

March 16, 2017



ST. STEPHEN THIS WEEK

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Newsletter

EVEN IN OUR ALONENESS, JESUS IS WITH US

"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20b)

Our family moved a lot when I was growing up. I learned early on what it was like to be "the new kid on the block." I was also shy, which made it hard to make friends. Some of that changed when college began. Specifically, I remember feeling overjoyed when I realized that every freshman was new and we were all "new kids on the block" together!

We don't have to have a shy personality to feel alone. We feel alone when we lose a loved one, grapple with a difficult health diagnosis, lose a job, undergo alienation from a child, reel from a separation or divorce...the list goes on.

As I write this, my eyes keep resting on a framed picture hanging in the cozy den. It is a Katharine Brown print of Jesus cradling a lamb close against his face. The look of love emanating from Jesus is palpable, and the lamb's face conveys such sweetness, contentedness, and safety that my heart melts each time I look at it.

We should never negate feelings of aloneness. But, even in our aloneness, Jesus is with us, holding us closely.

Do you remember the sweet hymn "Have No Fear, Little Flock"? The fourth verse says: "Thankful hearts raise to God; thankful hearts raise to God, for he stays close beside you, in all things works with you; thankful hearts raise to God." No matter what causes us to feel alone, Jesus is with us.

The promise Jesus made in Matthew 28:20b holds true forever and ever: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Pax,

Pastor Mary

CHRIS ALEXANDER: 1966-2017

Chris Alexander, a longtime member of St. Stephen, passed into the church triumphant on Friday, March 10. Chris was the husband of Beth and father of Cheslyn. We surround Beth and Cheslyn with our prayers of support during this difficult time.

A celebration of his life is scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday at St. Stephen. A team of church volunteers are organizing the reception that will follow the service.

Chris, 50, a member of St. Stephen since 2007, died peacefully in his sleep.

He and Beth shared 21 years of marriage together.

Born Nov. 17, 1966, in McDonald Army Hospital at Fort Eustis, Va., Chris was raised in Tallahassee and graduated from Florida State University with a B.S. in information studies. He held licensure as a Certified Technical Trainer. He pursued many career interests as an entrepreneur; most recently he owned and operated Massage Envy.

Chris had an animated personality and enthralled those around him with his storytelling. He valued his relationships with family and friends. He adored his daughter, Cheslyn Janae Donaldson, as well as his nephew Colbi Dawson Hopkins.

He was a facilitator of conflict resolutions. He demonstrated open-mindedness, forgiveness and compassion. Chris' love of theater began in middle school, when he participated in productions at Tallahassee Little Theatre. He continued his love of theater in college.

Chris was preceded in death by his mother, Karen Sue Wilkens – who, tragically, died just two days before he did. In addition to his wife, daughter and nephew, Chris is survived by his father, Paul Lawrence Wilkens; his brothers, Paul Marcus Wilkens (Jennifer) and Steven Alexander Wilkens; and two additional nephews, Luis Josef Menjivar and Ayden Nichols Seidel.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Capital City Youth Services, 2407 Roberts Ave., Tallahassee, FL 32310.

Schedule of Services for Lent/Holy Week

Midweek Lenten Worship Services:

6:15 p.m. – Soup and Salad

7:00 p.m. - Lenten Series on “The Seven Last Words From the Cross,” Scripture Readings, simple Taize chants:

- **Wednesday, March 22:** The Fourth Word: “Forsaken”
- **Wednesday, March 29:** The Fifth & Sixth Words: “Thirst” and “Finished”
- **Wednesday, April 5:** The Seventh Word: “Commit”

Sunday, April 9, 10 a.m.: Palm/Passion Sunday:



- Procession with Palms
- Dramatic Reading of the Passion
- Holy Communion
- Instrumentals
- Darkened sanctuary to symbolize Holy Week's beginning.



Thursday, April 13: Maundy Thursday: 7 p.m.:

- Holy Communion
- Foot Washing
- Stripping of the Altar
- Darkened sanctuary

Good Friday, April 14: 7 p.m.:

- Adoration of the Cross
- Simple Liturgy
- Instrumentals
- Darkened sanctuary to symbolize Holy Week's beginning.

There will be no Easter Vigil service but rest assured it will be resurrected next year! The decision was made prayerfully with Pastor Mary, Katharine Gossman, and the Worship Committee.

Easter Sunday, April 16: 8:30 a.m. - Easter Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt;

10 a.m.:

- Festival worship
- Holy Communion
- Instrumentals



POTLUCK



Please bring a dish to share for our monthly potluck to be held this Sunday! Pastor Mary and Council will be available to give a status update of the transition process and to answer any questions!

ADULT STUDY

Please join us in Adult Education each Sunday at 9 a.m. in the Matthew Room. We're working our way through the Small Catechism. Each week is a new adventure, so if you miss a week, you can still learn something new (or be reminded of something you've long forgotten). All are welcome!



MORE MIDWEEK UPDATES

- Sarah, our nursery attendant, will not be here this Sunday. Please let Lori know if you can help out in the nursery.
- Remember: Place any transition questions you have for Pastor Mary in the "A-Ticket, A-Tasket" Transition Basket in the back of the sanctuary.
- Sunday Church School will not be meeting this Sunday but will resume on March 26.



UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS:

T'moi DeWindt - 3/16
Tenan DeWindt - 3/19
Nicholas Franklin - 3/19
JoAnn von Berner - 3/21

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

This Friday:

11 a.m. - Memorial Service for Chris Alexander

This Sunday:

9 a.m. - **NO** Sunday Church School
Adult study

10 a.m. - Worship, Third Sunday in Lent

11:30 a.m. - Potluck

Wednesday, March 22:

6:15 p.m. - Lenten supper

7 p.m. - Lenten Midweek Service, The Fourth Word: "Forsaken"

7:30 p.m. - Choir rehearsal

SERVING SUNDAY:

Pastor Mary Nesmith, Presiding and Preaching; **Anna Amundson**, Assisting Minister; **Jennifer LaVia**, Cup Minister; **Sharon Simmons**, Visitation; **Kevin O'Donnell**, Walkways; **Susan Warren**, Greeter; **Gladys Kane**, Lector; **Gladys Kane & Susan Warren**, Altar Guild; **Barb O'Donnell & Susan Warren**, Counters; **Susan Warren**, Bread; **Anna Amundson**, Announcements.



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>.

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