

**ST. STEPHEN'S
SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

9:30 am Worship Service

And Coffee Fellowship

**NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON
June 26, 2019**

**POST OFFICE:
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PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

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

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St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



SUN
Summer 2019



Celebrating 65 Years of Ministry

SUMMER WORSHIP
One Service - **9:30am** - through Labor Day, Sept. 3

Celebrating Summer — All Church Events

Sunday, July 14 Henry Cowell "Big Trees" Loop Hike
& Picnic after Church 11:00 ish Jeanette 345-4507

Saturday, Aug. 10 Outdoor Movie Night
at church 8—10:30 pm

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. — Renee Rice V.P.— Robert Bartee
Secretary - Treasurer— Kent Madsen
David Balogh, Jeanette Dawson, Lydia Abler
Bill Schraft, and Rebecca Wickham
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 Joel's Office Hours—M/W/F 12 noon –2:00 pm
Pastor Joel's Cell Phone: 831-419-8290 (Call 9 am - 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

(Sister Parish continued)

articles as well as a poster with photos.

One thing we heard frequently was, "I don't think I could have done it without your help." It is amazing that providing a \$1,000 annual scholarship (for 15 students) and contributing \$2,000 a year for student group housing can make such a difference, but it does! The \$83 a month the students receive is enough to help make their education goals a reality. In El Salvador very little money can make a big impact!

These students are courageous too. Most of us are aware of the tremendous gang problem in El Salvador. To live in the big city of San Salvador and to travel on public transportation can be very dangerous. One of the students named Kenia, a 25 year old fourth year psychology student who is married with a six year old daughter, describes in her letter some of the obstacles she has had to overcome:

"Thanks to God, and putting forth much dedication and force, I have been able to carry on despite the circumstances that have presented themselves... This cycle that just finished, I took two subjects in the morning and two in the evening... It was very difficult to wake up in the morning and return by night to the house. I was afraid because of the violence and insecurity we live with in El Salvador. It is very tiring and risky but the goal to rise above and be a successful woman with a great future before me (overcomes) any type of barrier and gives the fortitude to carry on... With faith and much strength I am able to be a successful woman and bring a positive input into society... and I hope to continue growing in all aspects and... in this way to bring better help to the people who require it, as we live in a country where all of us need psychological help... In closing, I want to thank you with all my heart for being people who help young people that want to change the country. Thanks for the confidence you have shown in me as this animates me greatly...to continue forward with my studies and achieve my goals."

Hearing these students speak and reading their letters have encouraged us to promote this program and perhaps be able to provide more scholarships next year. We hope and pray that you will take the time to read these student's letters and consider how God would have you support this project to provide life changing opportunities for these students. You may donate online at santacruzalsalvador.org (where you may also set up a regular monthly donation) or you may write a check to SCaS and give it directly to Kent Madsen. Thank you for your consideration; your tax deductible gifts of any size will be greatly appreciated!

~ Kent Madsen

El Salvador Sister Parish

For many years Santa Cruz al Salvador (SCaS) has been promoting our *Prayer Child Scholarship* program which supports students attending the public school in Guillermo Ungo (GU) and has helped to build strong and often lasting relationships between students and sponsors. A highlight of each January delegation is the scholarship meeting where kids receive their school supply packets, letters, and gifts from their sponsors. This program is a perfect example of our motto, *Building Relationships for Better Lives*, but this year we also want to highlight what happens when these students graduate. A number of years ago an outspoken community member named Carmen, who runs the largest little store in GU, courageously stated, *"It is great that our youth are now able to graduate high school, but what do they do then?"* In reality, they would usually continue to work in the fields for their families or others but they had little opportunity for better jobs or advanced education. Carmen's words inspired our university scholarship program.



