

October 12, 2023



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



## 'I AM VERY TOUCHED': RELIVING PASTOR APPRECIATION DAY

**"What a joyful surprise to hear the children singing appreciation, while holding the butterfly artwork, and seeing baskets of gifts come down the aisle! Colleen, Jonas and I were overwhelmed by the kindness. There were baked breads, assorted chocolates and other treats. There were restaurant, Publix, Dollar Tree, massage/stretching and Lowe's gift cards and more than one bottle of wine! I am very touched by the kind words of appreciation many of you wrote. I'll treasure those cards always!" (Pastor Tom)**



**"What a wonderful and unexpected surprise to be feted by you on Sunday! Actually, I knew Emory would be recognized, but I had no idea there would be a basket for me, too. Both baskets were full of yummy and useful goodies. We are enjoying them every day. Thank you very much for remembering us, and for your kind and expansive generosity." (Ann and Pastor Emeritus Emory Hingst)**  
*(Hugging-the-pastor photo by Colin Hackley; cake photo by Sharon Simmons. Many thanks to the team who pulled this sneaky celebration together.)*

## PRAYER FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

*By Pastor Tom*



God of mercy and compassion,

We pray for an end to the violence between Palestine and Israel.

Send your Spirit to intercede on behalf of the innocents who suffer.

God of strength, give those who fight the will to lay down arms and leaders the will to open dialogue that will end the terrorism and human-rights violations. War begets war.

We grieve with families who have had to bear the threat of kidnapping, torture and murder and weep for people killed by missiles upon civilian buildings.

Let people return home safely.

God bring your peace.

In the name of Our Lord,  
**AMEN**

## STICK AROUND THIS SUNDAY

At Sunday's follow-up to our congregational Open Forum, we'll be splitting into two groups. One will ponder: "How can we attract new members – particularly youngish members – and encourage them to stay?" The other will discuss: "How can we build relations with the wider community – and build diversity?" Between now and Sunday morning, when we meet in the fellowship hall after the service, be thinking of which question you'd like to tackle. (And, yes, there will be snacks.)



## YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

(Through Oct. 1)

Total Giving: \$231,054

Total Expenses: \$213,078

+/- YTD: +\$17,976



Please note: St. Stephen has borrowed from designated fund accounts and is working with congregational giving to pay back those accounts before the end of the year. (Update provided by our financial team)



## LUNCHTIME FOR THE OWLS

Now that fall has arrived, our Older Wiser Lutherans are dining together once a month. Shown here from Tuesday's feast are (from left) Audrey Post, Sharon Simmons, Jan Harrison, Barbara Sullivan, Sandy Ness, Vicki Guttenplan, Martin Guttenplan, Pastor Tom, Billie Reardon, Sharon Gordon, Pastor Emeritus Emory Hingst and Ann Hingst. (Photo by OWL-in-chief Margaret Bowers)

## 'BROKEN-OPEN HEARTS': EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM'S SERMON

[Jesus] wants not to just break the hearts of people, but to break OPEN the hearts of people – because broken-open hearts see and hear things with fresh perspectives, and broken-open hearts let the "T" in truth come inside. This is the way our hearts will produce the good fruit the world desperately needs.

## MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- Excerpt from Pastor's words of welcome Sunday: "Most times we don't know one another's pain ... at least not fully. But God does. God knows you fully ... created you perfectly in God's image."
- I grabbed the watering can from the back porch and ducked inside to fill it. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw movement at the end of the spout. Turns out this can was the temporary home of a medium-sized anole. Roused by the rising tide, the little lizard popped his head out to investigate. He hopped down and took off. After a brief chase down the hallway, I Tupperware-trapped him and returned him to his wild kingdom. Imagine the tales he told his pals that night.





- **Wonderful line from our liturgy: “In Christ, you are already and always forgiven.”**
- **Excerpt from last Sunday’s prayers: “Guide national, state and local leaders to faithfully govern with wisdom, integrity and compassion. Remind them that working together toward compromise is NOT a sin, but the hallmark of our system of government by and for the people.”**
- **Sign up to take a meal to the delightful Ann and Emory Hingst. This link, [Meals For Emory & Ann Hingst via Take Them A Meal](#), tells you everything you need to know, including their food preferences.**



- **The cost of altar flowers has risen to \$40, up from \$35. If you have an anniversary, birthday, special memory or special St. Stephen person or program you’d like to honor, celebrate by sponsoring the flowers for our service. Sign up on the flower chart in the narthex. Include the \$40 with your regular offering. Bonus: You get to take the flowers home!**

## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS



Fred Allen - 10/19  
Isabel Barton - 10/19  
Val Kibler - 10/20  
Dave Suhrweir - 10/21  
Jim Sampson - 10/22  
Audrey Post - 10/24  
Barbara Ehlmann - 10/25  
Graham Reece - 10/26  
Bern Mustian - 10/30  
Jen Reece - 11/02  
Paul van der Mark - 11/06  
Hector Quinones - 11/7  
Barbara Sullivan - 11/07

## IN THE WEEK AHEAD

### 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  
**6 p.m.** - Game night group meets in FH (outside group)

### This Sunday:

**9 a.m.** - Book study  
**9:30 a.m.** - Choir practice  
**10 a.m.** - Worship, Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost  
**11:30 a.m.** - Open Forum breakout session in FH  
**4 p.m.** - Congolese Church Group meets in FH



### Monday, Oct. 9:

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

### Tuesday, Oct. 17:

**6 p.m.** - Tallahassee Swing Band at American Legion

### Wednesday, Oct. 11:

**5 p.m.** - TIMA meets in FH  
**7 p.m.** - Choir practice



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