



ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:15 am Worship Service

Coffee Hour

9:30 am Adult Forum & 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

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**NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON
November 21, 2011**

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



Sun

Celebrating 57
Years of Ministry
December 2011


The Season of Advent

We join together in preparing for God's loving the world through Christ on the four Sundays of Advent:
Nov. 27, Dec. 4, 11 & 18

We will observe the tradition of lighting the Advent Wreath. We will also pray for those who may not have a church home with the intention of inviting them to Christmas Eve Service.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services
Saturday, Dec. 24th ~ 5:00 & 7:30pm
(includes a special children's time)
and 11:00 pm (with Holy Communion)

Christmas Day Worship ~10 am



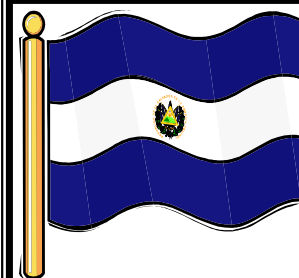
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
2500 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz, California 95062
Phone—831-476-4700 — Fax—831-476-3918
www..ststephenslutheran.org
email—office@ststephenslutheran.org
Rev. James P. Lapp, Pastor

Ministers: The Entire Congregation
Church Council: Pres. —Robert Bartee, V. P. —Paul Powers,
Treasurer—Tom Eagle, Secretary—Scott Medling,
Property—Don Smawley, Kim Cappelloni, Barbara
Rice, Marta Bechhoefer, and Jeanette Dawson
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

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 relationships with your prayer child. The Pupusa meal was a great success, not only in funds raised but in the fellowship. There was a lot of energy in that room!

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. They will be having a medical and dental clinic, as well as attending graduation. They also hope to meet with some of the University scholarship recipients.

The second delegation leaves Jan. 5. Chris and Kent Madsen are the only people from St. Stephen's on this delegation. Other delegation members are from Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Salinas and we are very excited to welcome 2 people from Christ Lutheran in Aptos. Their focus will be 2 craft projects with a Christian theme, along with some singing.

To all Sponsors – the delegation leaving Jan. 5 will be present at the scholarship ceremony. This is when we help distribute the school supplies, and will give the children the letter & picture that you promised to send when you signed your commitment card. (Remember that promise?) If you would like to send a small gift to your prayer child, Chris & Kent Madsen have room and will be happy to take your gift, confined in a 1 gal storage bag. (no larger than that – please). Suggested items: t-shirt, sleeveless tops for girls, pens, pencils, hair and nail stuff for girls, candy treats (that don't melt), yo-yo's & other small toys, etc. We need them by Jan. 1.

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.

Holiday See's Candy Sale – Candy will be available on Sunday, December 11th.

Thank you again for your continued support of our work in El Salvador.
Feliz Navidad, from Your El Salvador representatives.

News from Lutheran Campus Ministry of Monterey Bay

The fall quarter is well under its way at University of California, Santa Cruz. Although it has only been a month, some of the students are already up to their ears in mid-terms, group projects and other activities that keep them busy. It has been a busy and an exciting month for Lutheran Campus Ministry on this campus, as well.

We started off by tabling at OPERS, a student club fair, on September 22. This is an opportunity to make connections with new, as well as returning students. We are happy to see that the number of sing-ups at our table slowly, but certainly keeps increasing every year.

We are continuing providing rides for students to worship at a local church occasionally following it up by lunch and fellowship time. Our young adult Bible Conversations continue meeting bi-weekly, and we are looking for new and creative ways to engage young people with the Bible (maybe an on-line Bible Study?). We are also involved in service to our community by participating in Habitat for Humanity builds, organizing Trick or Treat for canned food to be donated to Santa Cruz AIDS project, and volunteering at an after-school program at the local Homeless Shelter twice a week.

Beginning of the year in many ways is determining of what the rest of the year will look like. At this busy time, I do thank you for your support through your prayers, financial contributions, and volunteering. With your help, we are continuing to support young adults on UCSC and CSUMB campuses not only in their spiritual walk, but in their need for community, their desire to serve, and more.

Inese Dahl
UCSC, Lutheran Campus Minister

(October issue)

From Pastor Jim



How many of us would describe our church as a “powerful church”? And even if we did, wouldn’t most people think we meant that it was super inspiring or spiritually uplifting in some kind of an ethereal way?

I just returned from a conference in San Jose with 75 other church leaders from around the country, which was hosted by the Industrial Areas Foundation, which is the non-profit organization we partner with in COPA. We spent a lot of time examining what the nature of power is and how it relates to our community work.

Much of the justice-type work we are trying to do in our community requires us to confront and work with the “powers-that-be” - whether that be elected officials, influential businesses, or other ways that large decisions get made. And often-times we associate the word “power” negatively when linked with such things. We see power corrupted so often that we tend to shy away from connecting it with something like our friendly, wonderful church.

I would like to challenge our standard way of thinking about power. I think we should have a goal of being described as a “powerful church”. Why should the bad guys have all the attention when it comes to power, when WE have a better understanding of what power ought to be?

We know that power can be used for the good of people, and that it should be used especially to help whom Jesus called “the least of these” in Matthew 25. Our work with COPA, Mid-Peninsula Housing and our efforts to begin our own preschool are all such attempts at claiming our own power in our community for “the least of these”. As we work with our partner institutions in COPA, as we did last Wed. night in Salinas we are becoming a more powerful church. And instead of just muddling along and reacting to the problems that corrupt power creates, we are becoming leaders in our community as we shape it to be a more caring place to live. Kind of like the Kingdom of God we hear so much about in the Bible. It’s good to be a powerful church.

December Happenings

Text Study & Sermon Talk

Join Pr Jim Tuesdays @ 11:00

Knitting

Meets every Thurs at 6:45 PM

Holiday Boutique & Bake Sale

Dec 4, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Fireside

Christmas Pageant

Dec 4, 10:30 AM

COPA Core

Dec 4, 11:45 AM

Women's Holiday Soup Luncheon

Thurs, Dec. 8, 12:00 PM

Home of Lu Sluiter

Christmas Caroling

Sat, Dec 10, 9:00 AM

Friendship Christmas Party

Sun, Dec 11, 5:30 PM Lu Sluiter's

Church Council

Monday, Dec. 19, 7-9 PM

St. Olaf College Xmas Festival

(100th anniversary program) Live Simulcast Sunday, Dec. 4 @ 12:30 Regal Cinema 9

Santa Cruz Corale

Dec 16—18

www.santacruzchorale.org/tickets

Council Highlights

1. The Women's Circle welcomed two staff members from the Churchwide WELCA office in Chicago. They were attending a planning workshop for the 2014 National WELCA Conference and called to attend the meeting. They offered an update as to the many ministry opportunities and resources the ELCA offers for women's groups. We think it may have been the first time our church has been visited by leaders from the Churchwide office.
2. The Long Range Task Force met on consecutive nights with two reps. from organizations that assist with Capital Campaigns and helping congregations develop strategic plans for their future. The two organizations that are being considered are The James Company and Kairos. They both come highly recommended by local Lutheran congregations and both interviews went very well. One will be decided upon to help us identify our programming and financial goals to help us meet our 5 year plan. Specifically, we will look to raise funds for a new bathroom near the entrance of the church (also for preschool), expansion of the fellowship hall, a new kitchen, and sanctuary renovations.
3. The Field Task Force met with Betsy Wilson from Mid-Pen. Housing for an update. We did not receive HUD 202 funding and the program is being cut in the future. This hurts our ability to provide senior housing. Other options will be pursued. The good news is that they will likely be able to build a new preschool facility for us!

A well-known evangelist said that the world has yet to see what could be accomplished for the sake of the gospel if we would quit being concerned about who gets the credit for what gets done in the kingdom of God. That includes our giving. In fact, one of the greatest tests for us as God's children is whether we are able to give cheerfully of ourselves and our resources without getting the credit.

Unless we give by cash and choose to forgo a tax deduction for our giving (hmm . . . now there's a novel idea!), probably the person who handles the church's financial affairs will be aware of our giving. Otherwise, though, it's a good idea to keep our giving a matter that's between ourselves and the Lord. Actually, it's more than a good idea. It's something Christ said we should do. . . .

2012 Offering Envelopes Are Here

Please pick them up in the narthex.

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



TAKING OUR OFFERING SERIOUSLY

Applying Bible Principles

Male peacocks are interesting creatures. They love to be noticed, so they spread their bright plumage for any and all to see (especially female peacocks!).

Many people are like that, especially when it comes to their financial support of the Lord's work. They want people to notice their act of giving, when they give, how much they give, and the causes to which they give. Some even announce publicly how much they give, supposedly to challenge others to follow their pattern of generosity.

But is that God's way? A simple examination of the sixth chapter of Matthew's gospel reveals the answer. The Lord Jesus said that our giving is to be done secretly. If we take His instruction at face value, then it is apparent that we are not to let others know the extent of our giving. In fact, Jesus went so far as to say (figuratively, of course) that we shouldn't even let one hand know what the other is doing when it comes to our giving.

Sometimes, our giving will be seen by men. Sometimes, that's unavoidable. But Christ's point concerns our motive. We should give to please our Lord, not in order to be seen by other people so that we receive their commendation or accolades. In other words, we are to avoid what one writer described as "advertised piety."

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December Birthdays

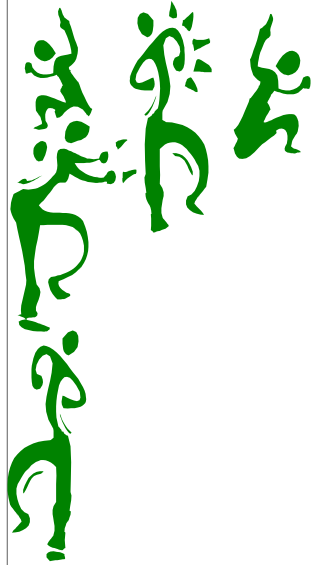
- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 12-4 Carol Bobo | 12-20 Stefan Meek |
| 12-5 Ruth Gonzales | 12-20 Greg Weber |
| 12-6 Don Smawley | 12-21 Robin Gloe |
| 12-7 Donald Daves | 12-22 Vern Lillehaugen |
| 12-8 Kirk Adams | 12-26 Shay Barsabe |
| 12-8 Maryann Hurttgam | 12-28 Brad Tuttle |
| 12-11 Julie Gilbertson | 12-31 Darren Crews |
| 12-12 Zack Larson | 12-31 Paul Cunningham |
| 12-13 Cary Helgueros | 12-31 Jeanette Dawson |
| 12-14 Sheryl Brouse | 12-31 Dusty Gipson |
| 12-15 Robert Bartee | |
| 12-18 Todd Johnson | 11-7 Zach Hayes |
| 12-18 Molly Mouw | |



- 12-04 Peggy & Phil Crews
- 12-04 John & Kathy Hopping
- 12-05 Wayne & Jill Adachi
- 12-05 Mike & Ruth Cruddas
- 12-17 Alfred & Ruth Mitchell
- 12-22 Chris & Lorie Juhl

Prayer Concerns: Short Term: Lisa Pawalkat, Pat Kress, Jean Hart & Gail Evans, John Hathaway, Cpl. Stephen Hayes, Corrina Kant, William, Christine, Stefan, Kevin, Marge, Marino, Leah, Joe, Marsha, Artie, Babe, Victims of flooding in El Salvador, Henrietta Howard, Marty Picco & family, Kaitlin Cahill, Evan and Mrs. Milnes.

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



Youth Corner

All High School Youth & friends are invited to:

“Citizens with the Saints tour”

December 2 - 7 pm
Grace Lutheran, Palo Alto

In preparation for the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, people are gathering in over 20 cities across the country for a day of music, storytelling and worship. The “Citizens with the Saints” Tour features artists from the Gathering, including

Agape* and Rachel Kurtz!!! You remember them from L.A. !!
So what is this all about?

- Raise awareness for ELCA World Hunger
- Inspire youth to be the hands, feet and ears of Jesus in their community
- Experience a taste of what the Gathering is going to be like

* Youth Group will begin monthly meetings in January *

Poinsettia Sale



The annual Poinsettias are sold to support our Youth Group. You will have a dedication printed in the bulletin on Christmas Eve. The plants will grace the sanctuary during Christmas services, and then you will be able to bring your plant home to enjoy for the rest of the holiday season. Sign up, or call the office.

\$15 to “St. Stephens Youth Group” by Dec. 5.

STEWARDS OF THE MONTH

The lively Newsletter Crew that has been collating together for years. The team leader, LU SLUITER and LISA PAWALKAT come a day early to do the labeling and sorting for bulk mail. The dedicated crew - TRUETT BOBO, BECKY CRAMER, JOANNE FREYMUTH, GWYN LARSON, LOIS & GARY MEEKER, and HJORDIS QUITZAU - carry on the most interesting conversations, and laugh their way through the pages. What a blessing that they can take such a mundane job and turn it into such fellowship. Leslie so appreciates your taking care of this huge task. In the office, her time flies & it seems as if it's always newsletter time! Thank you for continuing to share your time every month for God's glory.

Financials

	Oct.'11	Oct.'10	Jan-Oct '11	Jan-Oct '10	Jan—Oct Budget
<u>Income</u>					
Contrib.	\$20,638	\$19,904	\$175,661	\$180,275	\$176,853
Misc.	\$332	\$327	\$6,687	\$7,398	\$4,600
Total	\$20,969	\$20,231	\$182,348	\$187,673	\$181,453
<u>Expenses</u>					
Total	\$16,831	\$17,945	\$185,238	\$192,431	\$187,211
<u>Net Income</u>	\$4,138	\$2,287	-\$2,890	-\$4,758	-\$5,758



Circle's Christmas Boutique & Bake Sale

Sunday, Dec. 4th from 8:00 to noon

We will need: breads, cakes, pies, candy, nuts, and craft items too. Please wrap your baked goods in cellophane and tie with a red or green ribbon. Boutique items can be brought between 1:00 and 3:00 Saturday. Baked goods no later than Sunday 8:00 am. We will price items. Questions, call Lu 475-8418

MM / RR Circle Christmas Luncheon

Thursday, December 8 @ Noon

Please join us at the home of Lu Sluiter (141 Cabrillo St., Capitola). Lu Sluiter and Lois Meeker are preparing a soup luncheon. All ladies are invited to attend & you need not bring a thing! RSVP to Lu at 475-8418 by Dec. 5.

