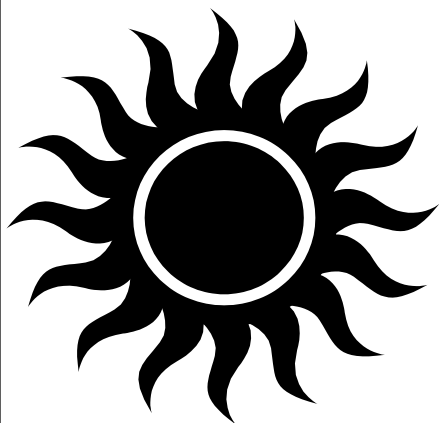


St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



Sun

Celebrating 57
Years of Ministry
January 2013

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, Jan. 27 at 9:30 am

Followed by the

Annual Congregational Meeting @ 10:45

(Coffee and bagels will be served. Child care provided)

We gather together to elect leadership to council, elect two voting members for Synod Assembly, and approve a budget for 2013 that reflects our mission. Please plan on attending to support your church as we continue to seek **God's will for our ministry together.**

An agenda will be sent out by email and snail mail.

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

2500 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz, California 95062

Phone—831-476-4700 — Fax—831-476-3918

[www..ststephenslutheran.org](http://www.ststephenslutheran.org)

email—office@ststephenslutheran.org

Rev. James P. Lapp, Pastor

Ministers: The Entire Congregation

Church Council: Pres. — Robert Barteo, V. P. — Tom Eagle,
Treasurer— Mark Linder, David Balogh, Kim
Cappelloni, Jeanette Dawson, Barbara Rice, and
Rebecca Wickham

Directors of Music: Suzanne Duval
& Gary Roberts

Custodian: John Hopping

Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp

Children's Minister: Dusty Gipson

Office Hours: Mon.—Thurs. 8:30am—2:30pm



Pastor's Cell Phone: 325-9095 (Call Pastor between 9 am and 5 pm, M-
Thurs. or anytime for emergencies. Please only give to church members)

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Stephen's is a welcoming, healing community
who worship God in Christ,
nurture people growing in faith,
serve others with acceptance and love,
and invite people to share the joy of the Spirit.

From Pastor Jim

"...looking for signs of Your Presence."



In our liturgy we have prayed these words as part of the prayer of sending after Holy Communion.

And although it is often difficult for us to "see God" in our daily lives, this prayer has been coming to life for me this past month.

One of the ways this has happened was in the devotions that I led for our last church council meeting (see *Council Highlights* pg.3), but there have been others - **more than usual for me. And I'm not real big on interpreting things that happen around me as "signs directly from God telling me what to do or think".** Instead, what I think is meant by that prayer is that God is always present with us but we tend to live and act and go about our lives as if God wasn't really there. **So we need to specifically look for signs of God's Spirit walking and working with us in the very ordinary things we encounter each day.**

A way that this has been happening more recently for me is through a bird...again. When I first became pastor here we got several visits from a Great Blue Heron out in our field. It was very unusual and served as a beautiful symbol for some of the new life we were experiencing at that exciting beginning time. (The photo is still in my office)

When I was a student at Cal Lutheran discerning my call to become a pastor, I used to spend time in a park outside my dorm. I became familiar with the cry of the resident Red-Shouldered Hawk as it swooped down on the creek to pick a crayfish. My campus pastor knew about this hawk and sometimes referred to it in his sermons. It became **a sign of God's presence for me.**

I have been hearing the cry of the Red-Shouldered Hawk all the time lately, especially at church and sometimes on our little steeple. **Being near Arana Creek has helped, I'm sure. It has been a comforting reminder of God's presence with us always and especially with our church and preschool. I hope you are able to find the signs of God's presence with you these days as well.**

January Happenings

Sunday Adult Forums @ 9:30

Jan. 13 "Justice and Peace in the
land we call Holy"

with Herb Schmidt

Jan. 20 "Thinking about Debt "

with Bill Anderson

Chapel with the Pre-Schoolers

Wednesdays at 10:00

Knitting

Meets every Thurs at 6:45 pm

Altar Guild

Saturday, Jan. 12, 9:00 am meeting
10:00 info / training

MM/RR Women's Circle

Jan 12 - 10:30 am Fireside Rm

Story Book Tea

Jan 13 - 2:30 pm Fireside Rm

CDC Board Meeting

Monday, Jan. 14, 5:30 pm

Church Council

Monday, Jan. 21, 7:00 pm

Habitat for Humanity Lunches

Thursday, Jan. 24 @ 10:30

Book Club

Saturday, Jan. 26, 10:30 am

Benevolence Offering

Ending Human Trafficking "Free the
Slaves" & "The Polaris Project"

Council Highlights

1. Devotions stemmed from a "sign" that Pastor Jim noticed on the wet church parking lot earlier in the day. It was an old bulletin cover that had become plastered to the asphalt in the rain. It was from the apocalyptic writings in Matthew and said "this is the beginning of the birth pangs..." We have been experiencing something like birth pangs as our congregation forms a new vision for its future and we work through the difficulties that always entails. May God guide us to the day when we will share in the joy that results from those birth pangs as we work together in mission.
2. A special council meeting to discuss the 2013 budget was called for Jan.5th at 9am.
3. Treasurer Mark Linder was unable to attend because of emergency eye surgery to repair a detached retina. He is expected to make a full recovery after 3 weeks of rest.
4. Pastor Jim shared that Chris Madsen had been hospitalized after suffering from many different kinds of symptoms for the past few months. She has since been diagnosed with lung cancer.
5. There was a discussion around the resignation of Tracy Fleming as Preschool Director. The Board will be meeting Dec. 19 to decide whether or not to remain open given the small number of children enrolled. (See pg. 7 of this newsletter for info. on that decision)
6. Prayers were offered for Mark and Chris



January Birthdays

- | | | | |
|------|------------------|------|----------------|
| 1-1 | Nathan Lapp | 1-21 | Chris Turzo |
| 1-8 | Katie Silva | 1-25 | Neil Crews |
| 1-10 | Colby Hanson | 1-27 | Crystal Hintze |
| 1-11 | Mitch Crews | | |
| 1-12 | Linda Hix | | |
| 1-13 | Jennifer Robe | | |
| 1-14 | Sofia Bartee | | |
| 1-17 | Laura Hayes | | |
| 1-17 | Emily Valencia | | |
| 1-18 | Patricia Travers | | |



Anniversaries

- | | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 1-20 | Donald & Doris Ray |
| 1-23 | Emmanuel & Juanita Perez-Flores |
| 1-24 | Lindsey & Becky Cramer |
| 1-24 | Charles & Deanna McIntyre |

Prayer Concerns:

Short Term: Chris Madsen, Mark Linder, Elizabeth, Pearl, Lisa Pawalkat, Renie Leaman, Juanita Perez-Flores, Bob Gipson, Carla & Chris Brown, Madeline Massa, Marino, Marge, Kevin, Stefan, Debbie, Joanne, Marsha, Mark, Linda, Joe, Artie, Evan & Mrs. Milnes, Kaitlin Cahill, Heysel, Maicon, Cameron Lucero, Tasha Turzo, Abbey Meck, Opa Meerman, St. Stephen's Child Development Center, and St. Stephen's Church Family.

Long Term: Bonnie Hansen, Jan Wagner, Gail & Nancy, Renie Leaman, Beverly Gilladett, Greg Weber, Jill Lapp, Mickayla, Pearl Runquist, Jeanne, Lester Thompson, Jane Flammang, Ron Buswell, Bob Heppe, The Robe Family, Brooks & Glen Leaman, Chris Tury, Dorothy Ronning, Clint Bell, The Youth



Sunday School News

Our Christmas Pageant was a success again this year. The kids worked very hard to tell the nativity story to the congregation. We also had lots of help behind the scenes with our costumes (Candace), sound (Kirk), slides for the carols (Truett), the star (Lisa), and our wonderful readers (Rachel, Kylie, Hannah and Collin). Our efforts were also led by Pastor Jim whose help guiding our children (especially during practice) was instrumental. Thank you everyone for your support of these kids!

Thank you also for your support of our recent sock drive for S.P.I.N. (Socks for People In Need). We collected 93 pairs of socks to be distributed to those in need in Santa Cruz County. This project is sponsored by our local Association of Faith Communities. If you are interested in more information about this project please visit www.afcsantacruz.org.

In December our students decorated and filled 100 Christmas goody bags for the inmates of the Santa Cruz County Jail. They really enjoyed getting to decorate the bags with stickers and other festive holiday decorations. This continues to be one of our more meaningful projects as the kids come to the realization that God's love is not bound by human perceptions. He loves everyone! They also learn that we are letting our lights shine by sharing that love with others through this project.

In January we will learn more about what life was like for Jesus as a kid through stories, games and craft projects.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to help out in this fun ministry in our church.

Sincerely, Dusty Gipson
831-338-3787 home or dustygipson@yahoo.com

St. Stephen's Child Development Center

As many of you may have heard our Child Development Center is in the midst of transition. Our director, Tracy Fleming has resigned effective December 27th and is moving on to another job. We appreciate her efforts and support during the beginning of our congregation's preschool adventure. Our board president, Barbara Bautz has also resigned. Her expertise, time and effort in getting our preschool off the ground are also greatly appreciated. Bill Schraft will serve as the new board president. In addition, Tom Eagle will also be moving on. He has been serving as our non-board member bookkeeper and has been a great source of information and direction in the area of finances. Sherilyn Jager will fulfill that role now. We wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

While all of that might sound a little overwhelming we are excited to announce the installation of our new director, Kathy Berens. Kathy has been an intern with the preschool, member of our board and comes with a wealth of experience, ideas, and enthusiasm. **She has been a member of St. Stephen's for about one year after moving here from San Juan Capistrano where she worked in Lutheran and Episcopal preschools.** She will begin serving when students return from Christmas break on January 2nd. She will be installed as the director of our school during our regular services on Sunday January 6th. We hope that you have a chance to join us on that Sunday and meet Kathy if you have not already had the chance.

Our center is currently serving 6 families. We look forward to a year of prosperity and the opportunity to serve even more in our community in the coming year. We also look forward to offering members of our congregation more opportunities in the new year for volunteering and serving through this important ministry. Look for more information to come soon.

We continue to appreciate the efforts of those who are moving on to other things as well as the continued support of the church council and this congregation. Our next board meeting will be on Monday, January 14th at 5:30 in the Fireside Room. We invite you to join us and find out what is happening at our school.

Sincerely, St. Stephen's Child Development Center Board

Pres. Bill Schraft, Sec. Sheila Buswell, Treas. Dusty Gipson,

Parent Hannah Forbus, Pastor Jim Lapp

cdc@ststephenslutheran.org (Director) 464-4453



Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County joins \$6.8 million national homebuilding effort in 2013: Orientation for New Habitat Home in Santa Cruz set for January 19th and 21st, 2013

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (December 17, 2012) – Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County has been awarded \$125,000 to build a, three-bedroom, two-bath home in the Beach Flats area of Santa Cruz.

The grant provides 50% of the cost of construction, and was given to Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County by Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity, a unique partnership between Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and Habitat for Humanity International.

Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County was given the award in conjunction with an announcement of a national gift made by Thrivent Financial on Dec. 17, 2012. The 2013 commitment from the organization is \$6.8 million and will push the total giving from Thrivent Financial past \$180 million, during the eight-year partnership between the two organizations.

Habitat for Humanity's relationship with Thrivent Financial brings the financial, volunteer and advocacy resources of Thrivent Financial together with the affordable housing construction leadership of hundreds of local Habitat for Humanity affiliates. To date, volunteers have donated more than 3.5 million hours to construct 1,922 homes in the U.S.

The 2013 commitment will fund the construction and rehabilitation of 113 Habitat for Humanity homes in 31 states, including the Beach Flats home built by Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County.

"We are deeply grateful for Thrivent Financial's partnership and steadfast commitment to decent, affordable housing around the world," said Jonathan Reckford, CEO of Habitat for Humanity International. "Working together since 2005 through the Thrivent Builds programs, Habitat and Thrivent have engaged volunteers to help thousands of families improve their homes and the communities in which they live."

Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County will host a mandatory orientation for home-

ownership applicants on Saturday, January 19, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and Monday, January 21, 2013 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Both orientations, given in English and Spanish, will be held at the Beach Flats Community Center, 133 Leibrandt Ave, Santa Cruz. To register please call the Habitat office at 831-469-4663.

Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County partners with working families and the community to build affordable ownership homes in Santa Cruz County. Providing a unique solution to the local housing crisis, Habitat for Humanity Santa Cruz County has enabled more than 35 families to purchase affordable housing since 1989. For more information visit www.habitat.org

Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity is a multi-year, multi-million dollar partnership between Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and Habitat for Humanity International. Thrivent Builds is designed to involve Thrivent members and Lutherans in helping provide a “hand up” to people in need of affordable housing, offering them a path to greater economic independence. Excluding government funding, Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity is Habitat's largest single source of funding, constructing more than 2,900 homes in the U.S. and around the world since 2005. For more information, visit ThriventBuilds.com.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit, Fortune 500 financial services membership organization helping approximately 2.5 million members achieve financial security and give back to their communities. Thrivent Financial and its affiliates offer a broad range of financial products and services. Thrivent Investment Management Inc. Member FINRA and SIPC. As a not-for-profit organization, Thrivent Financial creates and supports national outreach programs and activities that help congregations, schools, charitable organizations and individuals in need. For more information, visit Thrivent.com. Also, you can find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/thrivent) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/thrivent).

Habitat for Humanity International is a global nonprofit Christian housing organization that seeks to put God’s love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. Since 1976, Habitat has served more than 500,000 families by welcoming people of all races, religions and nationalities to construct, rehabilitate or preserve homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies; and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions. For more information, to donate or to volunteer, please visit Habitat.org, or follow us <http://www.facebook.com/habitat> or at [Twitter.com/habitat.org](https://twitter.com/habitat.org) or join Habitat’s blog community at Habitat.org/blog.

Beth Bowman, Director of Resource Development & Ron Buswell, Board Chair
(831) 469-4663 office or (831) 332-1420 cell

Mary Martha / Ruth Rebecca
Thursday, January 10
10:30 am in the Fireside Room

Please bring a sandwich. Coffee and dessert will be provided.
All women are welcome!

THANKS to all of you who contributed happiness by way of mitten tree gifts to the children of the Davenport Resource Center. Your thoughtfulness and support means so much to those kids - your gift may be the only one some of them receive for Christmas and you will make them smile with joy! Also we want to thank the knitting group from St. Stephen's for making such beautiful scarves and hats for the Center's families. They will be worn with pride. The donated coats and blankets will also be appreciated. Many blessings to all of you.

Adult Forums
Sundays at 9:30

Jan. 6 "Landmarks of Luther's Germany" with Gary Meeker

Jan. 13 "Justice and Peace in the land we call Holy"
with Herb Schmidt

Jan. 20 "Thinking about Debt" with Bill Anderson

Jan. 27 No Forum due to Annual Meeting

Church Council Nominations

If you would like to recommend someone to serve on the church council, make those names known to Paul Powers by Jan. 5. Date will be extended if more nominees are needed. The commitment is a three year term and council members are expected to meet the 3rd Monday of the month and be present at the annual church meeting and council retreat. Bring your desire to lead the congregation in fulfilling its mission and purpose.

Paul Powers
paul_b_powers@juno.com or 421-1982

Steward of the Month

Dusty Gipson

As you saw earlier in this newsletter our preschool is going through a time of transition and Dusty has put in a tremendous amount of time over the holidays to ensure it goes as smooth as possible. She has been volunteering with the children several days a week to give both Tracy and Kathy much-needed support. Most of all we have been blessed by her spirit, hope and enthusiasm for **our little school's future. Thank you for reminding us that we serve because God first loved us, and for inspiring us to give our lives and care for our church in response to God's love.**

The SUBVERSIVE WAY of Jesus

February 8 — Calvary Episcopal Church
February 9 — First Congregational Church

A Two-day Workshop
Featuring: Dr. Robin Meyers
Author of “The Underground Church”

Sponsored by: The Progressive Christian Forum of Santa Cruz

Christians from all walks of life will focus on the BIG PICTURE: what the church can be and what it should be! Robin Meyers constructs a vision of an UNDERGROUND CHURCH—a church far more like the first three centuries than the last seventeen. This new underground church is SUBVERSIVE RATHER THAN SAFE, Jesus-centered rather than tradition-centered, and calls for deep involvement by followers rather than marginal participation by members.

