



ST. STEPHEN'S SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:15 am Worship Service  
Coffee Hour  
9:30 am Choir rehearsal  
10:30 am Worship Service  
& Sunday School

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  
February 22, 2010**

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



# Sun

Celebrating 55  
Years of Ministry-  
March 2010

**Holy Week & Easter Worship**

<b>Palm Sunday</b>	March 28	8:15 & 10:30 am Worship <u>"Cry of the Whole Congregation"</u>
<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	April 1	11:30 am & 7:30 pm Worship <u>"The Last Supper"</u>
<b>Good Friday</b>	April 2	7:30 pm Worship <u>"The Seven Last Words"</u>
<b>Easter Sunday</b>	April 4	8:15 am Worship 10:30 am Worship with Children's Egg Hunt

**Easter Breakfast served from 9:30 to 12 by the Youth Group**

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  
 email—office@ststephenslutheran.org  
 Rev. James P. Lapp, Pastor

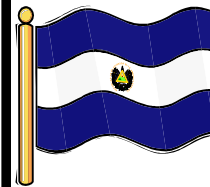
Ministers: The Entire Congregation  
 Church Council: Pres.—Paul Powers, V.P.- Robin Gloe,  
 Sec.— Bill Schraft, Treas.— Mark Linder,  
 Don Smawley, Marta Bechhoefer, Scott Medling,  
 Jeanette Dawson, and Jan Wagner  
 Directors of Music: Suzanne Duval & Gary Roberts  
 Custodian: John Hopping  
 Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp  
 Children's Minister: Dusty Gipson  
 Youth Minister: Lydia Abler

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.



El Salvador Sister Parish News

Most of you are aware that St. Stephen's has had a relationship with a group of rural communities in El Salvador (ES) since 1998. That relationship is growing beyond our wildest dreams. The Sierra-Pacific Synod (SPS) includes 204 ELCA congregations in Nevada & Calif.

Ruth Cruddas, Kent Madsen and I (Chris Madsen) are on the Synod's Global Missions Advocacy Team (GMAT). The SPS is a companion synod to El Salvador, Rwanda, and Taiwan and gave over \$110,000 in missionary sponsorship in 2007 (latest ELCA statistics). Although ES was the first companion synod, there has been very little communication between/knowledge about congregations with a relationship in ES. Putting that information together has been the priority of the ES sub-group so that news, insight, advice, etc. can be shared. Some congregations have a more formal relationship with the Lutheran church in ES through their 'Sister Parish Office', and some, like us, have more of a relationship with a community.

We are busy telling the story of the people of ES. In February, several of us gave a presentation about our organization *Santa Cruz al Salvador* to Advent Lutheran in Morgan Hill. In May, myself, Kent and Jill Adachi (the delegates from St. Stephen's) will be attending the Synod Assembly in Reno and will present a workshop on ES. Several members of St. Stephen's are traveling to ES this summer to visit (as opposed to leading a delegation). We plan to attend an International Peace March with Medardo Gomez, the current Lutheran Bishop in ES. Bishop Mark Holmerud of the SPS will also be visiting at that time and we have invited him to visit "our" community.

Of course, along with the story telling is fundraising for scholarships and the health clinic. We are currently selling See's candy, to be delivered on Palm Sunday. A lot is happening. At the heart of it is, of course, your Prayer Child. Please keep praying for him/her and their families. I join St. Paul in saying to you "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you...And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1: 3, 6). In Peace, Chris

## HAITI UPDATE

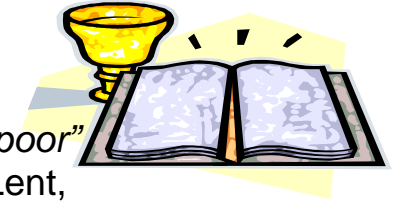
Your generosity has already accomplished so much.  
LWR Supported Work in Haiti - At a Glance:

- \* We've delivered 2,325 health kits, 1,500 layettes and 11,265 quilts (with more on the way).
- \* We are distributing 20,000 litres of water a day in Petion-ville through Lutheran World Federation (LWF).
- \* We are providing water, sanitation and shelter for 24,000 people through Norwegian Church Aid.
- \* We are establishing community stores to sell reduced-price staple foods like beans, rice and salt
- \* We are installing latrines and water filters to serve 10,000 displaced people.
- \* We are creating work programs to pay local residents for repairing vital infrastructure like irrigation systems.

Affirming God's love for all people, we work with Lutherans and partners around the world to end poverty, injustice, and human suffering.

Learn more at [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)

## From Pastor Jim...



We will end our worship services in Lent with the words: *"Go in peace. Remember the poor"* Giving to the poor is one of the disciplines of Lent, as is prayer & fasting.

In the Feb. 9 issue of the *Christian Century* the popular PBS travel show host, Rick Steves (ELCA member) was interviewed on the subject of "Travel as Political Act". One of the points he makes informs our church's ministry when he says:

*"Too often, when Christians visit a place where the people are poor they bring home quilts those people have woven, but they don't ask, 'Why are these people in such squalor?' Our goal as thoughtful travelers is to see things from an economic-justice point of view."*

This informs our ministry goals because we, too, are trying to be thoughtful travelers in our own community as we ask with our COPA partners, "Why is housing so unaffordable here?" We aren't satisfied with just referring people to the Homeless Services Center. We want to get at the root causes of homelessness.

Rick Steves decided to do the same and use an investment nest egg that was gathering interest but not doing anyone any good. He partnered with a local church & the YWCA to create 25 units of affordable housing in his own community. Rick says: "My hope is that others will partner with whomever and do something similar in their communities." We ARE doing the same by using our land that has sat empty for 50 years not doing much good for anyone! We too will be creating 25-30 units of affordable housing in one of the most unaffordable places to live in the country as we partner with Mid-Peninsula Housing Corp. I think it's pretty cool to be in league with someone like Rick Steves, and I am excited to be part of a church that remembers the poor not only with acts of charity, but also with acts of economic justice. Pray that this work will come to fruition.

## March Happenings

### Church Council

Next meeting: Mar 15 @ 7-9 PM

### Habitat for Humanity Lunches

Tuesday, Mar 9 @ 10:30 AM

### Story Book Tea

Mar 7 @ 2:30 Christ Lutheran

### Faith-full Families

Mar 21 @ 11:45 AM St Stephen's

### Knitting

Meets every Thursday at 6:45 PM

### Scotts Valley Bible Study

Meets the 1st & 3rd Fridays,

Mar 5 & 19 ~ at 10 AM

Spring Lakes Park Party Room

Contact Marshall Bautz 439-8979

### Women's Combined Circles

MM / RR meets Wed ~ Mar 3 @  
12:45 PM (this month only)

### Youth Group &

### Confirmation Class

Sundays, Mar 7, 14, 21 & 28

6-8 PM dinner included.

### Benevolence Offering

Live Oak Family Resource Ctr

## Council Highlights

1. Our community continues to be a place of desperation for some. The church was broken into again. This time it was the sanctuary and at least there was no forced entry or property damage. A microphone and computer monitor were stolen (\$400). The computer was disconnected but thankfully was left behind. The thieves may have been interrupted. They may have gotten in through the old side entrance doors. Metal plates have been installed by John Hopping to prevent that in the future. **Kent Madsen donated and installed a new monitor.** No insurance claim was made due to our \$1000 deductible. Donations to offset the microphone replacement can be given.
2. The Fire Department paid us a surprise visit during the week. Although they have come here since our new worship banners were installed, this time they decided to cite us for the banners not being fire retardant. Companies were contacted to have this done (there are 18 banners and 12 sashes) and it would cost us \$2500 to have it done. President Paul Powers took it upon himself to purchase and apply the retardant, assisted by our custodian John H

### January 2010 Revenues

Envelope actual - \$17,567

Envelope budget - \$14,500

Total Revenue actual - \$21,347

Total Revenue budget - \$18,797

Total expenditure actual - \$17,916

Total expenditure budget - \$17,771

Net actual \$5,031

Net budget - \$1485

## **Why Our Offerings Are Important: “Empowered by God—Responding by Grace”**

### **Applying Bible Principles**

Under the Old Testament economy, people were required to give to God because this was also the means of providing the government. A theocracy was in place then, which meant that government was actually operating under the direct authority and leadership of God Himself.

Today, we are under a different economy. However, we are still required to support the government. We may not like the way government operates. We may not agree with the policies of our governmental leaders. We may not even like the political process or the individuals involved in it.

But God says that is not the issue. The issue is one of obedience. He says we are to pay our taxes to whom “taxes are due” (Romans 13:7). In spite of all the ills of government, God says that governmental agencies and government leaders are His “servants” and that they operate for our ultimate “good.”

So the question is not whether we agree with or even support the work and activities of our governments at the local, state and national levels. The question is one of whether or not we will obey God. You see, it's relatively easy to sing, “Oh, How I Love Jesus.” It's far more difficult to demonstrate our love for Him by yielding to Him in full and complete obedience, especially when His commands are ones we do not care for — like paying our taxes.

If He is in charge, if He is Lord of our lives, then we will do what He tells us to do. As the little chorus states it so clearly, “I'll say, ‘Yes,’ Lord, ‘Yes,’ to Your will and to Your way; ‘Yes,’ Lord, ‘Yes,’ I will trust You and obey.” Even when it comes to paying my taxes? Even when it comes to paying my taxes!

“Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's” (Matt. 22:21).

## Mission Statements from Church Members

On the last Sunday in Jan. Rev. Bonnie Bell subbed for me as worship leader and preacher. As she looked at the gospel for that Sunday, she recognized it was where Jesus states his mission as he begins his public ministry. As part of her sermon she asked people in attendance to think about and write their own personal mission statements. Here are some samples to inspire us:

"I am a child of GOD!

Created to know God and bring others to know Him.  
Given the privilege of serving others in my roles as wife, mother, teacher, neighbor, church member, letting God's light shine through my God-given talents, skills, gifts and abilities."

"Do unto others...As you would have others do unto you"

"Therefore I am saved by faith through the grace of God. I will live my life as Christ would want me to. To be an example to others of Christ's influence in my life. To be caring, nurturing, and accepting of others. To help others wherever they are."

"To raise my recently two adopted children in the light of the Lord."

"Answer the call of the Spirit, as a lay minister. To reach financial 'critical mass' to no longer trade time for money. To create works of beauty through dance and music. Advocate good works, team coaching, set a good character example through sailing. Create beautiful sailboat creations in wood."

"To communicate God's love and availability through writing, singing, speaking and however else God leads me to serve."

## March Birthdays

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3-2 Nancy Prevedelli  | 3-23 Sheila Buswell   |
| 3-4 Amber Jett-Rice   | 3-23 Kayla Cappelloni |
| 3-4 David Robe        | 3-24 Dean Slay        |
| 3-5 Stephen Pond      | 3-31 Don Salter       |
| 3-10 Marshall Bautz   |                       |
| 3-10 Mark Mabry       |                       |
| 3-12 Theresa Loback-  |                       |
| Campbell              |                       |
| 3-12 Kyle vonSchmacht |                       |
| 3-18 Mathew Boe       |                       |
| 3-18 Keith Slay       |                       |
| 3-18 Shelby Volpi     |                       |
| 3-19 Oliver Spires    |                       |
| 3-20 Peggy Crews      |                       |
| 3-21 Mike Cruddas, Sr |                       |
| 3-22 Elizabeth Balogh |                       |



### Happy Anniversary



- |                             |
|-----------------------------|
| 3-10 Steve & Julie Mouw     |
| 3-16 Sherilyn & Bill Jager  |
| 3-29 Steven & Linda Bernard |
| 3-29 Randy & Kathy Johnson  |

### Prayer Concerns:

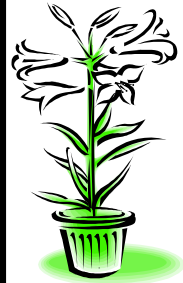
**Short Term:** Mike Cruddas & family, Aunt Kathy, Bob, Bruce, Susan, Steve, Daniel, Jan, Ruth, Marino, Marge, Kevin, Linda, Mark, Marsha, Josphe, Joanne, Irene, Linda Sl, Claudia,, Louise Daniel, Lori Margo, Henrietta Howard, Bonnie, Bev Loback, and Sebastian. **Long Term:** Clint Bell, Paul Hayes, Carly, Jeremy, Sandie, George Trippel, Jean Weiland, Carla Spain, Jim Abler, Mildred Belle, Ruth Farrar, Linda Taylor, The family of John Cahill, Ron Buswell, Dorothy Ronning, Bonnie Hansen, Susan, Jon & Judy, Devin Barlow, Alison Barlow, Jeannie Mann, Dorothy Anderson, Shirley Fuqua, Greg & Allison Pate, Aravella, Michelle & C.J. Muchanic, Suzanne Podolski, Finn Becker & family, Nathaniel Morris, Wayne Jackson, Martha Beito, Douglas Brown, Chelsea Rocha & family, Brooks & Glenn Leaman, Ruby & Bob Heppe, Larry Heppe, Linda Davis, Earl Lewis, Jeffery Patterson, Mark Gregory, Chris Tury, Cheryl Bayne, Vince Catalano, Bill Crouser, Jeanette Howe, Cathy Lorenzo, Ron Waltrip, Ernie, Debbie Jackson, The Oldfield family, Jo Wishart, Bruce, Susan, the jobless, Sister Parish, Schools, Our Youth, Our Troops, Pres. Obama & family, The people of Haiti, Peace & Healing for all the earth.

## Youth Corner

We are back and ready for action! Here is the line-up:

### "Radical Hospitality" High School Youth Retreat

At Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley on March 12-14.  
Turn in the reg. fee (\$85.00 per youth) and Medical Release Form ASAP.



### Easter Lilly Sales

Now through March 21, table after worship.  
Make checks payable to St. Stephen's Youth for \$15.

### Hosting Easter Breakfast

Decorate & Prep on Saturday,  
Serve Sunday (shifts TBD)



### Volunteer Service Projects

I have asked each of the youth to select a local organization they would like to volunteer for. I will also be asking them to keep an on-going journal of the work they are doing and lessons they are learning.

Final Thought...We are all members of many Communities, ranging in size from small (our family and friends) to large (global! Does it get any bigger?). All of our communities are under a lot of stress, especially with the current economic concerns. I feel, very strongly, that it is important for us all to find a way to relieve some of that stress - Which is why I have asked the youth to spend a little bit of their time to help local organizations in need. When we all help a little bit, a lot of great big things can happen!

Thank you! Lydia Abler

Home: 831-421-0996 or Cell: 408-319-1413 or Twitter: MinistryThruMus  
Email: <mailto:ministry\_thru\_music@yahoo.com>

## (Friendly Church continued)

with out of the ordinary circumstances (e.g. absent regular pastor; absent worship team; families away for the holiday), but I would have returned in my determined quest to find a church home. If the second or third visit were also flat, I would have looked elsewhere. Not all visitors would be that determined.

It may be possible, with a church that size, that some of the members might have suspected that our family were regulars from a different service time. (I'm sure we did, after all, seem quite comfortable with the liturgy and knew just when and how to respond throughout the service). Not wanting to embarrass themselves, or possibly us, they may have held back from a potential inappropriate introduction. In their effort to avoid a potentially embarrassing moment, however, they may very well have avoided the opportunity to welcome new members! Even if I had been a member who usually attended a different service time, I would not have been offended if a fellow-member greeted me saying something like, "Hi, I'm Kirk. I don't believe I have met you!" (Not that one must call himself "Kirk" for me to feel comfortable)! :-)

Studies show that people make up their minds about continued attendance at a church within the first few minutes of their visit. A nice, cheerful family greeted us at the church where we visited, and the ushers were all smiles. Unfortunately, though I initially felt welcomed, that's where the warmth ended. There was no follow up past the entrance.

This experience caused me to ponder about my own efforts to extend a warm welcome to unfamiliar faces during my Sundays at St. Stephen's. I invite you to do the same. When you walk into the sanctuary and spot someone new to you, do you go over and introduce yourself? If you're sitting close to a visitor and they seem lost, do you help them find their place in the bulletin? When church is over, do you make it a point to say hello to the visitors, even if you greeted them during some other part of the service? We have assigned ushers who try to make the visitors welcome, but so did the church I visited. Is the visitor to our sanctuary made to feel recognized, and important in our church on Sundays? When people visit, do they feel welcome or do we have our "off" Sundays? Are we a consistently friendly church? Hmm. Something to ponder and pray about.

## Are We a Friendly Church?

By Kirk McMilin

I went to a church up by Sacramento the Sunday after Christmas, and I would like to share some of my impressions as a visitor in that church.

The sanctuary looked new and probably sat around 300. The church also housed a Christian school, evidenced by the signs and photographs displayed on bulletin boards. When our family walked through the front doors we entered a large foyer, and were greeted by a family who shook our hands, and welcomed us warmly. I thought they were the ushers, but, apparently, they were the greeters. The ushers were in front of the sanctuary doors cheerfully handing out bulletins. When we sat down we were 7 or 8 minutes early, but no one came over and introduced him or herself. We silently waited for the service to begin, with no word, nor friendly exchange from any of the parishioners.

The hymns, that Sunday, were all Christmas songs, but none of them were the recognizable, standards. The worship team was absent that week, so there was no vocal leadership, and the congregation didn't sing out very confidently. Every song felt kind of flat and low energy. At St. Stephen's, when we "pass the peace" people wander across the sanctuary greeting each other. I didn't see too many people crossing the aisles to pass the peace, nor did anyone seem to make a point of seeking out visitors. No one introduced himself or herself to us during the passing of the peace, and only those in close proximity greeted our family. The service liturgy was from the traditional green book. Again, with no worship team to assist in vocal leadership, it seemed a little lackluster.

After the service ended, we shook the guest pastor's hand and took a peek in the gymnasium. When we headed to the front doors, I caught the eye of a couple of gentlemen who smiled, but they didn't offer a hand or any cheerful words. For a guest seeking anonymity, the degree of amiability (or lack thereof) may have been appropriate; however, for one hoping for an inclusive, friendly, atmosphere and a potential church home, this congregation's welcome was weak.

If I had moved into the area and was looking for a church, I would have excused my less-than-ideal first-time-experience at that church knowing it was a "holiday Sunday"

## Sunday School News

Dear Sunday School Families,

Spring is almost here and I can't wait to share the fun we are going to have in March!



### March 7

Life and times of Jesus pictictionary game

### March 14

New song and Who is Jesus? project

### March 21

More new song practice and continue Jesus project

### March 28

Quiet time with God

Please let me know if you would be interested in helping out with any of these Sunday School classes.

In February, Sunday School students delivered over 100 Valentine's to convalescent home residents in Santa Cruz. The kids had a great time and brightened the day of many elderly people. I look forward to future projects that will allow our children the opportunity to reach out to the larger community.

Please contact me if you have any questions, comments or ideas that might make this Sunday School program better for the children of this congregation.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely, Dusty Gipson

831-338-3787 home or [dustygipson@yahoo.com](mailto:dustygipson@yahoo.com)



## “SVETLANA’S STORY”

A film based on the true story of one woman’s experience of slavery

March 1—7:00 P.M.

UCSC Kresge College, Rm. 321

Contact Truett Bobo 475-8473

## Property Work Day

Saturday, March 27 9am-Noon

Note the Date Change!



## STEWARD OF THE MONTH - Paul Powers

This was easy to pick because Paul is going way beyond basic stewardship with this banner and fire retardant application work (see Council Highlights). Not only is he saving the church thousands of dollars, but instead of getting upset and wringing his hands of the whole thing, Paul saw a need and filled it. And it was a pretty big, unexpected need. Stewardship is knowing all that we have is a gift from God and that we need to take good care of it. Thanks for taking good care of our church, Paul.



## Mt. Cross Summer Camp is Coming!!!

- Sign up your grandchildren for a week of swimming, Bible encounters, hiking Making new friends and singing.
- Your child could spend a week in the TREEHOUSES!
- Tell children down the street
- Pay a youth’s way for the CIT leadership program
- Brochures are in the narthex

Www.mtcross.org or 336-5179

## Three Cups of Tea Dinner

Wed. March 3 @ 6:00

Khyber Pass Restaurant

To benefit the Central Asia Institute

Book Review Discussion led by Herb & Grace Schmidt

Ahmad Zaki Mubarez will speak about the need for schools and education, and share his mother’s teaching experience in Afghanistan.

\$20 adult / \$15 Student