In Memoriam

Cheryl Bayne - A long-time member who struggled mightily with Multiple Sclerosis, especially the last 12 years. She shared her gift of calligraphy with the church until she was unable to.

Frank Shogren - Cathy Yost's son who was a very active leader at St. Stephen's for many years. Frank built the Fireside Rm, Offices, and Storage Sheds. He also took great pride in organizing and elaborately adorning the sanctuary for Christmas.

Sunday School News

Families and Friends, please join us for our annual Sunday School Christmas Pageant:

"Christmas in Bethlehem"
Sunday, December 4th
during the 10:30 service

Full dress rehearsal
on Saturday, December 3rd from 3-5pm
Pizza provided

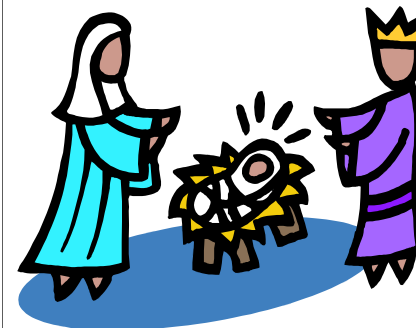
In addition to our Christmas pageant and holiday celebration, this month we will also be working on our Bags for Inmates project. The children will decorate lunch bags, make holiday cards, and gather items such as candy bars, chips, etc. for inmates at the Santa Cruz County Jail. This is such a wonderful opportunity for our children to share God's love with others.

Thanks so much to all who helped us gather 79 bars of soap for the Rebele Family Shelter. This was even more than we collected last year!

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

Sincerely,

Dusty Gipson
338-3787 home
dustygipson@yahoo.com



* SAVE THE DATE: February 24-26 *
3rd—5th grade Mt. Cross Retreat
Chaperones needed





Friendship Christmas Party

Dec. 11th at 5:30 pm

Lu Sluiter's Home—141 Cabrillo St., Capitola
RSVP 475-8418 by Dec. 8

Bring: Finger food (not dessert) to share and



**Saturday Dec. 10
9:00 am @ church**

The holidays will be with us before we know it. I have booked the "St. Stephen's Christmas Choir" to sing carols at two retirement communities. We will be singing for the residents of Driftwood Health Care Center at 9:45 am for a little more than one half hour. Then we scurry over to Pacific Coast Manor to sing for the folks there from 10:45 am to 11:30.

Please arrive at Church no later than 9:00 am. We will provide music books for you. I'll hold a quick rehearsal of the carols that we plan to sing and then we'll be off. Dress festively and feel free to bring sleigh bells, or car keys to jingle when we sing.

I hope many of you can join us. It's always a gratifying experience to witness the power of music, particularly during the Holidays. Many of the residents love it when we come, especially when we ask them to sing along.

After singing, we will return to St. Stephen's and if we're lucky, Paul Powers might provide us with some delicious hot chocolate and some other tasty treats.

In peace, Suzanne Duval

Blue Christmas Worship Service

Sunday, December 18th at 7 p.m.

St. Stephen's will be offering a Blue Christmas Service -- a time when the "blue" feelings many people experience during the holidays can be acknowledged.

This is not a joyous season for everyone. Greetings of Merry Christmas or Happy Holidays, non-stop caroling, parties, and pageants, and other traditional ways of celebrating the holidays often contrast sharply with the feelings of people for whom it's not "the most wonderful time of the year." For families suffering from the recent or impending death of loved ones or in crisis due to illness or any other kind of loss, or for those who suffer from Christmas depression or other mental illness, it can be a very isolated and lonely time.

In this Blue Christmas Service, all those who are not having a very Merry Christmas for whatever reason, and the friends who support them, are invited to come and be with one another in a liturgy that speaks of the compassionate love of God for His hurting people. Together we will offer up our pain, sorrow, anxiety, and loneliness to the One whose birth we commemorate -- our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is our prayer that those who attend will be blessed with peace, hope, and especially the comfort of knowing they are not alone.



Gifts that keep on giving

See lwrgifts.org or 800-597-5972 or elca.org/good gifts 800-638-3522 for meaningful gifts that inspire leadership, nourish the hungry, and heal the sick. Including LWR fair trade coffee & chocolate!