The underground church is a NONVIOLENT COMMUNITY that replaces the word “faith” with the word “trust”; values authenticity over orthodoxy; makes Jesus a model for living rather than an object of worship; builds coalitions by working with others on issues of peace and nonviolence, radical hospitality, and economic justice; stands out from the dominant culture by engaging in subversive acts motivated by experience; expands the communion meal into a true feast; addresses issues of economic injustice; empowers activists and participates in creative noncooperation; favors counter imperial praxis to doctrinal uniformity; talks less and does more; and does no harm when harm can be avoided. In short, the underground church reclaims the subversive way of Jesus for our age.

You need not attend the entire event—am / pm and Fri / Sat. options are available. Registration forms in the narthex. Deadline Jan. 15. More info see Connie Creel.



Altar Guild info meeting & training

January 12 @ 10 am

Come learn how we prepare our church for weekly worship.

More hands are needed. Men, women and children welcome. Time commitment is minimal.

Call Candace for more info. 476-9753.

BOOK CLUB

Date: Saturday, January 26

Time: 10:30 am

Place: Fireside Room

Book: "To Heaven and Back" A Doctor's extraordinary account of her death, heaven, angels and life again. By Mary C. Neal, M.D.

Questions: Contact Candace 476-9753 or Kathy 430-6359



2013 Offering Envelopes Are Here

Please pick them up in the narthex.

Remember to bring your "Giving Card" and "Time & Abilities" sheet and place it in the offering plate any Sunday during worship.

El Salvador Sister Parish News

The Santa Cruz al Salvador Board wishes to extend a great big thank you to all of you for your continued support and your willingness to help build a relationship with your prayer child.

By the time you read this, the first delegation will have returned from El Salvador with lots of wonderful stories to share, which we will do some time in 2012. The delegation was small this time with Kent Madsen, Catherine Holmes and her daughter, Jeanette who are from Advent Lutheran in Morgan Hill. They attended the graduation ceremonies which was very special for Kent as his prayer child, Walter graduated from high school. Unfortunately Chris Madsen was unable to attend due to health issues.

The second delegation leaves January 2nd. Delegation members are from Christ Lutheran in Aptos, Advent Lutheran in Morgan Hill, **Good Shepherd in Salinas, Trinity Presbyterian and St. Stephen's in Santa Cruz.** There will be three days of clinic, craft projects, a day trip into San Salvador with several of the students, a visit to the hospital in Suchitoto and the scholarship awards ceremony. Your gift bag is very special to your prayer child so we want to thank you for being so prompt in getting the bags to the delegation prior to their departure. If you were unable to provide a gift bag, be assured that a bag was prepared for your student by the delegation. Photos of the students will be taken and presented to all sponsors upon their return.



Commitment Card

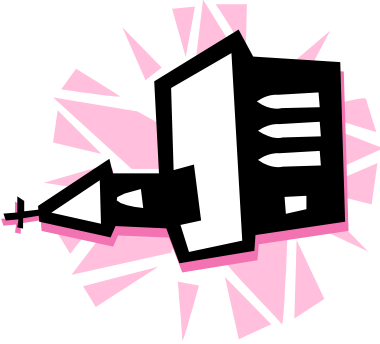
If you haven't already turned in your Prayer Child Commitment Card, please do so as soon as possible. For those of you who do not have a prayer child and are interested please contact Chris Madsen or Ruth Cruddas. We should be getting more names in January.

New Board Members Welcome

If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors of Santa Cruz al Salvador, please let us know. We meet once a month to plan our fundraising activities, review reports from our partners in El Salvador and follow up on sponsor connections with their prayer child. It is a great opportunity to serve.

Thank you again for your continued support
of our work in El Salvador.

Feliz Navidad, from
Your El Salvador representatives.



ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:15 am Worship Service

9:30 am Adult Forum & Choir Rehearsal

10:30 am Worship Service

Children's Church

Coffee Hour

St Stephen's Lutheran Church
2500 Soquel Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Non-Profit Org.
Postage Paid
Permit #79
Soquel, CA 95073

**POST OFFICE:
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

**NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON
January 7, 2013**