



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

'A PLEASURE TO SERVE YOU'

By Pastor Tom

What a blessed surprise to be remembered on Pastor Appreciation Day! I was so overwhelmed with gifts and cards that I am still opening and discovering them. I am thankful for each of you who gave such thoughtful, delicious and generous gifts. What was particularly special was the way you remembered Colleen and Ann. We pastors are thankful for our spouses! I am also thankful for being called to this great congregation. It's a pleasure to serve you as pastor. *(Photo by Colin Hackley)*



WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Along with baskets of goodies donated by the congregation, Pastor Appreciation Sunday featured tributes written by Rita Ford and sung, chanted or spoken by some of the kids (with help from Rita and occasionally the congregation). They sang the first song to Pastor Tom, to the tune of the spiritual "Amen."

Amen. Amen. Amen, Amen, Amen.

See our pastor (Amen)

Singing at the pulpit (Amen)

Keeping us alert to hear God's word

Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen

Picking up the cake crumbs (Amen)

In the fellowship hall (Amen)

May God bless him always, and his family

Amen. Amen. Amen, Amen, Amen. (twice)

Then the kids, one at a time, spoke these words to Pastor:



You are not just a pastor, you are a life-changer. Heartfelt thanks for all you do.

You turn the Word into a symphony for the soul. Thank you for your beautiful messages.

Your guidance shines brighter than a lighthouse. Thank you for always leading the way.

Finally, the Greeley girls and their friend chanted this message for Colleen:

You are not just a pastor's wife.

You have been specifically called by God in this role.

It isn't easy, but this is why we love you so.

This is why we pray for you.

This is why we can do what we do.

Because we do it alongside you.

(Photo by Colin Hackley)

SUCH THOUGHTFULNESS

Dear Friends,

It never occurred to me that I would be recognized on Pastor Appreciation Sunday, and I was a little embarrassed that I was! I am no longer a pastor's wife, and even when I was, I deserved no special recognition.

When Emory asked me to marry him, before I said “Yes,” I asked him what would be expected of me. I had the model of my mother’s generation in my head, and I knew I couldn’t be that. Emory said the only thing he expected was that I show up for church — and I knew I could do that. His response took the pressure off, and I became just another member. The congregation never expected anything from me, and cheerfully tolerated my doubting and questioning. (Just ask Ron, Kirsten or Sue Canning about our lively Sunday School classes!)



I am overcome by your generosity and the thought and care that went into filling my basket. Thanks to Margaret, Andrea, Nathan and all the unnamed people who contributed to the basket. I appreciate your thoughtfulness very much!

With love,
Ann

THE SOCK AISLE

There are some aisles that you usually avoid in the grocery store. For me, there’s the pet-food aisle, since we’re momentarily dogless. There’s the greeting-card aisle, since we buy our cards elsewhere. And there’s the sock aisle, since some of us never got the hang of buying footwear in a food store.



But the sock aisle is where we need to go! Either there or some other sock source of our choosing. As Outreach Coordinator Sharon Simmons has been faithfully reminding us – and as your editor failed to remind you last week – our Sock It for the Homeless drive is underway. We’re collecting new socks for men and women who are homeless clients at the Kearney Center. This is one of three initiatives that St. Stephen participates in with New Mt. Zion AME Church. So buy some socks pronto, please, then toss them into the convenient sock tub in the fellowship hall by Oct. 27.

WHAT THE TEAL PUMPKIN PROJECT IS ALL ABOUT

By Terri Schmitt

Recently my son, Isaac (22 years old), plaintively recalled a Halloween 12 years ago when he had almost no treats after I pulled out everything that could have caused a food-allergy reaction. It still stings him the ways he has been separated and “othered” because of his food allergies.

How can you help children with food allergies feel “normal” and included? You can offer non-food treats and sign up your household on the Teal Pumpkin Project map. Be sure to either paint a pumpkin teal or put up a Teal Pumpkin Project sign. (Side note: Isaac still insists that there must be “safe candy” for kids with food allergies. He was saddened to discover earlier this week that Nerds are no longer stamped peanut-free and tree-nut-free. I’m still looking for safe candy for our house.) Thank you for considering this!