This January, in GU, we met with 10 of the 15 University scholarship students; we also invited them to bring a parent or other family member. Though there was some business to discuss, the main purpose for the meeting was to get to know these students. Each student was confident, very well-spoken, and focused on their goals and ambitions to not only achieve some level of professional success but to also advance their community and their country. Yet they were also humble and extremely grateful for the help they have received. What we heard and saw so impressed us that we wanted to share these students' stories and make the **University Scholarship Program** our fundraising focus for this year. We received letters from all 15 students and we have translated these letters and will be sharing them in future newsletter

from Pastor Joel...



Dear Friends, It's been over a month since we began our spiritual journey together here at St Stephen's. Being a father of four, I anticipated hearing questions along the way like: "Are we there yet?" or "How much longer till we get there?" My familiarity with asking questions comes from an early age when I would consistently annoy my father in the family car during summer trips with the same annoying habit. Even Pastor Jim has noted that I ask a lot of questions when we've gone out fishing together: "Why are we using squid this time and not sardines?" or "What's the fishing going to be like today?" or "Do you think the wind is going to pick up?" Probably I haven't changed as much as I'd like to think.

Nonetheless, I wish I could have had the opportunity to show my father that I have made improvements, and have gotten much better at self-regulating my production of annoying questions. Next time I go fishing with Pastor Jim, I intend to demonstrate improvement in this area of my life. I attribute my growth to the realization that I don't need to be in such a hurry, but I also attribute growth to a phrase that has been ruminating in my subconscious for the past 6 or 7 years: "The journey is the destination." It is a simple and effective mantra that helps me to be mindful and present. "The journey is the destination" are words that help me notice wonders. Simply put, I have learned to observe, enjoy and smell the roses along the way. I also attribute this phrase to the accumulation of a bit more wisdom in life.

Thus far in our summer journey together, I have enjoyed hearing your stories from those who have come by the office or whom I have had the pleasure of visiting at home. I was so taken by the story of one parishioner that I offered to do a video recording of him telling the story of his life. He got his first car at age 12, along with lots of girlfriends who wanted a ride in the car with him. He joined the Navy at age 16, and was married the next year. Eventually he became an electrical engineer and has been married 73 years. I am not sure whom he will share his video with, and I imagine that all of you reading this newsletter know who I am writing about. The point is this: think of the resources and wisdom that are in this one parishioner's nine decade-old story. But also think of all the other stories at St. Stephen's that are full of wisdom and life skills. Some are not yet even one decade old. The lessons learned and life skills acquired at St Stephen's are an invaluable resource for the future.

Even though I am happy to go on living the life of an Interim Pastor with the motto "the journey is the destination," I know there are some expectations for the future when I leave in September. Pastor Jim has already invited St. Stephen's to be thinking about a time of discernment called "Fresh Expressions" when he returns. "Fresh Expressions" is a time of discernment for future destinations at St. Stephen's. In the meantime the best traveling mode for us would seem to be to observe, enjoy and smell the roses along the way. Celebrate the collective wisdom and individual skills you have acquired from lives well lived - what a marvelous treasure you have. But there is more... As was reaffirmed on Pentecost Sunday, we also have the indwelling Holy Spirit in each member of our community. For now "the journey is the destination," but know that God has a destination far beyond what we could ever think or imagine. As the Apostle said (I Cor 2:9):

*That which eye has not seen
That which ear has not heard
That which has not entered into the hearts of men
Has God prepared for those who love him.*

