



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



Our new members, from left to right, are Margarete Deckert, Andrea Albertin, Jennifer Slusarz, Monty Mortensen, Donna Schiffer, Cam Metcalfe, Mia Fuller and Jacob Nallapu. *(Photo by Colin Hackley)*

## THEY'RE NOT VISITORS OR JUST 'FRIENDS' ANYMORE

Sunday's liturgy was extra special. In front of a packed house, the eight people pictured above became new St. Stephen members. We had hoped to provide some of their bio information in this edition of the newsletter, but it's going to take a bit longer to pull it together. Meanwhile, we thank God for these new additions to our congregation.

## AND WHAT A BLESSING THEY ARE

*Excerpt from Pastor Tom's sermon*

... Consider the people and communities in our own lives who have protected and nurtured our faith journeys and the ways we are called to support, care for and protect others as the body of Christ. Many of us are self-sufficient (to an extent) now, but it was not always that way. There have been people and communities that have brought us to this day, and to be the people that God is leading us to be.

Dare I say that this is a perfect day and way to think of the folks joining the body of St. Stephen. They bring experiences, stories and accounts of God working in their lives into the long story of St. Stephen. This congregation is enriched by them, and those of us who've been here a while are eager to hear their stories and grow in new relationship with one another. They likely have each been protected and protectors, too. I pray that they are enriched by our presence as I am by theirs....

## THIS SUNDAY...

... a congregational meeting is set for right after the liturgy. Among other things, the Church Council will unveil the proposed spending plan for 2026. As Rudy Hehn announced last Sunday, the Finance Committee is sending out useful information that you should receive before the meeting. (Some of us received ours Wednesday. Very helpful!) Hope to see you there.



## AND THEN THE NEXT SUNDAY ...

... is our annual Ministry of Reconciliation Sunday. Longtime organizer Dave Suhrweir has selected another noteworthy speaker, one who happens to be running for mayor. It's Jeremy Matlow, one of the "2" votes in the City Commission's frequent 3-2 decisions. The title of his talk is "Love, Equality and Solidarity Start Locally." See Dave's flyer, which is attached to this newsletter, for more details.



## TOILETRIES, PLEASE

*By Sharon Simmons, outreach coordinator*

Our annual TNT (Toiletries and Toilet Paper) collection in collaboration with New Mt. Zion AME Church, to benefit the Kearney Center, has begun. Bring toilet paper, toiletries (body wash, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap, lotion) and place them in the designated tub in Hingst Hall. We'll collect until the end of January.



## A FAVORITE FUND

*Sharon composed this overview especially for our new members, who might not know about this legacy of the Hingst family.*

In 2021, the late Pastor Emeritus Emory Hingst and his wife, Ann Hingst, gifted St. Stephen \$25,000 with the express intent of setting up an endowment to fund future peace and justice initiatives throughout our church community and the community at large. In 2022 and 2023, a committee met with Pastor Ana, our synodical legacy-giving planner, on the legalities of setting up an endowment.

By the end of 2023 a continuing resolution setting up the St. Stephen Peace & Justice Endowment Fund had been approved by the Church Council and the congregation. Funds had been deposited and the Outreach Committee became the guardian of the endowment. Distributions cannot touch the original donation or be used for purposes other than the specified intent.



By 2025 the endowment had grown to \$30,000 through interest and designated fund donations from congregation members. In March 2025 we funded grants to the Seminole Manor Neighborhood Association, Grace Mission and Just Love Advocacy. Now the endowment fund has grown to approximately \$33,000, and we are waiting to receive a new round of applications by the Feb. 1 deadline.

We remember the generosity of the Hingsts and members of the congregation who designate gifts to sustain and grow this peace and justice ministry in our community.

## A CAR IN NEED OF REPAIR

*By Pastor Tom*

Thanks to a few generous donors, we've raised a bit more than \$3,000 to assist a member of our worship community who needs significant auto repairs. We're almost \$1,000 short of what's needed. If you're able, please consider giving to the Pastor's Justice and Mercy Discretionary Account *[not to be confused with the Peace & Justice Endowment Fund]* so we can close that gap even more. Thank you for considering it. God is at work among us, and angels are present!



## CALLING ALL CHILI FANS

Grace Lutheran invites members of St. Stephen to participate in its Chili Cook-Off at noon Sunday, Jan. 25, after its second service. The invitation states: "We welcome those who would like to make their chili to participate in the cook-off challenge and those who would just like to taste each chili."



## AH, RENEE FLEMING

Jeanette Sickel wanted to make sure everyone knew (especially you, Cassandra) that none other than legendary soprano Renee Fleming is in town this week. We checked with the FSU ticket office and were told that these are non-ticketed events, in case you want to try your luck. She's scheduled for a Guest Artist Masterclass at 6:30 this evening in Opperman Music Hall; a "Music and Mind" presentation at 10 a.m. Friday in Opperman; and a book signing at 11:30 a.m. Friday in the Opperman mezzanine.

## THE SHOW MIGHT GO ON

*By Ron Hartung (aka Lex Lutheran)*

This is the time of year when we're usually getting ready for the church talent show. Traditionally it's on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. This year that would be Feb. 15, just one month from today. Yikes.

Since before some of you were born(!), I've been the one who pulled the show together and often acted as MC. For two years now, Ruth and I have been wrestling with medical issues that take up much of our time and energy. Last year, Pastor Tom served as MC and the talent show went on. This year, he's not available. Neither am I. To be honest, I no longer have the oomph to write the songs and recruit the multitalented participants that St. Stephen's show is known for.

So the door is wide open for anyone who'd like to become the impresario of our talent show. Maybe we skip this year. Maybe we do a show but no longer schedule it right before Ash Wednesday. Or maybe it's time to put the whole idea of a talent show to rest. What do you think? Want to talk it over with Pastor Tom? Want to ask me questions? We'll see what happens!





BEFORE YOU GO...

- This lovely bloom is a Japanese Magnolia, also called a Lily Magnolia. It’s growing next to the church parking lot, where Rudy Hehn took its picture last Sunday. Given the weather forecast, we’re not likely to see it looking so pretty this Sunday. Stay warm, everyone.
  - Someone who brought food for a recent St. Stephen event is missing a special tray. Her name is Robyn, and here’s what she wrote: “I am looking for a small china tray (with deviled eggs) I brought for the reception for Ann Hingst. It is a green and white design with my name on tape on the bottom. It says ‘Portugal’ on the bottom also. I hope it can be found. Thank you.” If you know where this tray is, please let Rita know so she can arrange its return.
  - A celebration of the life of Wanda Lynn Post, Audrey Post’s sister-in-law as well as her housemate for the past 11 years, is scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday in the church sanctuary. We’re having a family reunion-style potluck afterward in Hingst Memorial Fellowship Hall, so feel free to bring a favorite dish to share. Homemade or store-bought is fine. The family requests casual attire.
- Pastor Warren Schave, who was one of our interim pastors after Emory Hingst retired, died Jan. 3 at age 90. Pastor Schave spent much of his career as a prison chaplain. A celebration of his life is scheduled for 11 a.m. Jan. 31 here at St. Stephen.
- Don’t forget that a weekly Bible study is now taking place at 10 a.m. Thursdays in the lobby conference room (aka the old nursery). We’re all invited.
- The Arise service will be our liturgy through Epiphany. Your singing of it last Sunday sounded magnificent!
- Is there any chance we’ll be reinstalling shades in the sanctuary? They sure did cut the wintertime glare.
- Need the contact information for a St. Stephen member? Use your digital directory. Don’t have it on your phone? Office Manager Rita can fix you up.
- Please remember that you can look up past sermons or newsletters that you missed. Visit our website: <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/>.
- 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 name tags, or ask Rita to sign you up. Include the \$40 with your regular offering. And then take the flowers home!



YOUR RIDE IS WAITING

One of newsletter editor Lex Lutheran’s favorite Facebook pastimes is to save photos of (and colorful ads featuring) old cars. He keeps imagining that, one of these days, you’ll all visit his home office and watch the slideshow together. As an alternative, he’s decided to share a different colorful old-car photo here at the bottom of each newsletter. We’ll pretend we’re picking out a car to take us all to the next off-campus congregational retreat. Today, our ride is a 1950 Studebaker. As the exuberant ad copy proclaims: “Most people say it’s so startling a car, they half expect to see it take off and fly!” Fasten those seatbelts, everyone.



## SERVING THIS WEEK

**Pastor Tom Holdcraft**, Preaching and Presiding; **Rob Schiffer**, Assisting Minister; **Colleen Holdcraft**, Cup Minister; **Erik Robinson**, Lector; **Colin Hackley and Sandy Lamb-Daniels**, Tech Team; **Susan Warren and Rita Ford**, Altar Guild; **Janet Barber and Susan Warren**, Counters; **Susan Hehn**, Cantor; **Denise Bookwalter**, Announcements

## COMING UP

### Today:

Noon - Al-Anon meets in Pastor Emory Hingst Memorial Fellowship Hall, aka Hingst Hall (HH)

7 p.m. - AA meets in HH

### This Friday:

9:30 a.m. - TOPS meets in HH

### This Saturday:

11:00 a.m. - Celebration of Life for Wanda Lynn Post

### This Sunday:

9 a.m. - Bible study

9:30 a.m. - Choir

10 a.m. - Worship: Second Sunday After Epiphany

### Monday, January 19:

5:00 p.m. - TIMA meets in HH

### Tuesday, January 20:

5:00 p.m. - NA meets in HH

### Wednesday, January 21:

5:00 p.m. - TIMA meets in HH

7:00 p.m. - Choir

### Thursday, January 22:

10:00 a.m. - Bible study



## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Nathan Basford - 1/19  
Denise Bookwalter - 1/22  
Stephen Barton - 1/22  
James Gunderson - 1/24  
Sandy Ness - 1/24  
Gladys Kane - 1/28  
Jennifer Buchanan - 1/29  
Graham Hackley - 1/30  
Jayden Schiffer - 1/31



If you have news or photos to share,  
please send them to Rita at  
[sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com](mailto:sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com).

Don't forget our Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ststephentallahassee>.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church, ELCA