes, shaving cream, disposable razors, deodorant, diapers (especially sizes 2-5), wipes and sanitary pads. You may drop them off in the tub in the fellowship hall.

Common Ground Needs: The Common Ground community pantry needs accessories such as scarves, shoes, handbags, totes, belts and jewelry along with new/unused makeup. Yes, there's a tub for those items in the fellowship hall.

Manna on Meridian: Manna needs volunteers. If you want to sign up, see Cassandra White or Caroline Collins.



Upcoming Outreach Initiatives: Saturday, Sept. 7, is the annual Florida-Bahamas Synod "God's Work, Our Hands" workday. The Tallahassee workday will take place at the Seminole Manor Neighborhood Pantry beginning at 8 a.m. We'll be repairing rotten wood around the back door and doing lots of other fun and necessary stuff. See Pastor Tom to sign up.

FIGHT FOR THE APALACHICOLA

Passed along by Karen Olson

A South Florida oil company is asking the state Department of Environmental Protection to approve "wildcat" drilling beside flowing waters in the Apalachicola River Basin. This type of oil drilling risks toxic pollution in our waterways and sucks up thousands of gallons of fresh water every day. It threatens to undermine tax-funded oyster restoration programs in Apalachicola.

DEP is now accepting written comments. They have previously denied drilling permits with strong public opposition.



Learn more at <https://www.downriverproject.org/oil> .

BEFORE YOU GO...

- We're having a Noisy Offering this Sunday to benefit Manna on Meridian. If you're able, please bring an offering, noisy or otherwise.



- Pastor Tom says: "Pastor Derek Hoven, the new assistant to the bishop who worshipped with us recently, was impressed with our worship service, specifically naming our exceptional music, prayers and overall joyful attitude. He loved that we were involved in Open Forum discussions because that's 'where relationships are strengthened and congregations are better prepared to navigate change.' He offered me links to a video series put out by the Milwaukee Synod that will accompany us in further listening to God in a changing world." (Photo by Colin Hackley)



- 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



Marilyn Larson - 08/22
Greta Scavone - 08/23
Jerry Harrison - 08/24
Andrea Notley - 08/26
Susan Warren - 08/26
Melissa Barton - 08/27
Annette Claussen - 09/06
Martha Marky - 09/08
Greta Langley - 09/09
Bryon Ehlmann - 09/11
Aaron Halvorson - 09/14
Ron Hartung - 09/14
Ceilia Greeley - 09/23
Violet Greeley - 09/23
Kirsten Matthis - 09/23
Sue Williams - 09/28
Jeanette Sickel - 09/30

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:

1:30 p.m. - Al-Anon District meet in FH

This Sunday:

9 a.m. - Book study
10 a.m. - Worship, Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
1:30 p.m. - On Purpose Women meet in FH
4 p.m. - Congolese Christian worship in FH



Monday, August 26:

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

Wednesday, August 28:

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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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor