

**St Stephen**  
Lutheran Church, ELCA

# The Messenger

2500 NE 14th Street Causeway, Pompano Beach, FL 33062 Ph. (954) 942-4473

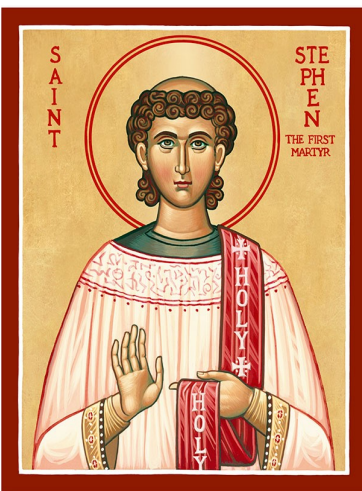
December 2017

## Sunday Schedule:

\* **10:15 a.m.**  
Worship Service

## Christmas Eve Schedule:

5:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.  
*Both with candlelight*



**SAINT STEPHEN**  
The First Christian Martyr

## In This Issue:

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## “We Are Christmas People”

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not Perish but may have eternal life.” *John 3:16*

This Bible verse reminds us that we are Christmas people every day. Did you catch that? For God so loved the world! That’s why Jesus came as a baby in the manger. It is God’s ultimate gift of love. We are used to hearing the phrase: “We are Easter people.” That is also true. It is the resurrection that makes us so. But is the incarnation (God putting himself into the world as an infant and Savior) that makes us Christmas people.

As “Christmas people” we can celebrate that God is with us (Emmanuel) every moment of every day. I must confess that my wife and I are absolutely Christmas

people. You can come to our House any day of the week in any month of the year and see that we have our Christmas tree in our living room. Fully decorated. It is not to save time in December, but rather a daily reminder that God is with us. Even one of

initially asked her why she wanted to leave the tree up and she replied that it brought peace into her day and night, especially at night when it is lit. To that I say “amen”.

Christians are now in the season of Advent that is connected to Christmas.

There would be no Advent without a Christmas. And so we see that we join in the Christmas spirit throughout the weeks of Advent. Buying gifts for loved ones; decorating our homes joyously; inviting neighbors and

friends to our homes. Advent is a season of hope, joy, love, and peace. May you be filled with those gifts of the spirit all the days of Advent; all the days of Christmas; and all of the days of your life.

God bless you.

Peace!

Pastor Nelson



God’s angels is looking over us from the top of our tree. Oh yes, I might also mention that we have a Clock that chimes a different Christmas Carol every hour, on the hour, for 24 hours a day.

This was Sarah’s idea initially, and I have joined in with great enthusiasm. I



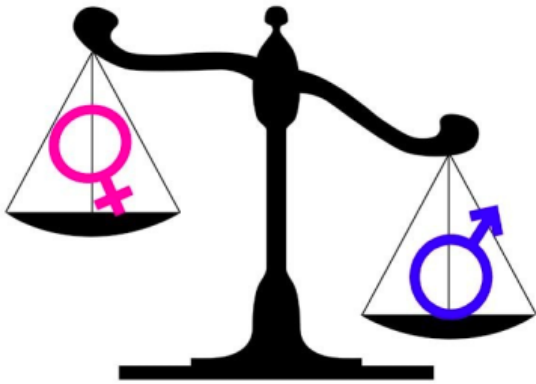
*Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,*

*I am honored to be your interim pastor as we prepare together to receive your new pastor. Saint Stephen has been blessed with wonderful leadership in the person of Bishop Pedro Suarez. Now the Synod will be blessed with his leadership. The season of Advent is a time of hope and looking forward to new life. As we trust God’s leadership and the Spirit’s presence this Advent season, we can be confident that Saint Stephen will continue strongly to proclaim God’s word and serve God’s people. I look forward to getting to know each of you better and to serve God here in this place.*

*Just a little information about me and my family. I am married to Sarah and we have three grown children. Sarah and I live in Lake Worth and have been in Florida for 10 years. I am also a pastoral counselor in West Palm Beach.*

*Your friend in Christ,  
Pastor Nelson*

## ELCA on Gender Identity Discrimination



In light of recent public events and conversation, it is important to remember the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) rejects all forms of hatred or discrimination. This includes employment discrimination against the transgender community, as stated in "Gender Identity Discrimination," a policy resolution that was adopted by the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

"As church together, it's now more important than ever for us not only to pray, but also stand beside all who are facing many forms of prejudice," stated

spoken against discrimination in law or policy related to sexual orientation or gender identity. The policy resolution, adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 2013 – the highest legislative body of the church – instructed the presiding bishop to communicate public support for actions that prohibit "employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gen-

der identity" and encouraged all ELCA synods, congregations and members to do the same. Additionally, as a church, we have committed our support to those whose vocation is in the military ("For Peace in God's World," 1995). The ELCA is a church that belongs to Christ and Christ's church universal, where there is a place for everyone. The call of Christ's people today is to celebrate the diversity of God's creative work and embrace all people in the spirit of love, regardless of race or ethnicity, economic status or gender.

The ELCA has repeatedly

### Discrimination

The prejudicial treatment or consideration of a person, racial group, minority, etc. based on category rather than individuality, excluding or restricting members of on the grounds of race, sex, or age

## Events and happenings this month...

### Saturday, December 2 - Church Decorating



Come and help decorate our church for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany at 9am.

### Saturday, December 9 - Children's Advent Day

The Nurturing team will be having a special day with the children, making crafts, singing and also preparing for Christmas Eve. Please bring them over from 10a.m. to 12 noon!