Summer Happenings

Knitting Group

Thursdays at 6:45pm

Alcoholics Anonymous

Fridays at 7:00 pm

Saturdays at 8:00 pm

Alanon Family Group

Saturdays at 10:00 am

MMRR Circle

On summer hiatus

Dinner Groups

July 6 & Aug. 3 @ 5:00 pm

Embroider's Guild

July 15 & August 19 @ 7 pm

Provide Habitat Lunches

July 23 & Aug. 27 @ 10:30 am

Women's Café Group

No July meeting

August 21 @ 6:00 pm

Newsletter Collating

August 28 @ 10:00 am

Thrivent All Church BBQ

August 25 Harvey West 1:00

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

Council Highlights

1. Pastor Joel led us through devotions
2. Pastor Joel updated us on members he has called upon, anyone wishing for him to call upon them or know of someone in need, please reach out to Pastor Joel
3. Jay Johnston has agreed to fill one of the council vacancies. We still have one vacancy and are in need of a secretary, please reach out to Renee Rice reneerice@yahoo.com if you are interested in serving.
4. Reconciled in Christ update. At the Council Retreat in March, the council voted on beginning the process of becoming a Reconciled in Christ Church. See below to explain what this process means and why we feel that it is something we are called to do.

RECONCILING IN CHRIST: LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION

For the past two years the Church Council has contemplated our participation in the Lutheran program of "Reconciling in Christ".

An independent, Lutheran, membership-supported organization, ReconcilingWorks is committed to strengthen all of God's beloved for authentic, visible, faithful lives and to work for systemic change within the church and society. We believe reconciling works, for the sake of the world.

Since 1974, ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation has advocated for the full welcome, inclusion, and equity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations, and community.

In relationships built through outreach and education, ReconcilingWorks shares Christ's message, the Gospel, which is for everyone equally. We advocate for systemic change in policy and

Scholarships - Applications Due July 31

Scholarships are offered yearly for members attending seminaries, universities, colleges, junior colleges, or trade schools. They are funded through prior investments designated for scholarships and benevolence giving. If you are interested in applying for a scholarship please complete an application by the end of July and turn it in to the church office. The application form is available from the church office.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me 408-812-1141. Kent Madsen, Treasurer

House Meetings

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all church members, and an invitation to discuss our church and ask questions in small, intimate gatherings called House Meetings throughout July and August. These "House" meetings will be held by various members of the Sustainability Task Force either in their homes, or the Fireside Room at church, and offered on a variety of days and times to accommodate your schedule; this is an opportunity for conversation, sharing and future visioning amongst church members in a smaller group setting. Some of you may have attended similar meetings last year; please join again and share your experiences. The more the merrier! To sign up please complete an online form found at: <http://bit.ly/HouseMeetings2019> OR on the clipboard at church.

Co-chairs, Sustainability Task Force - Kirstin Csik-Hughes & Mark Linder



DINNER GROUPS

SATURDAYS - JULY 6 & AUGUST 3

We are seeking to foster deeper fellowship & greater connections within our church community. Dinner groups will be traditional Lutheran style (as in, POTLUCK!) and hosts are needed to provide seating for 6-10 guests. Guests bring food and helpful hands, but all will leave with increased blessings.

Please contact Kirstin Csik-Hughes at kirstin.csik@gmail.com if you are willing to host or would like further information.

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

July - Homeless Service Center

The HSC practices effective solutions that create a pathway to housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Cruz County. Our programs focus on moving out of homelessness into stable housing.

Every day we are reminded of how much people can accomplish with a little support and a chance to be connected with the services they need. Thanks to our amazing supporters, we are able to help more people get back on their feet. Your donations provide emergency and transitional services to hundreds of children and thousands of adults every year through our programs: Rebele Family Shelter, Paul Lee Loft & Winter Shelter, Page Smith Community House, Daytime Essential Services Center, 180/2020 initiative and the Recuperative Care Center.

August – California Lutheran University

Remembering our roots: "From the time of the Reformation, the Lutheran church has been a teaching and learning church...With his teaching on vocation, Luther understood the Christian life to be one of service to God and neighbor in one's every day places of responsibility; education equipped Christians for this vocation. He taught that education served the common good of Church and society: In a move unusual for his day, he taught that schools for all – those who were wealthy, those who were poor, boys & girls..."

For 50 years we have been committed to this idea of educating young people for lives of leadership and service in the world. By sending your people to CLU (**Nelleke Meerman**) and supporting with offerings and prayers, our congregations have continued in the rich tradition of a Lutheran understanding of education.

