



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter



Thanks to Cheryl Stuart for capturing some of the special moments during the children's Christmas program from Sunday. Many thanks also to Nathan Basford, Andrea Notley, Christopher Reece, and all of the cast.

COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION

Communication is key in keeping a church vital and healthy especially during a time of transition. Without clear and regular sharing of information, what happens? We kinda make things up! Misinformation and rumors will spread. So, please find below only one of the many ways I will be communicating with all of you during this transition process!

"A-Tisket, A-Tasket" ... the newest form of communication is a Transition Basket! As a part of the Children's Time, I had the children choose a location for the basket. The children chose the shelf in the back of the sanctuary and we thanked the Altar Guild who gave smiling permission! All members and visitors are now encouraged to drop questions regarding the transition process into the basket. Please make sure to sign your question so that all communication is kept transparent, open and honest! I will answer these questions in newsletters to follow. Remember, this will be only one way of communicating! Stay tuned for many others!!

This week's questions:

Q: Will members of the congregation have input into the selection of the new pastor? Specifically, regarding possible improvements in the worship experience? A survey? Congregational Meeting?

A: *Throughout the process, all members and even visitors, will have input into the selection of the new pastor. The Call Committee usually sends out a survey to all members. Later, when the Council approves the candidate recommended by the Call Committee a congregational meeting is held. This is not an interview but a relaxed meet and greet with the candidate. The candidate then exits, at which time the congregation votes. Constitutionally, there must be a 75% majority in favor of extending the call. In a nutshell, the Call Committee does not choose the new pastor. The Synod does not choose the new pastor. The Council does not choose the new pastor. The congregation is the only body which has the constitutional power to call a new pastor. Other information gathering venues from the congregation include a series of small group gatherings, a Saturday retreat, and monthly Q&A sessions at the Potluck!*

In terms of "possible improvements in the worship experience", please take any idea directly to the Worship Committee. The small group gatherings and the Saturday retreat will provide other opportunities to share ideas affecting the worship at St. Stephen.

Q: Will the Transition Committee become the Call Committee?

A: Our Synod does not use Transition Committees. The tasks which require completion by the Office of the Bishop is the Council's responsibility. The checklist is long and detailed. The other tasks which must be completed fall under the auspices of the Interim Pastor. It is only after these tasks are completed and approved by both the Interim Pastor and the Office of Bishop can the Call Committee be elected at the congregational meeting.

TRANSITIONAL FLOW CHART

Below you will see the flow chart that Pastor will be reviewing regularly to ensure we are meeting the standards for the transition process. We are currently in step 3 of the process. Some steps will move quicker and some will take longer. The thing to remember is this is God's time and not ours.



Florida-Bahamas Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Step 1:
Current pastor resigns or retires... A celebration of ministry together

Step 12:
Evaluation of the process

Step 2:
Congregation receives a transition pastor or interim.

Step 11:
Installation

Steps in the Calling of a New Pastor

Your pastor has resigned or retired...

What happens next?

Step 3:
A Ministry assessment & discernment process occurs

Step 10:
Congregation votes to extend a call; pastor accepts or declines call

These steps illustrate the process your congregation will experience.

(Introduction, Resource 9)

Step 4:
The call process begins... call committee is formed

Step 9:
Congregation meets primary candidate

Step 5:
Congregational Ministry Site Profile is created

Step 8:
Primary candidate identified & interviewed by congregation council

Step 6:
A Call List is formed

Step 7:
Interview of candidates

ADULT EDUCATION, 2017

The New Year is upon us, and I bet many of us made "resolutions" of one sort or another. Perhaps one of your resolutions was to "check out the Adult Ed class in the New Year as a way to deepen my faith"!! Well, don't be too anxious---the Adult Ed class will not meet either Christmas Day or New Year's Day! We will meet, though, on January 8. Pastor Mary will join us to talk about what we want to study over the next weeks/months. We're talking about reading the Small Catechism; we've got a short book, "Conversations with Martin Luther" we're looking at; Pastor Mary has some ideas too. As a group, we'll decide how to proceed. Even if you've never been to an Adult Ed class, this is a good time to check it out. All are truly welcome. See you in the Matthew room (first door on the left as you come up the walk to the sanctuary) at 9 am on the second Sunday of the New Year, Jan. 8!



A friend who lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan, sent this photo to Emily Ruddell last month. Emily thought that we newsletter readers would appreciate the message.

MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- PLEDGE TIME: Thank you to all who have turned in the pledge cards for 2017. If you haven't done so yet, you still have time.
- 2017 OFFERING ENVELOPES: The envelopes are ready for you in the narthex.
- Judi Dye-Molledo, a former long-time member of St. Stephen, is recovering from a stroke at Seven Hills Health and Rehabilitation Center. For those wishing to send a card, the address is 3333 Capital Medical Blvd., Rm. #77, Tallahassee, 32308.
- NURSERY ATTENDANT: Sarah, our nursery attendant, will be out the next 2 Sunday's (Dec. 25 and Jan. 1). Please let Lori know if you are available to help out.
- POTLUCK: We will continue the Potluck on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Pastor will have a "Q & A" session following the Potlucks, so be ready with some questions regarding the transition process or anything else you may want to ask!



UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS:

- David Kennell - 12/24**
Kate Stuart - 12/29
Mike Martinez - 12/30
David DelRossi - 12/31

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

This Saturday:

7:30 p.m. - Christmas Eve worship

This Sunday:

10 a.m. - Worship, Christmas Day worship

Wednesday, Dec. 28:

7 p.m. - Choir rehearsal

SERVING CHRISTMAS EVE:

Pastor Mary Nesmith, Presiding, Preaching; **Barb ODonnell**, Assisting Minister; **Phil Williams**, Cup Minister; **Kevin ODonnell**, Walkways; **Jan Harrison**, Greeter; **Sue Williams**, Lector; **Martha Marky & Rita Ford** Altar Guild; **Barb ODonnell**, Bread.

SERVING CHRISTMAS DAY:

Pastor Mary Nesmith, Presiding, Preaching; **Cheryl Stuart**, Assisting Minister; **Sandy Larson**, Cup Minister; **Gladys Kane**, Visitation; **Phil Williams**, Walkways; **Rita Ford**, Greeter; **Jennifer Buchanan**, Lector; **Martha Marky & Rita Ford**, Altar Guild; **Steve Kunst & Cheryl Stuart**, Counters; **Barb ODonnell**, Bread.



If you have news or photos to share, please send them to Lori at ststephentallahassee@embarqmail.com.

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

St. Stephen Lutheran Church, ELCA
2198 N. Meridian Road | Tallahassee, FL 32303