

August 24, 2023



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



*Can you find Stephanie Leitch in this photo? She's on the far left, pictured outside a famed library in Germany, where she spent time this summer leading these doctoral students from around the world in an exploration of "Early Modern Visual Data: Organizing Knowledge in Printed Books." You'll find more details from Stephanie inside today's newsletter.*

## CATCHING UP ON THE NEWS

By Pastor Tom

- **NOISY OFFERING THIS SUNDAY:** The proceeds from our Noisy Offering will go to the International Rescue Committee, to help pay for school uniforms for children in newly arrived refugee families. In the next two months, the IRC will be placing new families into apartments in the district of Nims Middle School, which has a strict uniform policy. It's expected about 20 kids will need uniforms. So we can make a difference.
- **PREPARING FOR THE WORST:** Also this Sunday, after the liturgy, a captain from the Leon County Sheriff's Office will present ways to discourage, prevent and/or prepare for (God forbid) an active shooter. Since you'll be postponing lunch for this important discussion, food will be prepared by the Care and Hospitality Committee. Parents, please note: We've been advised that children younger than 12 should not attend.
- **GIFT POLICY:** At its meeting last Sunday, the Church Council approved a gift policy recommended by the Synod and the ELCA Foundation. Copies of the policy are available.
- **FOLLOW-UP FORUM:** The Council also discussed what we learned from the recent Open Forum and began planning for the next one, scheduled for Oct. 15. Keep an eye out for more details as we get closer to that date.



## NOTE FROM A GRANDMOTHER

By Ridy Hofer



On July 19, my granddaughter Poppy Marie Hofer Thompson was born in Victoria on Vancouver Island, Canada. She is so beautiful she takes my breath away. Her big 5½-year-old brother is so proud to have a little sister of his own.

After an emergency C-section, all went well. We did alert the doctors to an issue her dad had when he was born, and unfortunately Poppy seems to have inherited it. It is an endocrine problem that he completely grew out of at age 12 months. Right now we are taking two steps forward and one step back. Not completely out of the woods, but optimistic. As you can imagine, her parents Marlise and Kevin are stressed. Again, though, keeping a positive outlook that all will end up A-OK.

## EXPLORING IMAGES

By Stephanie Leitch

This summer, I led the 45th international summer course at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, on the topic of “Early Modern Visual Data: Organizing Knowledge in Printed Books.” A group of 15 doctoral students from Europe, Asia and the Americas joined me to inspect the kindred function of images across diverse and seemingly disparate texts.

In the 16th century, woodcuts accompanied memory treatises, devotional texts, texts about the cosmos and the natural world, as well as manuals about the care of horses and textbooks for artists. Along with a group of seven tutors, we asked to what extent images provided the mortar between different modes of empirical investigation, and how images helped to sift, filter and organize information.

*The Herzog Library made a podcast of the summer course that Stephanie led. Here's a link:*

<https://www.hab.de/early-modern-visual-data/> . You'll find a discussion of the book project between minutes 4:45 and 7:00.



## BEYOND ‘IT’S A MYSTERY’: EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM’S SERMON

... We throw up our hands [sometimes] and say, “Who knows?!? It’s one of those mysteries.” And while that might be true, it doesn’t mean that it’s a waste of our time doing the difficult work together in conversation and discernment about mysterious things.

This has been exactly what Paul has been doing in his letter to the Romans. In Chapters 9-11, he’s been writing about God’s character in hopes to guide the reader to understand something about God. One of his points, “Disobedience leads to God’s mercy,” is an important piece to his argument, but then he had to explain that this truth didn’t mean people should go about doing whatever they wanted. His dilemma was that the Christians in Rome were beginning to believe that since the people of the Jewish faith didn’t believe Jesus to be the Messiah, then they were forfeiting their place as God’s people. Paul helped them see that [just as] the Gentiles were once outsiders and God’s mercy brought them in, that same mercy from God keeps the Jewish people connected to God’s covenant.

So, together, Paul and the Christ believers in Rome ... did some hard theological thinking. The more ... pieces of the puzzle he put together for his readers, the more he encountered pieces that were left to explain. Still, it wasn't all done for nothing. Paul could have written, "Hey, folks, it's all a mystery!" But he didn't do that. He knew that the deep theological thinking needed to be done and was worthwhile – because Romans is one of the best ways to come to glimpse God's immense ability to pour out grace and mercy to all people. Even the disobedient ones, which is really every single one of us....

## MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- A message from Katharine: "I hereby decree that the hymn request season is officially over. Also, choir rehearsals begin Wednesday, Sept. 6, at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall, and Sunday choir rehearsals begin Sunday, Sept. 10, at 9:30 a.m., also in the fellowship hall."
- This is the last Sunday we'll be collecting school supplies to be given to the IRC, for students who need them.



- Lesson relearned at one St. Stephen household this week: Don't neglect your dryer vent! You can wind up with a giant ball of lint – and even a bucketload of water.

- Some of us have been having fun taking meals to Ann and Pastor Emeritus Emory Hingst. Thanks to Care & Hospitality Coordinator Margaret Bowers, we have an easy way to do it. Here's the link: [Meals For Emory & Ann Hingst via Take Them A Meal](#). It tells you everything you need to know, including their food preferences.
- 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 flower chart in the narthex. The cost is \$35, which you can place in the offering plate.



## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Jerry Harrison - 08/24  
Andrea Notley - 08/26  
Susan Warren - 08/26  
Melissa Barton - 08/27  
Annette Claussen - 09/06  
Martha Marky - 09/08  
Sarah Rumph - 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  
Laura Kimel - 09/28  
Sue Williams - 09/28  
Don Dowd - 09/30  
Melody Duke - 09/30  
Jeanette Sickel - 09/30





## IN THE WEEK AHEAD

### Today:

**12 p.m.** - Al Anon meets in 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, Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost with  
Noisy Offering

**11:30 a.m.** - Safety training in FH

**4 p.m.** - Congolese Church Group meets in FH



### Monday, Aug. 28:

**5 p.m.** - TIMA (Tallahassee Martial Arts) meets in FH

### Wednesday, Aug. 30:

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



If you have news or photos to share,  
please send them to Lori at  
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Don't forget our Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ststephentallahassee>.

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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

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