### Sunday, December 24

#### -- Morning Worship

"Mary Mother of Our Lord"  
10:15am Advent Worship

#### -- Christmas Eve

5:30 p.m. The children will have a chance to portray those involved in the Christmas story. Come worship the Christ child with good music, inspiring message and candlelight.

7:00 p.m. We hope to be inspired, challenged and filled with the Spirit of God as we sing Christmas tunes. Bring friends and family to celebrate Christ birth. A candlelight at the end helps us to remember that Silent and Holy Night!



### Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Day



It's that time of year again!

It is a time to share the goodness of your heart with others. May the light of love shine upon you, and may your life be filled with blessings in this Christmas season.

*Merry Christmas & Happy 2018!*

## ABOUT THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with more than 3.7 million members in more than 9,300 congregations across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of "God's work. Our hands," the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians and service in the world. The ELCA's roots are in the writings of the German church reformer Martin Luther. Visit us at [ELCA.org](http://ELCA.org).

## GIVING IS GROWING

People give out of abundance. When we perceive scarcity, we live in fear, trying to hang on to things.

When we live in God's generosity, we can let go of fear. We no longer require a stranglehold on our possessions. We can share generously.

Transformation happens, both for us and for our neighbors. When we choose to see God's abundance instead of our human scarcity, we give.

Jesus disciples had every reason to live in fear shortly before the crucifixion. They had every reason to hoard their abundance. However, God's energy is more present in those who multiply gifts than it is absent in those who choose to live by fear.

*Stewardship Commission.*



## Congratulations to Aura Suárez



On Saturday November 25, Aura Suárez was consecrated as a Deacon of the ELCA. A nice representation of pastors and leaders from the area and beyond came to support and celebrate with Aura and her family this im-

portant event in her life. A beautiful reception followed the meaningful worship service. Many thanks to St Stephen's members and volunteers for their help and support to make this Consecration a wonderful celebration of love and friendship.

## SAVE THE DATE...

### SERVICE OF INSTALLATION



*Bishop Pedro Suárez*

*Florida Bahamas-Synod, ELCA*

**January 20, 2018  
Noon**

**St. Mark The Evangelist  
Catholic Church  
New Tampa, FL**

Register at  
[www.fbsynod.org/installation](http://www.fbsynod.org/installation)

**30 PASSENGERS BUS TO TAMPA**  
Early registration required. Only 10 seats are left. Come with us to the Installation of Bishop Pedro Suárez, our recent pastor. We are renting a bus for 30 people, the Synod is paying for the bus, we pay for the tax & tip of \$10.00 per person. We leave the church promptly at 6:30 am.

Did I remember to take the price tag off my gift?



*Adrian*



2500 NE 14th Street Causeway  
 Pompano Beach, FL 33062  
 Ph. (954) 942-4473

Pastor: Rev. Pedro M. Suarez

*“Encouraging and Strengthening Faith  
 in Jesus and Sharing the Joy of God’s  
 Love”*

## Volunteer Assistants in December 2017


10:15 am	<u>December 3</u>	<u>December 10</u>	<u>December 17</u>	<u>December 24</u>	<u>December 31</u>
ASSISTING MINISTER	Pat Belanger	Sera Butz	Natalie Prego	Aura Suarez	Aura Suarez
ACOLYTE	Katie Paff	Aiyana Cartwright	Katie Paff	Aiyana Cartwright	Kaite Paff
LECTOR	Erika Flanigan	Kevin Otterson	Catherine Zippay	Rick Dunton	Tom Peterson
USHERS – Need 4 to Serve	Suzanne Loggings Linda Hanzlik Terry Shumway Lisa Castaneda	Floyd MacDonald Jimmy Fennelli Lynda Smith Zachary Smith	Harry Ambrose Patricia Engle Terry Shumway Catherine Zippay	Lisa Castaneda Linda Hanzlik Lynda Smith Zachary Smith	Floyd MacDonald Jeanne Pettit Harry Ambrose Patricia Engle
Head Usher	Rosie Fennelli	Rosie Fennelli	Rosie Fennelli	Rosie Fennelli	Rosie Fennelli
GREETERS – Need 2 to Serve	Caroline Smith Zachary Smith	Kelly Jacobson Rose Jones	Caroline Smith Zachary Smith	TBA	Caroline Smith Ruth Wagle
SOUND	Eric Castaneda	Larry Jones	Dennis Magarrell	Sera Butz	Eric Castaneda
PROJECTION	Dennis Magarrell	TBA	Eric Castaneda	TBA	Dennis Magarrell

**We're on the web**  
[www.ststephenlutheran.net](http://www.ststephenlutheran.net)  
 \*\*\* Check the Video Sermons

Email us at:  
 sslcpompano@gmail.com  
 And like us on.....  
[www.facebook.com/sslcpompano](http://www.facebook.com/sslcpompano)



# December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31					1	2 9am Church decorating
3 - <b>Worship</b> 10:15am - Sunday School 11:30am	4	5 7:00pm Council Meeting	6 9am Quilters 3pm Preschool Chapel	7 7:00 pm Choir Practice	8	9 10-12pm Children Advent
10 - <b>Worship</b> 10:15am - Sunday School 11:30am	11	12	13 9am Quilters 3pm Preschool Chapel	14 7:00 pm Choir Practice	15	16
17 - <b>Worship</b> 10:15am - Sunday School 11:30am	18	19	20 9am Quilters 3pm Preschool Chapel	21	22	23
24 - <b>Worship</b> 10:15am  <b>Christmas Eve</b> - 5:30pm & 7pm	25 <b>Christmas Day</b> 	26	27	28	29	30