Go to FARE's website [foodallergy.org](https://www.foodallergy.org) and click on “Teal Pumpkin Project” to get ideas for what to hand out, find printable signs, learn more about food allergies, sign up to be a safe trick-or-treat house and provide information for families with food allergies.



CATCHING UP WITH THE SHEPHERDS

Recently we asked former member/former “Director of Education & Youth Ministries” Paul Shepherd to write a few paragraphs for our upcoming special RIC-anniversary issue of the newsletter. Along the way, we asked Paul to update us on his family’s exploits and to send a recent group photo. From left: Paul, Lois, Erika & Charlie, Max & Shikha, Summer & Ben. Added shortly after this photo was taken — grandbaby Remy. Those of us who still think of Charlie as an 8-year-old can’t get over how much he now looks like his dad. Paul wrote:

I’ve been pursuing dreams a bit – 12 years as a ski patroller and instructor at Wintergreen, a stint as a professor with Semester at Sea (with Lois, and Charlie along for the ride), tennis coach – and the last seven years as something I’ve always wondered about – teaching high school – which turns out, I love. Probably haven’t been exactly following those state standards, but we’ve all learned something. Retired now and renovating a Victorian in Nova Scotia. Lois has a couple more years in her professor gig at University of Virginia, continues with her various art projects, and has a book coming out on what it means to be a welcoming person. Max is engaged and a newbie professor of biomedical engineering at Northeastern. Summer and Ben and Remy grand-baby!) are in Colorado. They are avid triathletes (not the baby, at least not yet), she works as a nurse, and makes lots of pottery. Charlie is a construction manager and is currently deployed with the National Guard helping clean up Western North Carolina. He’s married too. I am writing again – three books that need publishers – and we all very much miss our Tallahassee friends. We have spare rooms for any who wish to visit in Charlottesville, or in Nova Scotia. Love, Paul

EXCERPT FROM PASTOR TOM’S SERMON

Based on Mark 10:17-31, in which Jesus tells the rich man to sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor.

... Be they money, possessions, comfort, fame ... every human being bows down to something. And this word of God, the one that is active and living, speaks to our hearts today because it convicts every single one of us. Jesus’ conversation with the rich man puts our heart in the crosshairs of the Holy Spirit....

It is one of those Bible lessons that I’d like to manage or mitigate. You know what I mean! Put a little spin on it.... [Such as saying] this command only applies to the ultra-rich.... [But] It is about us. No matter how many zeroes we have in the bank account.

We can allow the conviction to enter into our hearts and we can let the text do the hard work that Jesus meant it to do. Even though it seems extreme, Jesus was promoting a great vision here. He still promotes the vision through the living active word. His point was not just about divesting ourselves of possessions, lightening our load, but giving things away to the poor. If the tide comes in, then all boats will rise....

We are told the man went away shocked and grieving, but we don’t know what happened next or later with him. We aren’t told if the encounter with Jesus set in motion an ability to come to know the freedom Jesus offered. I like to think that if he could be positively affected by the life-changing, active and living Word of God, then I can be, too....

BEFORE YOU GO...

- Have you noticed the new soprano in the choir? That's Olivia James. Let her know how much you appreciate the gift of her voice.
- 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



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 - 11/07
Barbara Sullivan - 11/07
Daniel Martinez - 11/07
Mark Warren - 11/13
Elliot Reece - 11/14
Cheryl Stuart - 11/14

COMING UP

Today:

8 a.m. - FSU Film School filming in sanctuary

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:

10 a.m. - Sew for Hope meets in FH

This Sunday:

9 a.m. - Book study

10 a.m. - Worship, Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

4 p.m. - Congolese Christian worship in FH

Monday, October 21:

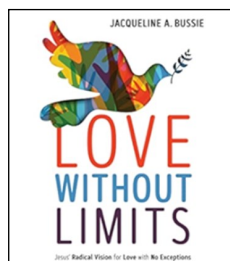
5 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH

7 p.m. - TIMA meets in FH

Wednesday, October 23:

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.

Don't forget our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ststephentallahassee>.

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The Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor