



# ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

## St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



## SINGERS AND DANCERS AND SWIFFERS – OH MY!

The annual St. Stephen Lutheran Church Mardi Gras Talent Show encompasses much more than just the hour or so when it's presented onstage. There's all that creativity, rehearsing and refining that takes place beforehand, and then there's the joy and camaraderie that both the performers and the audience carry with them out the door.

Sunday's show was packed with memorable performances. Largely thanks to Dave "Zing" Suhrweir's magnum opus, there were loads of new participants this year. For those unfortunate souls who couldn't be there, and for those who want to relive the delightful experience, let's take a closer look.

Violet and Ceilia Greeley were back this year – performing "Come on, Children, Let's Sing" with friends Audrey and Rachel.



Another highlight was Simone Schuster's operatic performance of "The Finer Things," from the musical "Jane Eyre." To put it mildly, Simone has a killer voice. Turns out she had been all set to perform her song years ago. She explains: "When I was 16 I was supposed to compete with that piece. But I got the stomach flu and had to leave early. I've always wanted to sing it for something, and I finally did today!" Just memorizing it must have been quite a feat. Here's a sampling of the witty lyrics:

*Mozart and Schumann and Bach /  
Wrote the finest notes  
Every cadenza delights / Every cadence floats  
Ahhhhh! / Music is glorious / But I declare  
When it comes to a woman /  
Schumann just cannot compare*

*These are the finer things /  
That only beauty can supply  
These are the finer things / And what's more beautiful than I?  
For not a soul could give you more / Arpeggios and trills  
Frolics and frills / Soon you will see  
Of all your things / The very finest thing  
Is me!*



Pastor Tom and Colleen Holdcraft unleashed “Footloose,” a high-octane dance number. “Colleen and I rehearsed quite a bit with the help of a YouTube instructor,” Pastor said after the show. He gave Rita



Ford credit for selecting the “Footloose” song. “The three of us, at first, were going to do a dance together,” he said. “When it looked like there weren’t going to be a lot of entries in the show, Rita suggested we split – and she did a routine on her own. Thus the ‘Delilah’ dance was born.”

Ah, yes, “Delilah,” the old Tom Jones song about faithlessness and tragedy. Rita brought it eloquently to life. Elsewhere in the show, Rita teamed up with Cassandra White and the Greeley girls for a goofy skit about how to sneak your way into heaven. The audience learned crafty ways to answer such questions as “How many seconds are in a year?”

Back again this year was everyone’s favorite lip-syncher, Judi Duffy – this time breaking hearts with (sniff) her rendition of “Alone Again (Naturally).”



The printed program promised an examination of “Biblical Rock Stars” by talent -show veterans Susan and Rudy Hehn. Turns out the poor biblical characters in



question were chosen for their supposed relationship with, um, constipation. For example, there was Cain – who wasn’t “able.” And Moses – who took two tablets. Get it? The question is: Where did the Hehns get their material?

“Rudy and I traveled to the Isle of Iona in Scotland,” Susan explained. “The island is known as the ‘birthplace of Celtic Christianity in Scotland’ [and] a place for spiritual retreats. We went there to see where our son Brian, and later our child Jezza, spent a summer living, working and leading music for worship services in the abbey chapel.... During our visit we attended a Ceilidh (pronounced Kaylee), a Scottish dance gathering. In between the dancing, their tradition was that anyone who had something fun to say or do could have the floor. That is where we heard the ‘Seven Constipated Men’ song for the first time. We have always thought it funny that we learned that in a place for spiritual retreat. Rudy says: God ‘moves’ in mysterious ways!”



In her thought-provoking time on the stage, Greta Scavone told a short story titled “All Part of Gift.” “That story is one that I heard many years ago and never forgot because it ends with an inspirational message of wisdom, and it is the kind of story I can imagine being told around a campfire,” Greta said Monday. “Uplifting others through encouragement, inspiration and timeless words of wisdom is a passion of mine; I thought that ‘All Part of Gift’ was a story that could well convey that old cliché ‘It’s not the gift itself, but the thought that really counts.’”

