

**ST. STEPHEN'S
WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

8:15 Worship Service

9:30 Adult Forum

10:30 Worship Service & Children's Church

And Coffee Fellowship

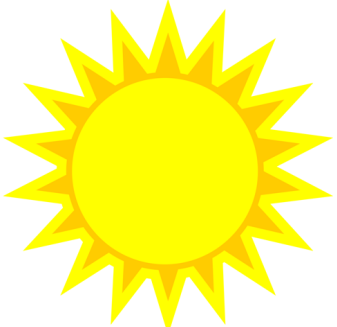
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April 26, 2018

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

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St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



Sun

May 2018

Celebrating 63 Years of Ministry

SUMMER WORSHIP

One Service - 9:30am
Sundays, May 27 - Sept. 2
(Memorial Day Weekend - Labor Day Weekend)



Mt. Cross Annual Memorial Day Work Weekend
May 25—27 (Sunday BBQ)

Registration is now open for our summer programs! Visit our website for more info and to view our exciting programming options for children, youth groups, and families.

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. — Kent Madsen V.P.— Jay Johnston
 Secretary - Robbin Heppe Treasurer— Ron Buswell
 Jill Adachi, David Balogh, Jeanette Dawson,
 Renee Rice, and James Russell.

Directors of Music: Suzanne Duval & Gary Roberts

Sunday School: Leslie Lapp

Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens

Custodian: John Hopping

Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp

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

Pastor's Office Hours—Wed. & Thurs. 10:00 am –1:00 pm

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.

VISION STATEMENT

To become an energetic, inclusive, multigenerational, multicultural,
 missional community that offers, hope, joy, worship, service, play,
 and life as disciples of Jesus Christ

El Salvador Sister Parish News



This photo is from our January 2018 delegation, taken during one of our lunches with scholarship recipient families. How pleasantly surprised we were to find that the mother of the scholarship student, on the left, is one of our earlier scholarship recipients. Her name is Maria Norma, who was our first university student graduate in Nursing. So yes, we have moved into the next generation of students with our scholarship program!

Thanks again for your support of all that we do to "Build Relationships for Better Lives". I especially want to thank those who participated in our 14th annual Bargetto Wine Tasting on April 28th. We'll be back next month with a recap of that event.

To learn more about our sister parish and how to get involved, see www.santacruzalsalvador.org.

Kent Madsen and Jeanne Boudreau
 Santa Cruz al Salvador

Tragic news from our Sister Parish

For those of who have been on a Santa Cruz al Salvador delegation, you must remember our driver, Kike. He always greeted us with a warm smile and helping hand as he loaded our luggage into the back of the bus. He was always there, willing to engage in conversation even with the language barrier. His driving skills were exemplary and he kept us all safe as he drove through the countryside.

On April 17th we received an email from Brenda Hubbard, our in-country coordinator saying that Kike had been murdered.

Here is Christina's first-hand story from the uncle . . . "Kike's tio, Don Samuel, father of our beloved Samuel, asked Kike for help, like we all do, with his microbus, he needed to fix some seats or something. Kike always willing to help.

Kike said he knew a place in Soyapango and they met up at a gas station there. Don Samuel was nervous about where they were going, thought it was very dangerous and Kike said he knew the place well and had been there many times. So they went to this workshop and were working inside the micro taking out the seats and cleaning it up, and a little kid came in and was talking a bit to Kike. Don Samuel did not hear what was said.

They decided to look for lunch and went out and walked around to find lunch and went back and were standing in front of the micro eating their lunch, out on the street i think, and suddenly another micro backed up in front of them and 3 guys jumped out and grabbed Kike and Don Samuel said WHAT??? WHY??? and they shoved him and said shut up and pushed Kike in the micro without saying anything. Don Samuel was totally panicked and went into the workshop and said I'm gonna call someone and the guy said DON'T CALL ANYONE THEY WILL KILL US ALL.

So Don Samuel drove to a gas station on the carretera de oro and called the police. He noticed a blue car there near him and when the police arrived it left. 2 police patrol cars highly armed and with polarized windows arrived, they took him back to the workshop and he explained everything, they kept him inside so no one would see him but he saw that blue car again there.

Meanwhile Kike's body was found a ways away on a street, shot in different places. Don Samuel later identified 2 of the gang guys from photos at the police and it is possible that they got those 2, we are not sure. However, if they do, Don Samuel can only testify to "kidnapping" or depriving Kike of his freedom since Don Samuel did not see them kill him.

It is known that little kids work as lookouts and pass on information to the gang members so a big hypothesis is that the kid that spoke with Kike got some kind of information, where he lived or something, and if someone goes to one gang's territory but have an identification card with an address from the opposing gang's territory, they will kill them. The fact that they were there so long and out in open walking around, could possibly raise suspicions. Don Samuel thinks there is a young assistant guy in the workshop that may be involved some way.

That is the tragic infuriating senseless heart breaking story of the dearest sweetest kindest best father husband friend I have ever known. At least as much as I could get straight from the mouth of Don Samuel, heartbroken and shaken to the core."

Guillermo F. Sensente says, "Soyapango is one of the most dangerous cities in El Salvador and we never go into it because of that." This devastating news has created a big hole in our hearts. We all loved him and give thanks for having known him. A very gentle soul. He will be missed and always remembered. Please pray for Kike's wife, Lorena & their family, Kevin, Gabriela and Andrea.

from Pastor Jim...

"Into the Wilderness...to Share the Good News"



This was the serendipitous theme that came to us as we gathered as a Mutual Ministry Committee, in order to begin our work on the Lily Foundation's Clergy Renewal Grant Application for my hoped for Summer 2019 sabbatical. Bill Schraft, Kent Madsen and Jeanette Dawson all contributed.

I say "serendipitous" because we were struggling with how to put our theme concisely and interestingly, when I went to the office work room to make some copies of the application. When I opened the copier lid, I found a Sunday School coloring page that had been left on the glass. I picked it up to move it and I noticed that it was a picture of Jesus in a desert wilderness setting with cactus, rock formations, lizards and other desert critters. As I laid it down on the counter I noticed that at the bottom were the handwritten words "Into the Wilderness... to Share the Good News". This reflected the scripture theme of that Sunday when we read about Jesus being tempted in the wilderness during the season of Lent. The words were the first and last ones of the passage in the gospel of Mark.

When I brought it back to the group it was as if an angel had appeared and given us God's blessing for what we were trying to do. Tears came to my and Jeanette's eyes as we realized it exactly expressed what we had been trying to say.

I had suggested that I wanted to spend 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness in order to be renewed through time and experiences in God's natural creation. At the same time we were trying to incorporate how St. Stephen's would experience renewal through the sabbatical time too. I had suggested that part of my time would be spent exploring new ways that more traditional churches like ours are overcoming the typical trend of slow decline, and were reaching their communities in creative ways. This was the 'good news' we were seeking in the wilderness of a post-Christian American culture.

So now we wait and see. Our application reflected many of the same things that previously successful ones did. So we have high hopes!

May Happenings

Sunday Adult Forums 9:30

Chapel with the Pre-Schoolers

Wednesdays at 10:15 am

Knitting Group

Thursdays at 6:45pm

Alcoholics Anonymous

Fridays at 7:00 pm

Saturdays at 8:00 pm

COPA Housing Meeting

May 5 @ 2:00pm (Sanctuary)

Church Council

May 9 @ 6:30pm (now Weds)

MMRR Circle Luncheon

May 10 @ 10:30 am

Finance Committee

May 11 @ 8:30 am

Embroider's Guild

May 14 @ 7:00 pm

Women's Café Group

May 16 @ 6:30 pm

Child Dev. Center Board

May 21 @ 11:15 am

Bible Study May 22 @ 10:00 am

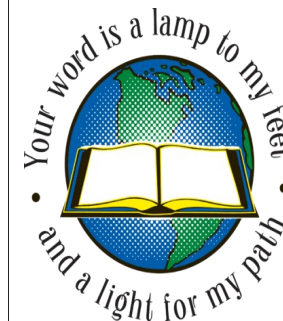
Habitat for Humanity Lunches

May 22 @ 10:30

*Please sign up to help on Sundays
Coffee Hosts and Ushers needed*

Council Highlights

1. Devotions from "Steeple to Street" centered on how we are not alone as a more traditional church experiencing a decline. We were reminded that we exist to carry out the mission of Christ first and foremost. That means we need to be prepared to be creative with how that happens and to be ready to go out into the community and be the church where it is needed the most.
2. Betsy Wilson from MidPen Housing was our guest attendee. They are having some complications securing the property tax exemption due to the ground lease arrangement we have with each other. We decided that we needed to consult with the Bishop and Synod attorneys to get their input first. Once we receive their go-ahead, we will be able to make the necessary changes so that MidPen can qualify for a "welfare exemption".
3. Pastor Jim, Bill Schraft, Kent Madsen and Jeannette Dawson completed the Lily Endowment Clergy Renewal Grant application for Pastor Jim's hoped for sabbatical in the Summer of 2019. It was an extensive process that was completed and submitted one week before the deadline. They acknowledged that they had received it and will be notifying us in August about their decision. The theme is "Into the Wilderness...to Share the Good News".



Sunday Adult Forums at 9:30 am

April 15 - May 20

A Study of the Church in the Book of Acts
by Rev. Raymond Pickett, President of PLTS
led by Pastor Jim

STEWARDS OF THE MONTH

Janet Slay and Jill Adachi

Janet's stewardship of God's creation has always been a big part of her Christian faith. We are especially fortunate to receive some her heartfelt work at our church facility, as she has spent many hours tending to the flower beds and planters outside of the sanctuary. Thank you, Janet, for the love of God that you share and show us through your green thumb and dedication to care for God's creation.

Once again, Jill helped round out our spectacular Easter celebration by providing leadership for our Easter Breakfast fellowship time. She said that this year went particularly smoothly due to all of the experienced and helpful volunteers that she coordinated. Thanks for giving your time and efforts so generously & joyfully!

Welcome Little One

Parents
Nikki & Rob-
Thibault




Grandma
Connie
Creel

Layla Marie Thibault
Born March 2
Santa Barbara

COPA Civic Academy on Housing
May 5
2:00—3:30 pm Our Sanctuary

Featuring a brief presentation on the housing challenges in Santa Cruz county, small group and individual conversations, and story sharing. We will also look at options for action we can take. Questions / More info? Call Mark Linder 408-891-8912



Faith

A living, daring confidence in God’s grace.

When Lutherans talk about faith, we are talking about the relationship God’s Holy Spirit creates with us. It’s a relationship where God’s promise of steadfast love and mercy in Jesus opens us to a life of bold trust in God and joyful, generous service to everyone we know and meet in daily life.

Martin Luther was exuberant when he described the freedom of “a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that believers would stake their lives on it a thousand times.” He once wrote, “Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good things unceasingly.”

Faith convictions expressed as statements of belief flow from this confident trust in God. ELCA Lutherans share in the faith expressed in the Apostles’, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, in the Lutheran confessional writings (collected as the Book of Concord), and in the ELCA Confession of Faith.

At the same time faith does not close our minds to the world and our hearts to others. We continue to listen to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We listen to the witness of others and we watch for the ways God is active in the world around us. Faith opens a place for engaging others in conversation, for seeking the truth, for asking questions and speaking love in word and deed.

Faith is a full life, liberated for a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.

Faith and Society

“Faithful participation in society is integral and vital to the mission of the ELCA. It is a church that believes God is calling us into the world — together. As part of this call, we seek the common good for society, provide moral vision and are committed to addressing social and cultural injustices and issues. The ELCA participates in God’s just and loving purpose for all of creation in many different ways, from the daily actions of members as citizens, to efforts in social service, to public witness for justice.

In response to God’s gracious love that seeks justice, the ELCA equips and nurtures us for our callings in the world, fosters social service and ministries of mercy, encourages learning and moral deliberation around social and cultural concerns, enacts social teaching and policy documents, interprets and applies social policy, and partners with agencies, organizations and institutions dedicated to service and justice.



Sunday School

The children's beautiful A-L-L-E-L-U-I-A banner remains above the altar as we continue to celebrate the resurrection. Alleluia! He is risen!

"The scent of Easter" The children were blindfolded and challenged to identify items: *Perfume* to represent the anointing of Jesus. *Fresh baked bread* to represent the body of Jesus. *Grape juice* to represent the blood of Jesus. *Vinegar* to represent Jesus dying for us on the cross. *A seed (with dirt)* to represent Jesus being buried in the tomb.

Why Easter Eggs? Coloring & hunting is certainly a fun tradition. But these kids want to know why we do what we do. Many early Christians regarded the egg as a symbol for the stone being rolled from the grave. Others saw the egg as a symbol of new life. At church, we simply use the opportunity to fill the bright plastic eggs with symbols that help understand our faith.

"Believe it or not!" You know Mr. Ripley's book of strange and amazing photos. Although they seem unbelievable, they were true events. Personally I find it hard to believe that a chicken laid a perfectly square egg. I'd have to see it to believe it. The kids especially liked the 3,000 foot hot dog weighing 885 pounds. If it's true, it's true, whether I believe it or not. Faith is not a science. You cannot prove it. That's why it's called *Faith*! Thomas didn't believe the other disciples when they spoke of Jesus resurrection. But Thomas believed when he actually touched the nail prints in Jesus hands. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" John 20:29 May we believe in our heart the truths we find in God's Word even though we can't see them with our eyes.

"Open Mind—Open Heart" Do you enjoy puzzles? Sometimes they are easy to figure out, other times I look and look but cannot figure out what goes where. Then my son comes in and figures it out instantly! Sometimes it takes us a while to see clearly. This lesson was of the disciples fear when they saw the risen Christ. They thought he was a ghost! Jesus convinced them by opening their minds. They touched him—ghosts don't have a body. Jesus ate their food—ghosts don't eat. Now they believed and were anxious to tell everyone about Jesus! Evidently desperate times called for desperate measures. Let us pray that he will open our hearts and minds to understand God's word. It was exciting to watch the kids light up as we played some word jumbles and the answer was revealed to them. The craft wasn't quite so revealing, but they were great listeners as they painted!

I will be out of town May13 . . . Can you Sub? ~ Faithfully, Miss Leslie

Birthdays & Anniversaries

5-3	Margaret Schraft	5-20	Aria Bartee	5-27	Mary Robe
5-5	Kathleen Allen	5-23	Don Fuqua	5-28	Mitch Ronning
5-5	Kent Madsen	5-24	Travis Awe	5-29	Elke Spires
5-6	Cheryl Curry	5-25	Trent Hopping		
5-6	Renee Robe	5-26	Andrew Davis	5-24	Paul & Leah Powers
5-7	Ross Johnston	5-26	Epimenio Valencia	5-26	Epimenio & Emily Valencia
5-9	Lois Meeker			5-27	David & Gwyn Larson
5-10	Julie Mouw	5-27	Mark Brouse		
5-15	Jesse McMilin	5-27	Tyleigha Brouse- Jones		
5-18	Jordan Ayers				
5-19	Laney Johnson	5-27	Barbara Rice		



Short Term: Paul Campese, Beverly Hickman, Jeanette, Tony Mendoza, The Childer's Family, Keith, Chad, Lou, Tera Threewit, Emil Hayler, Natalia Erickson, David, Betty Kievlan, Helene W., Elizabeth, Melissa, Rod Burchell, Colin, Henry, Tim, Mary, Marta, Bryan, Dustin, River, Carole, Annetta, Dorothy, Yvonne, Don, Jack, Elida, Don Fuqua, Jean Petersen, Lois, The Trippel family, Xavier, John Morgado, Sandra Eldridge, Susan Anderson, Carmen Harper, Stephanie Jager, Ryan, Joe, Pat & brothers, Riley, Shelby, Kaitlyn, Daniel, Ryder, Homeless, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, and Our Church Family.

Long Term: Lorenzo, Jan Shadle, Ed Drews, Vi Olly & CJ Muchanic Jr., Jenny Rebecca Hodge, Rick, Bobbie Erickson, Edna Lindquist, Richard C. Becky, Lauri Hollist, Ken Pahel, Pat M., Gary, Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Barry & Barbara, Chris & Lorie Juhl, Karin, Chris, Kyle, Pat Hubbard, Cathy Lorenzo, Pearl Runquist, Volpi Family, Robe Family, men and women of Armed Forces, the President, and the Youth of today.

Mary Martha/Ruth Rebecca Women's Circle

**Thursday, May 10 from 10:30 am - 12 noon
Fireside Room at church**

On April 12, MMRR went on an armchair tour of Europe as Pastor Jim had us travel through Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany with him via his beautiful slides and commentary on what he and Rachel saw and experienced on their Fall trip. We saw amazing Alps, charming villages, universal landmarks, waterfalls with breathtaking landscapes, historical monuments and where Martin Luther walked, wrote, taught, lived and died. Not bad for a morning meeting in the Fireside room! Then we were treated to Lu's yummy dessert, good coffee and roses. We also got some business done as well.

Why not join us for our final meeting before summer hiatus on May 10 when we have our annual salad bar (veggie and fruit) party? We would love to have any of you women come and be a part of our group.

Women's Café Group

**Wednesday, May 16
6:30 pm**

**Devotions & Dinner Fellowship
More info 476-4700**

Bible Study

**Tuesday, May 22
10:00 am Fireside Room**

**with Rev. Bonnie Bell
All are welcome!**

Child Development Center



Our preschool has much to be thankful for. Our longtime goal to have a rainy-day fund is on track and we will reach our initial target amount by June ensuring that should something unexpected happen, we can cover payroll and expenses for over 2 months. This includes providing health insurance for our 3 full-time teachers. We still have more goals to reach financially regarding cost of living raises, but we have a very dedicated team that understands the wisdom of allowing responsible growth to ensure longevity.

We have had generous donors, especially the Schraft and Rebecca Russell family who have given us so many gently used items to enrich our activities. We have another house, table and umbrella, and 2 shopping carts, to name a few. These items combined with a donation from our congregation of \$100 was used to purchase a Farmer's Market to create a dramatic play shopping experience on the playground. We have 3 playhouses now, so they can shop and take their items to the houses...so fun!

We have been in waitlist status for most of the school year. We have a few graduating, so we were able to enroll to our 2-year-old program; Amelia in April, Hailey, Ben, and Calvin on June 18, and Eva in September. We have 2 tours scheduled and a few more names on the waiting list to follow up on. After a year of full enrollment, we have discovered that serving 22 students provides a very good balance financially and gives us the ability to know each child well. Expansion would require more building space and we have taken up most of it already! Discussion about opening an infant classroom will be further explored in 2019/2020. There is a big need for this in our community.

May brings Parent Teacher Conferences which is our opportunity to discuss with families how their child has developed in fine motor, language/literacy, cognitive, and social emotional areas, marked by the goals we set in fall 2017. We also assist families with finding services for speech therapy or developmental screening when indicated. It fills our hearts to watch a child's life be changed when enrolling here unable to speak clearly, and leave here feeling confident for their next educational experience, or find a school that meets their individual needs.

Thanks be to God! Kathy Berens

Treasurer Notes ... Budget Information – March 2018

	March	March	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution In- come	\$11851	\$13301	\$40338	\$38605	\$1732
Facility Use In- come	\$ 593	\$715	\$2423	\$2145	\$278
Investment In- come	\$3216	\$3585	\$10402	\$10755	\$-353
Total Income	\$15661	\$18330	\$55164	\$53690	\$1474
Expenses	\$19282	\$17684	\$54021	\$53091	\$930
Net	\$-3622	\$646	\$1143	\$599	\$544

Contribution income for March was 89% of budget. We received the full year’s pledge from two families and also a significant donation from a non-member in January so to- tal income is still ahead of budget year to date by \$1.5K. Expenses exceeded budget in March primarily due to unplanned plumbing issues. So overall income is ahead of ex- penses by \$1.1K year to date.

Special funds for the Organ, Piano, Hearing Impaired, Solar Electricity and Narthex Bathroom

	March	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Organ	\$0	\$898	
Piano	\$0	\$252	
Hearing Impaired Equip	\$10	\$320	
Solar Electric Payback	\$213		\$23226
Narthex Bathroom	\$426		\$7824
Sunday School Projects	\$100	\$90	

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2018 through March	
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$818
SS Scholarships	\$429
Live Oak Resource Center	\$305
Habitat for Humanity	\$0
Mt. Cross	\$0
World Hunger	\$0
Homeless Service Center	\$0
CLU/PLTS	\$0
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$19
SS CDC	\$118
	\$0
El Salvador Sister Parish	
Lutheran World Relief	\$0
ELCA Synod	\$600
COPA	\$500
Lutheran Immigration	\$0
Total	\$2788
2018 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$15317
% of Target	18%

Church Bell Bricks

We have received orders for 102 bricks* as of 4/6/18 toward our goal of 200.

- Ron Buswell, Treasurer