



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

### HELP CHOOSE OUR NEW SIGN

By Pastor Tom

As you know, our sign along Meridian Road is falling apart and needs to be replaced. The Church Council has been working on replacing it – and now wants the congregation’s help in choosing one of the four designs we have.

From this Sunday through Dec. 11, they’ll be available for viewing and voting in the fellowship hall. They range in price from \$8,589 to \$9,389. The Council is asking you to pick out your two favorites – and please keep the cost in mind. So far, we’ve raised \$1,225 toward a new sign.

If you can’t visit the fellowship hall in person, please cast your votes anyway after studying the four designs printed here. Send your choices to Office Manager Lori. Her contact information is at the bottom of this newsletter.

**A**  
\$8,598



**B**  
\$8,989



**C**  
\$9,289



**D**  
\$9,389



## HERE'S A GIFT IDEA: MANNA

In case you're new to our congregation: Manna on Meridian is a joint ministry supported by Faith Presbyterian, Grace Lutheran, Saint Paul's United Methodist, Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee and St. Stephen. In 2020, Manna provided nonperishable groceries, bread and fresh produce to 2,000 households. The next year, that number grew to 2,400. So far this year, it has served 2,860 households, averaging 260 per month. Your donations help ensure that Manna can continue to serve those in need without cutting back on how many households it helps. You know, a donation to Manna can make a great gift. Visit <https://bit.ly/MannaonMeridian> and consider the following information from the Manna experts:



- A \$20 recurring monthly donation covers the cost of a bag of nonperishable groceries for a single household.
- A \$35 recurring monthly donation covers the cost of a bag of nonperishable groceries, *plus bread and fresh produce*, for a single household.
- To donate in someone else's name, please include their name and address in the note section of the checkout process so Manna can send them a letter.

## GIVING TREE

Many thanks to everyone who has adopted one of our Giving Tree families and has shopped (or soon will shop) for their Christmas requests. Time is flying! If you want to take part but haven't signed up yet, Andrea Notley might still have a family for you. But don't delay! The deadline to bring in your gift-wrapped packages (each one marked with your adopted family's wish-list number) is Dec. 11. Andrea's OK with having her contact info printed here: [notley90@comcast.net](mailto:notley90@comcast.net) or 850-443-5293.



## IF NOT YOU, WHO?

By Karen E. Olson (Excerpt from the Jan. 28, 1990, edition of the Tallahassee Democrat)

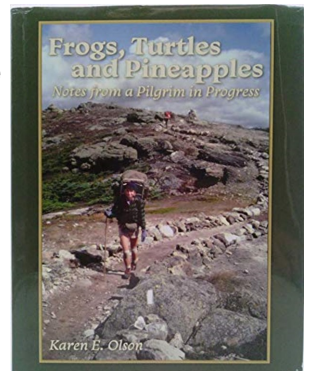
... Most of the volunteers [at the Food Bank of Tallahassee] are well acquainted with their clients' struggles to survive. The news isn't always bad – one welfare mother of five, for example, is about to get a four-year business degree.

“She is the happiest person I've ever seen,” said volunteer Ethus Snider, on loan to Killearn [United Methodist] from Trinity United Methodist Church. “She is bubbling over.”

Too often, however, the conversations revolve around lost jobs, unpaid taxes and incurable illness. The consolation is a hug, a prayer and a promise to return.

In seeking the strength to come back, [volunteer Wayne] Swinney said he focuses on the gratitude he feels for the ease of his own life: “It can get to you. It's like, some people say, ‘I couldn't do it.’ But my goodness, if you don't do it, who will?”

You'll find this and more of Karen's stories in the book “Frogs, Turtles and Pineapples: Notes From a Pilgrim in Progress,” available at church or from Karen.



# THE CATERPILLAR IN OUR LEMON TREE

By Ron Hartung

Yellow fruit is OK on a lemon tree, but not yellow leaves. So when we spotted them on our tree a while back, we knew that a military response was called for. The only question was how much firepower.



What an education, then, when we checked with our landscape-designer son. “Drop your weapons,” Jake suggested. “The yellow leaves might be a result of the recent cooler weather. Have you seen any actual insects on the leaves?” I went into the back yard to check. No flying bugs, but I did see an ugly creature that resembled bird poop.

Aha. Jake forwarded an article about the orange dog caterpillar, “the larva of the Giant Swallowtail butterfly.” Yes, that homely little blob of a caterpillar soon will be an airborne beauty of a butterfly. What a teachable moment. And what a great excuse to say “poop” in a church newsletter.

## EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM’S SERMON

“[Christ the King Sunday] is celebrated not because Jesus called Himself king. It was created about 100 years ago by Pope Pius in response to the growing secularism and ultra-nationalism in Europe. Pope Pius instituted [it] as a form of protest to address the ways people were making their leaders into false gods and their nations into idols of worship. Individuals rising to power for themselves and people putting them there to hurt people different from them. Sound familiar?”

## HAIKU CORNER

By Lex Lutheran

### BEST LINE FROM A CAMPAIGN AD

Voter says: “I will pray for Herschel Walker, but I won’t vote for him.”



### THE HAIKU WATCHDOG

Gladys is out there,  
looking over my shoulder,  
counting each sylla- ...  
[Darn!]



### SO SOON?

Advent candles lit.  
Pages torn from catalogs.  
Christmas is coming.

5 7 5

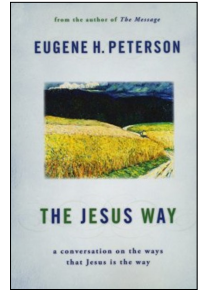
## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



We'll be decorating the chancel area with poinsettias for Christmas. Would you like to dedicate one (or more)? The cost is \$10, and the dedication list will be in the Dec. 18 and Dec. 25 bulletins. Just fill out the form in the bulletin and place it with your payment in the offering plate, or email Lori with the information. The deadline is Dec. 11.

## PLACES YOU MIGHT WANT TO BE

- This and subsequent Sundays: "The Jesus Way," book discussion at 9 a.m. in Matthew Room, led by Pastor Tom.
- Dec. 10: Annual holiday card signing for those on Death Row, noon to 4 p.m., northeastern part of Cascades Park (across Suwannee Street from DOT building). For some, this is the only piece of mail they get all year. Sponsored by Tallahassee Citizens Against the Death Penalty. Join fellow St. Stephen members there.
- Dec. 18: During the liturgy, Rita Ford and Colleen Holdcraft will lead the St. Stephen children in a Hallelujah Dance. Also during that liturgy, Jonas Holdcraft will play the violin. One more thing: We'll have a baptism! The liturgy begins at 10 a.m.
- Dec. 24: Worship on Christmas Eve, beginning at 6 p.m. (What a change from last year – when we worshipped at 4 p.m. in the fellowship hall. So good to be back in our sanctuary.)



## DECORATING THE SANCTUARY

Members and friends of the Altar Guild will gather at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 17, and the rest of us are invited to join them to dress up the sanctuary for Christmas. See you there.

## MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- Haven't filled out your "estimate of giving" card yet? You have until the end of the year. The Church Council greatly appreciates your estimate of what financial gifts you'll be able to give toward St. Stephen's ministries in the year to come. You may pick up a form in the narthex or, easiest of all, just email Lori your pledge.
- 2023 Estimate of Giving**  
In support of God's mission for St. Stephen Lutheran Church:  
To be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

I/we pledge to intentionally give financially to the ministry of St. Stephen Lutheran Church:  
(Please select one option)  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year

I/we understand that this plan can be changed by notifying the financial secretary.
- As Pastor Tom reminded us recently from the pulpit: It's not too late to get a flu shot. And, of course, we owe it to ourselves and each other to keep up-to-date on our COVID boosters.
  - 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 2022 Flower Chart in the narthex. The cost is \$35, which you can place in the offering plate.
  - Have any questions for our Church Council members? They're listed on our website, <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/about-us>.
  - Have anything to add to a future newsletter? Email Lori at [sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com](mailto:sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com) or call 850-385-2728.



## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS



Nancy Staff - 12/01  
Bob Eshleman - 12/02  
Brian Oliveri - 12/03  
Annelise Leysieffer - 12/04  
Annette Claussen - 12/08  
Janet Barber - 12/09  
Maria (Ridy) Hofer - 12/11  
Laura Sullivan - 12/14  
Rita Ford - 12/18  
Wesley Holdcraft - 12/18  
Pastor Tom - 12/29  
Kate Stuart - 12/29  
Mike Martinez - 12/30

## UPCOMING DATES

### This Sunday, Dec. 4:

9 a.m. - Book study: "The Jesus Way" by Eugene Peterson

9:30 a.m. - Choir practice

10 a.m. - Worship, Second Sunday of Advent

11:30 a.m. - Council meeting

### Wednesday, Dec. 7:

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>.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church, ELCA  
2198 N. Meridian Road | Tallahassee, FL 32303  
The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

*Edited by Lex Lutheran. Designed by Lori Zengel, office manager, [sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com](mailto:sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com).  
Website: <http://www.ststephenlutherantally.com/>*

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