Then there was Dave Suhrweir – and his alter ego, The Amazing Zing. Our friend Zing, who’s been part of our talent shows since 2011, is a multit talented fellow whose performances don’t ordinarily go quite as planned. This year’s premise was that he had created a musical. “The concept came to me in the spring of last year,” Dave said Monday when asked to describe his preparation. “The American political climate in 2024 led me to the message that I wished to convey, which guided me to the appropriate songs and the search for relevant props. My point was not just to be funny, but to express that the musical was to metaphorically give the audience a massage, to reduce stress and produce relaxation.”



That whirlwind of audience participants and rapid-fire musical snippets might have seemed chaotic, but it was carefully timed and choreographed. After Zing fell asleep and awoke to the sounds of “Peer Gynt,” Simone (with a stack of dollar bills flying out of her hands) lip-synched some of “Money, Money,



Money”; Jonas Holdcraft admired himself in a mirror to “You’re So Vain”; the Hehns lip-synched “Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better”; the Greeley-Reece-Stover kids lip-synched “We Don’t Need No Education,” followed by “O Fortuna”; Barbara Sullivan and her Swiffers danced to “Another One Bites the Dust”; Zing himself toyed with a cuckoo clock to “Carnival of the Animals”; everyone sang along to half a minute of “What the World Needs Now”; Rita led a swift procession of kids to “Guide My Feet”; Hector Quinones and Sandy and Lawana Lamb-Daniels danced to “On the Wings

of a Dove”; the kids returned, dancing to “Boogie Shoes”; the audience stood and celebrated along with “Gonna Fly Now” from “Rocky” for half a minute; Colleen gracefully floated around the sanctuary to “Love Is Like a Butterfly” while the Stover boys carried a butterfly chain; Olivia James lip-synched a bit of “Put a Little Love in Your Heart”; and, finally, Zing and the kids distributed balloons to “Maple Leaf Rag.” Whew.

Dave credited his partners in this production: “Paul van der Mark and Karl Barton have the technical skills that neither I nor The Amazing Zing possess. I gave Paul the links to the selected songs and designated the segments of the songs that I desired. He consolidated them into one medley of the musical. Karl saw to it that the recording started timely and produced quality sound during the performance. I also want to thank Rita, the obvious choice for choreographer and guide of the young participants.”



So when people ask, “What happened at **your church Sunday?**” – well, sometimes it’s an essay question. You have to admit: There’s no other church like St. Stephen!

*(Rudy Hehn took the photos of Simone, “Footloose,” “Delilah,” Greta and Elliot “Two Balloons” Reece. Cassandra White took the photo of the Hehns. Sylvia Smith took the photos of Judi Duffy and Zing.)*

*Also, many thanks to the inimitable Katharine Gossman for her piano accompaniment.*

## SPEAKING OF DANCING...

A couple of days after the show, Colleen had this thought: “How fun would it be for St. Stephen to host line dancing for fun? There’s plenty of room in the fellowship hall. We have a screen and projector that we’d use to pull up YouTube and follow along. Then once we learned a dance we wouldn’t need the screen. Count me in!” All right, people: Discuss amongst yourselves!



## SHOW-BIZ MEMORABILIA

Did you see that photo above showing the London Fog raincoat that Judi wore during the talent show? It’s nearly new, and it can be yours! “It has outgrown me,” Judi says. “If you would like it (free of charge), contact me at 850-668-3440.” Maybe Judi will even autograph it for you.

## CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER MC

*By Ron Hartung*

This year, for the first time in a long while, I had nothing to do with the talent show. Usually I write a few St. Stephen-themed songs for each show and act as emcee. But because of our family’s medical adventures this past year, we haven’t been at church much. And without that in-person St. Stephen connection, I couldn’t imagine trying to write lyrics – or presuming to be a master of ceremonies when some in the audience would be thinking, “Who’s this guy? Haven’t seen him around.”



I looked it up, and it’s exactly **40 years** since I succeeded Susan Hove as the keeper of the talent show. So we were way overdue for someone new as MC, and Pastor Tom provided a perfect burst of new energy this year. Alas, Ruth couldn’t make it to Sunday’s show, but I was delighted to be in the audience and, as always, was impressed by St. Stephen’s ever-blossoming array of talent – and Rita’s ability to round up (and create) new acts. Speaking of Ruth: She’s making progress with her physical therapy, battling the neuropathy that makes it so challenging for her to walk. Next year, maybe you’ll see a Hartung or two back onstage! But probably not dancing.

## WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER?

Pastor Tom says we’re planning a new-member welcome March 23 – because three more people wish to join the church! He says we’d be happy to welcome even more, in case you’ve been thinking of joining. If you have any questions about that process, please see Pastor.



## STRIPES!



“We got the striping completely done,” Church Council member Rob Schiffer said when we asked for an update on the recent parking-lot workday. “The striping team included Pastor Tom, Jonas Holdcraft, Mark Warren, Susan Warren, Val Kibler, Greta Scavone and me. Also, Mark Warren and Pastor Tom leveled out the concrete benches in the area just north of the sanctuary.” (Pastor Tom clarified: “I really didn’t help much with the bench leveling except to help with the heavy lifting. Mark did all the leveling – and got stung by fire ants during the work.”) Ouch. Pastor added: “Emily Jennings was also there working to trim azaleas and other landscape duties.” Rob says that if you see anything else on the church grounds that needs attention, please let him know.

## BEFORE YOU GO...

- Daylight time! This Sunday! Spring forward!
- Margaret Bowers says there’s a reception welcoming our newest members March 23, after the liturgy.
- Don’t forget that we’re sponsoring a Diaper Drop for Refuge House. (Children’s diapers, sizes 2-6, are the most requested.) We’ll collect packages of diapers in the Hingst Fellowship Hall through March 30.
- Another reminder: From 6:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 15, Tallahassee singer Avis Berry will perform at Element3 Church, 1190 Capital Circle NE. Her performance will raise money to dig a well that will serve 20 families in her husband Amon’s village of Kaguma, Kenya. Tickets are \$25. Buy them here: [www.Bit.ly/E3KenyaWaterConcertMar15](http://www.Bit.ly/E3KenyaWaterConcertMar15).
- Even though I’ve lived in Tallahassee since the tail end of 1976, I still can’t get used to the idea of trees shedding their leaves in March. Right this minute, the live oaks in the park across from our house are creating a leafy blizzard. Soon my rake and I will have to be out there, grudgingly playing our part. This ain’t the way it worked when I was a lad up in Davenport, Iowa. Leaves fell in the fall. Period.
- 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



Chris Gossman - 03/19  
Diane Hines - 03/23  
Stephanie Leitch - 03/27  
Davis Holdcraft - 04/01  
Gordon Fleischer - 04/06  
Colin Hackley - 04/06  
Beth Alexander - 04/11  
Rudy Hehn - 04/12  
Donna Schiffer - 04/13  
Erik Robinson - 04/14  
Elizabeth Halvorson - 04/15

## COMING UP

### Today:

**Noon** - Al-Anon meets in Pastor Emory Hingst Memorial Fellowship Hall or Hingst Hall (HH)

**7 p.m.** - AA meets in HH

### This Friday:

**10 a.m.** - TOPS meets in HH

### This Saturday:

**1:30 p.m.** - Al-Anon meets in HH

### This Sunday:

**9 a.m.** - Book study

**9:30 a.m.** - Choir practice

**10 a.m.** - Worship, First Sunday in Lent

**11:30 p.m.** - Worship & Music committee meeting

**4 p.m.** - Congolese Christian worship in HH

### Monday, March 10:

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

**7 p.m.** - TIMA meets in HH

### Tuesday, March 11:

**5 p.m.** - NA meets in HH

### Wednesday, March 12:

**10 a.m.** - Friendship Star Quilting Group meets in HH

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

**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

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