



ST. STEPHEN'S SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:15 am Worship Service
Coffee Hour
9:30 am Choir rehearsal & Adult Forum
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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St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



Sun

Celebrating 57
Years of Ministry
March 2011

**March 9—Ash Wednesday Services
March 9—April 13 Wed. Lenten Services**

Every Wednesday during Lent
We have TWO opportunities to gather:

**Worship—11:30 am, Soup lunch—12:30
Soup Supper—6:30 pm, Worship @ 7:15pm**



These worship gatherings are designed to help us reflect more deeply on our walk of faith with God. The Season of Lent calls all Christians into a time of fasting, prayer and additional giving in order to help us prepare for the miracle of the Resurrection at Easter. Please sign up on Sunday to help host a soup lunch or supper. We need at least two families to sign up for each soup supper. These services are also the time we collect special offerings to help subsidize our Vacation Bible School for the children.

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

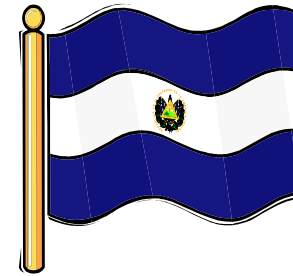
Ministers: The Entire Congregation
Church Council: Robert Barteo, Kim Cappelloni, Paul Powers,
Barbara Rice, Don Smawley, Marta Bechhoefer,
and Jeanette Dawson
Secretary— Scott Medling, Treasurer— Tom Eagle
Directors of Music: Suzanne Duval
& Gary Roberts
Custodian: John Hopping
Church Administrator: 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

El Salvador Sunday March 13 "Deepening Relationships"

"Don't forget"... this is the task before us. Why is it so important not to forget the suffering of the Salvadoran people? Or any people? "Don't forget" These were the words we heard so often when we left our sister parish in El Salvador on my first visit - "Please don't forget us". I have returned seven times now, while Chris, Kent, Ruth, Mike and others from Santa Cruz al Salvador have returned year after year for more years than I can count! And guess what? We don't hear "Don't forget us" anymore. "Compassion" - that means to "suffer with". This is how we don't forget.

On our last delegation in November we continued to deepen and strengthen our relationships as we listened to the stories of our prayer children's parents. As we listened, cried, laughed and quietly reflected, we were invited into relationships as equals with some of the most courageous and amazing people we have ever met. Through our yearly visits with our prayer children we are led to a deeper commitment and identification with the people of our Sister Parish and the God of the poor.

It is only fitting that our El Salvador Sunday will be on March 13, the first Sunday in Lent. Special guests from Trinity Presbyterian who were on the last delegation will participate in both of our services. I feel that I can speak for many of my co-delegation members when I say that our trips to El Salvador have been instrumental in helping us to re-think our own lives and knock us off our normal, comfortable routines in order to question what it is that God wants of us, and to live a more conscientious life. I hope that all of you will be able to make it to one of the services to hear some of the stories and up dates.

Thank you, Lisa Johnson

Living a Life of Significance

**Excerpts by Barbara Droher - Kline
President & CEO, Lutheran Social Services of N. CA**

I had the pleasure of attending a Thrivent dinner in Pleasanton with a group of donors and staff. The guest speaker was my colleague from the LSS of America Board, Dr. Kurt Senske. Dr. Senske is the CEO of LSS of the South (Texas) and also president of the Thrivent board of directors. Kurt shared his experiences in seeking to “live a life of significance”, as documented in his newest book, *The Calling: Live a Life of Significance*.

Kurt spoke of having a personal mission, tying in both Thrivent’s vision and Lutheran social ministry. His talk energized the room! Lutherans and non-Lutherans alike (including at least one Buddhist guest) felt inspired by what he had to say, as did I.

His talk reminded me of a Harvard class I took several years ago. The room was made up of a state and local executives from around the world. The mission of the professor, Marty Linske, was to find those in the class in positions of privilege who had the power to protect their position, or to risk those positions to make significant changes. Turns out, most of the class were risk adverse!

I have found that leading a life of significance, also means taking personal and professional risks, just as Jesus and his followers have, to help those with little or no privilege in our society and in our world.

Partnerships build on shared visions and energy. In these trying times, LSS is continuing to build on our partnerships, our history, and our experiences to renew our mission to serve those in need. Please review your renewed calling and consider those served by LSS in your call to “live a life of significance.”



From Pastor Jim

More and more I am thinking that the craziest, strangest, most radical thing we do at St. Stephen’s is show up in church on Sunday morning!



Is it just me or do you feel like it is harder and harder to find a reason to make Sunday morning worship a regular priority in one’s spiritual life? It still baffles me how we can have only 25% of our own members in church on any Sunday. Is there such great competition for our attention and time that even that one little hour and a half gets squeezed out of our lives? What keeps us and anyone else in our community from coming to church when there is so much good that happens in such a relatively short amount of time?

Sure, it’s not always an earth-shaking, life-changing, inspiring experience, but isn’t even having the chance to encounter God and be totally embraced by God’s grace and love enough? Isn’t it enough to join with 2000 years of the journey of the Christian faith and glean the insights and guidance for the living of these days? Isn’t it enough to want to participate in keeping that faith of the church alive and well far into the future? Isn’t it enough to connect with our family and nurture those relationships of faith that help us meet the many needs God calls us to serve? If you haven’t been here very much, please know that you are deeply missed and that our church is diminished without your regular presence.

As Lent approaches may we all re-dedicate ourselves to most basic outward and inward sign that our relationship with God is the most important thing in our lives: Regular Sunday Morning Worship!

March Happenings

Adult Forum

“Living the Questions”
Sundays at 9:30 am

Text Study & Sermon Talk

Join Pr Jim Tuesdays @ 11:00

Youth Group & Confirmation

Sundays from 6:30-8 pm

StoryBook Tea

Sunday, Mar. 6 & 27th @ 2:30

Habitat for Humanity Lunches

Tuesday, Mar. 8 @ 10:30 am

Mary Martha/Ruth Rebecca

Thursday, Mar 10, 10:30 am

FaithFull Families

Sunday, Mar 20, 11:45 am

Church Council

Monday, Mar 21, 7-9 pm

Choir

Rehearses Sundays at 9:30 am

Band

Meets every Thurs at 6:30 pm

Knitting

Meets every Thurs at 6:45 pm

Benevolence Offering

Live Oak Family Resource Ctr

Council Highlights

1. Council does not meet until after this newsletter has to be mailed out so this column will feature an Annual Congregational Meeting summary.
2. Thank you to Gwyn Larsen and Donna Sorensen and crew for organizing and providing a lovely brunch to sustain us for a longer than normal meeting!
3. Robin Gloe, Mark Linder and Bill Schraft were deeply thanked for giving their time and leadership abilities for our church on the council.
4. Kim Cappelloni, Barbara Rice and Robert Bar-tee were elected to new 3-year terms on the church council.
5. Kent and Christine Madsen were elected as our Synod Assembly delegates. It will be held in Burlingame Fri. May 13-15. Because of our close relationship over the years with Bishop Medardo Gomez of the Lutheran Church of El Salvador, it was great that the Madsens were willing to attend, as Bishop Gomez will be a guest speaker at the Assembly.
6. After an important question/answer time with staff members of Mid-Peninsula Housing, the congregation overwhelmingly voted in favor of a motion to enter into a Ground Lease/Option with them to develop and manage up to 30 units of affordable senior housing. The church will receive a lump-sum lease payment of \$750,000. Typically it takes about 4 years from this point for the housing to be completed.
7. Treasurer Tom Eagle gave a detailed budget presentation that included having to cut our Assoc. Musician position in half (\$4750) in order to balance a realistic budget. We were all encouraged to find ways to increase our giving even a little bit in order to prevent more cuts next year.

(“Faithful Stewards” continued)

By withholding tithes and offerings. Despite this, God patiently instructs us to bring the whole tithe into the storehouse and offers a challenge to us. Concerning the tithe, God says, in essence, “Prove Me. Try Me. Put Me to the test. And see — in response to your obedience — if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”

If you are one who tithes, you know how God keeps promises. You have settled this issue in your heart. If you are not one who tithes, why not take God at His Word. Here’s how: Take stock of your present financial situation, and then step out by faith. Put God to the test by tithing for six months or so. Then take stock again. You will find that God has kept His promise and provided specific, tangible blessings in your life in response to your obedience. Tithing, you see, is not God’s way of raising money to pay the church’s bills. Tithing is God’s way of growing God’s children.

As you consider your giving and your offering to the Lord next Sunday at St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church, will you say “thank you” to God and “move up to the tithe” so you can know the full benefit of growing in your faith?



*give and it will
be given to you*

A GOOD MEASURE
PRESSED DOWN
SHAKEN TOGETHER
RUNNING OVER.
LUKE 6 : 38

WHY OUR OFFERINGS ARE IMPORTANT

“Faithful Stewards of God’s Infinite Grace”

Some people view principles of the Old Testament as ending with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. After all, this great event marked the end of the old era and the establishment of the new covenant. One area in which people think this way is that of tithing (financial giving of 10% of income). They reason as follows: “When you can show me in the New Testament where it says, ‘Thou shalt tithe,’ then I will tithe.”

Although on the surface that reasoning sounds O.K., there are at least two major problems with it. First, nowhere does the New Testament state, “Thou shalt **not** tithe.” Second, the reason the New Testament does not contain that statement is that tithing was not a requirement that started when the law was given. The principle of tithing existed before the law and during the law; it has never been rescinded by God. So, even though the power of the law came to an end when Christ died on Calvary, tithing did not. It was part of the relationship with God before the law existed.

In fact, tithing simply follows the pattern of “first fruits” giving by which we give to God the first part of our income, not the bits and pieces which might be left over. Tithing is putting our giving to God first rather than at the end of our spending after all of our bills are paid.

Tithing is an area of our Christianity that requires faith in God’s promises and provisions. Let’s face it — at first glance, tithing really isn’t very logical. After all, if you can’t make ends meet on 100%, how can you make ends meet on 90% or less?

In Malachi 3, God issues a serious indictment against His people. God says we have robbed Him. How have we done this? Offerings. Then He patiently instructs us to bring the whole tithe into His storehouse and offers a challenge to us. Concerning the tithe, God says, in essence, “Prove Me. Try Me. Put Me to the test. And see — in response to your obedience — if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”

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Stephen Olford wrote this: “Abraham gave tithes to God through Melchizedek, the king-priest. According



March Birthdays

| | | | |
|------|------------------|------|------------------|
| 3-2 | Nancy Prevedelli | 3-18 | Keith Slay |
| 3-5 | Stephen Pond | 3-19 | Oliver Spires |
| 3-6 | Beverly Hickman | 3-20 | Peggy Crews |
| 3-10 | Marshall Bautz | 3-21 | Mike Cruddas Sr |
| 3-10 | Mark Mabry | 3-22 | Elizabeth Balogh |
| 3-12 | Theresa Loback- | 3-23 | Sheila Buswell |
| | Campbell | 3-23 | Kayla Cappelloni |
| 3-12 | Kyle vonSchmacht | 3-24 | Dean Slay |
| 3-18 | Matthew Boe | 3-31 | Don Salter |
| 3-18 | Shelby Volpi | | |



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

Prayer Concerns: **Short Term:** MaryAnn & Joel, Gail & Nancy, Sonja Peterson & family, Renie Leaman, Beverly Gilladett, Kathybell, Greg Weber, Margaret & Bill Schraft, Mike Brag, Harold Vaughn, Cardine, Hildegard & Robert Grotjan, Eddie Fococci, Alan Giersberg, Mark Griffon, Jill Lapp, Richard Wedemeyer, Madaline Massa, Pastor Martir, Steve Hintze, Bruce, Lorena & Saul, Doreen & family, Elena, Steve, Daniel, Dylan Foster. **Long Term:** Kaitlin Cahill, Opa & Nana Meerman, Dan Meck Family, Dorothy & Gary, Robe Family, Kaitlyn McKinney, Clint & Bonnie, Maya & Emma, Chrissy DeStefano, Nicco Hall DeStefano, Betty, Faith Conrad, Paul Hayes family, Allison Bolin, JoAnn, Eric Hedsrom, Jim Boone, George Trippel, Jean Weiland, Carla Spain, Mildred Belle, Linda Taylor, Ron Buswell, Dorothy Ronning, Bonnie Hansen, Jon & Judy, Peggy, Ned R., Devin Barlow, Alison Barlow, Dorothy Anderson, Shirley Fuqua, Greg & Allison Pate, Aravella, Michelle & CJ Muchanic, Suzanne Podolski, Wayne Jackson, Martha Beito, Chelsea Rocha Family, Brooks & Glenn Leaman, Bob Heppe, Jeffery Patterson, Mark Gregory, Chiris Tury, Cheryl Bayne, Vince Catalano, Jeanette Howe, Ron Waltrip, Jo Wishart, Cathy Yost, the jobless, Sister Parish, the youth, our troops, Pres. Obama & family, Peace & Healing for the earth.

Youth Corner

Confirmation classes have begun again for: Nelleke Meerman, Jesse McMilin, Madeline Mouw, Rachel Lapp, Kylie Ronning, Stephan Meek, Hannah Travers and Colin Travers.

We meet on Sunday Evenings: 6:30pm -8pm at church.

After our first year of learning Luther's Small Catechism, this 2nd-year group will be becoming more familiar with the message of the Bible and how it relates to their daily lives as teenagers preparing for adulthood and the decisions they need to make along the way. Our resource, "Way to Live" was written by youth and adults and does a great job in helping youth know that faith is an ongoing practice throughout our lives. It does a great job of raising the kinds of tough questions that accompany this time of life, and helps provide some ways to find the answers.

The youth are preparing to Affirm their Baptism on Sun. Oct. 30 when they will share their "Statements of Faith".

"Let no one despise your youth,
but set the believers an example
in speech and conduct, in love, in faith,
in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

Thank you! Lydia Abler
Home: 831-421-0996 or Cell: 408-319-1413
or Twitter: MinistryThruMus
Email: <mailto:ministry_thru_music@yahoo.com>
Facebook: ministry_thru_music



Thank you St. Stephen's for your recent donation of \$418.00 and all of the lunches for our workers! Your support is critical to us being able to sustain our 22-year history of creating affordable homeownership opportunities in Santa Cruz County.

It is because of contributions such as yours that we were able to shave a very successful year in 2010. We completed construction of a 4-bedroom home in Soquel and started construction of a 3-bedroom home in the City of Santa Cruz, which we expect to complete by the summer of 2011. We also were very busy with the design and engineering work for the 3-unit town-home development that we are planning to build in the City of Scotts Valley. We have already purchased the land and the Redevelopment Agency of Scotts Valley has approved \$300,000 in funding to assist with a apportion of the development costs. We still need to raise more funds for the construction of these units and your contribution will help us in achieving our goal.

Because you are a valued donor, there are two things that I think are important for you to know in regards to your contribution:

1. We take our responsibility very seriously to efficiently use and maximize all of the contributions that we receive. We rely heavily on volunteer labor to build our units, and we solicit donated materials as much as possible. The cash contributions that we receive help to "bridge the gap" in constructing the unit when either labor or materials cannot be donated. We are able to sell our units to lower-income households at affordable prices through this combination of donated labor and materials and cash contributions.
2. The affordable homes we build continue to remain affordable in years to come. Should the home be sold, there are affordability restrictions that ensure another lower-income household benefits. Therefore, your contribution today will continue to be a valuable part in preserving affordable housing opportunities in Santa Cruz County for the long term.

Again, thank you for your generous support of our mission. No matter the size of the donation, every single dollar is appreciated and used towards providing more affordable housing opportunities today and in the future.

Sincerely, *Melanie Shaffer Freitas*
Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity



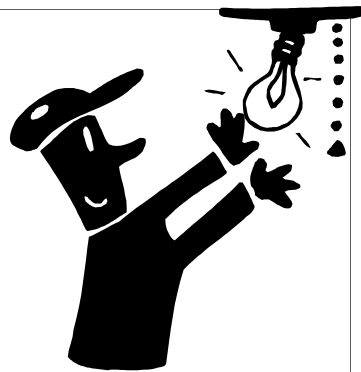
Mt. Cross Summer Camp is Coming!!!

- 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

New Lighting

We recently had the opportunity to participate in the "Right Lights" business program (implemented by Ecology Action / AMBAG Energy Watch). They made recommendations for lighting quality, cost reduction and energy savings. The estimated annual savings for our facility is nearly \$3,000! Not only do we benefit financially, the projected reduction of our CO2 emissions into the atmosphere is 8,085 lbs. per year. This project was completed under their rebate program, at NO COST to us! Green Lantern Electric did a great job with the installation. Kudos to all these folks & their good work that we all benefit from !



Sunday School News



Our February Valentine distribution at Driftwood Healthcare Center went very well again this year. The kids had a lot of fun creating beautiful hand-made Valentines and the residents really enjoyed receiving them. During the months of March and April leading up to Easter we will be exploring some of the stories we have from Jesus adult life and ministry through reading, crafts and games. In addition, we will be having a guest speaker from Thrivent share information with the students about financial stewardship and Candace Anderson will be sharing with the students about the colors and symbols we find in our church throughout our church year. We have even more really exciting things going on in the next few months too! Get out your calendars and note these dates:

April 20th- Easter Sunday Celebration- Guest story teller and Easter Crafts during Sunday School time. We will have an egg hunt for the children after the 10:30 service. We are collecting donated items such as candy and small toys for the egg hunt. Look for the Easter decorated box in the Narthex to drop off your donations.

May 22nd- End of Year Potluck and Student Art Show- This is the official end of our Sunday School year and a chance for the whole congregation to celebrate the children and their work. There will be a student art show, music and an open mic right after the 10:30 service on the playground. Look for the potluck sign-ups at the beginning of May.

June 20-24- Vacation Bible School- 9-noon for those entering Kindergarten through those entering 5th grade. We are also looking for leaders in middle school or older for this adventure. Please let me know if you would be interested in this opportunity. There are a number of Mt. Cross summer camping opportunities for our Sunday School students this year. More information coming soon... All are welcome at St. Stephen's so don't forget to invite your friends and neighbors to any and all of our programs and events! Sincerely, Dusty Gipson

Mary Martha / Ruth Rebecca Circle

Thursday, March 10 @ 10:30 am Fireside Room

Please join us for an informative presentation by Ms. Sharon Rudell, Director, Sienna House. Ms. Rudell will describe the mission of Sienna House, a maternity home that offers support for women in the midst of a crisis pregnancy.

Bring your own sandwich. Coffee and dessert provided.

Hostesses: Renie Leaman and Bev Giladett.

All women are welcome!

STEWARDS OF THE MONTH

Don and Donna Sorensen

It is with a sad heart that we recognize this beautiful couple because they will be moving to Saratoga soon. We will have a "Farewell and Godspeed" part of our worship service on their last Sunday (tbd). Since coming to our church about 12 years ago they have given of themselves in countless ways that have helped our ministry fulfill its mission. Their witness of Christ-like, humble hospitality will be deeply missed. From ushering, to helping with fundraisers, to counting, to lots of time in the kitchen hosting receptions and potlucks - Thank you for sharing your gifts here!



IN MEMORIAM

Pauline Acronico

Entered Eternal Rest - February 16, 2011

A memorial service was held at Pacific Gardens Chapel on Tuesday, February 22nd

"May light perpetual shine upon her"

Sunday Adult Forum continues

"Living the Questions"

Join Pastor Jim at 9:30 each Sunday as we take some time to deepen our walk of faith by asking some of the harder questions of life. We will use a critically acclaimed DVD series with some of the leading Biblical scholars and thinkers to stimulate our discussions.



Financials

| <u>Income</u> | <u>Jan-2011</u> | <u>Jan-2010</u> | <u>Jan-Jan 2011</u> | <u>Jan-Jan Budget</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Contrib. | \$17,436 | \$25,394 | \$21,348 | \$17,582 |
| Misc. | \$1,244 | \$316 | \$1,600 | \$460 |
| Total | \$18,680 | \$25,710 | \$22,948 | \$18,042 |
| <u>Expenses</u> | | | | |
| Total | \$17,634 | \$22,016 | \$18,367 | \$19,493 |
| <u>Net Income</u> | \$1,046 | \$3,694 | \$4,581 | -\$1,451 |