AND

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

We provide theological education for the training of clergy and lay leaders through ordination, non-ordination, and research level degrees and certificates.

PLTS is one of eight seminaries of the ELCA, a founding member of the [Graduate Theological Union](#), and a graduate school of CLU. Theological education is done in the context of people who are rich and poor, liberal and conservative, and a wide array of human race, religion, sexuality, education, experience, and background. If our theology did not take all people into account, it would be deficient. PLTS develops leaders for the church by: deepening faith in Christ; challenging the mind; expanding the heart; and energizing for mission.

June: ELCA World Hunger - \$60 was given (as of 6/26)

(Reconciling in Christ continued)

practice in church and society, working to alleviate not only the painful symptoms of oppression but also to eliminate its root causes.

We are Lutherans working with the recognition that racism, sexism, ageism, able-ism, heterosexism, homophobia, and all the other artificial distinctions that seek to raise one group into privilege and preference over another, conspire together to diminish our world and church. Reconciliation is a fundamental value; it is what the Apostle Paul says we are all called to do.

In our own Mission Statement approved by at a Congregation meeting states "that St. Stephen's is a welcoming, healing community who worship God in Christ, nurture people growing in faith, serve others with acceptance and love, invite people to share the joy of the spirit". Becoming part of this program/movement will move us deeper into our Mission.

ReconcilingWorks first sentence in its Vision for the Church - "*Freed by God's grace, the body of Christ on earth leads a joyous dance of transformation integrating sexuality and spirituality, justice and mercy.*"

Mission Statement - *Working at the intersection of oppressions, ReconcilingWorks embodies, inspires advocates and organizes for the acceptance and full participation of people for all sexual orientation, gender identities, and gender expressions within the Lutheran communion and its ecumenical and global partners.*"

Values statement - *We believe that God values and embraces each person as a beloved child, that the Spirit gives a diversity of gifts for the common good, and that Jesus Christ call us to work for justice....."*

The Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program is for congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, and other Lutheran organizations and ministry communities who have made a public commitment to welcome, include and celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people. By having a statement affirming this welcome that specifically names either, "LGBTQIA+ people" or "people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions" in their statement, these faith communities are accepted into the Reconciling in Christ partnership with ReconcilingWorks. Presently there are 883 Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Communities and another 385 Faith Communities on their journey to become a RIC.

Each congregation that lives out the RIC Journey, does so in a way that is unique and authentic to their community. By engaging in a welcoming process, the faith life of the community deepens. As members participate in dialogue with one another, they practice putting their faith into speech and then action, creating a more vibrant spiritual community.

Reconciling in Christ is a process that St. Stephen's can enter into now. There will be help and guidance throughout the process. As a Reconciling in Christ Church, St. Stephen's name and location will be identified on the ReconcilingWorks web site. This is another way for outreach into Santa Cruz County and fulfill our calling to our Mission.

Please contact Renee Rice reneerice@yahoo.com or any council member if you have comments, questions, and/or concerns?

Sunday School resumes September



“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me”. John 17:22-23

I have some flour, cocoa, sugar, salt & eggs. Just by looking at the items, you might not know what we could do with them. The individual items could have many uses, but guess what we might be able to do with them if we put them all together. Well, for one thing, we could make a chocolate cake! Would you like to eat a spoonful of plain flour? How about a spoonful of salt or some vegetable oil? I didn't think so! Most of these items wouldn't taste very good by themselves, but when you mix them all together, put them in a pan and bake them in the oven, you have something that is really — a delicious cake!

These different ingredients that go into baking a cake can teach us an important lesson about the church. The church is made up of many individual members. Like these ingredients, the members of a church are quite different, but when you put them all together and they work together as one, the church can do some wonderful things. You and I are part of the church. Jesus wants us to love one another, help one another, and serve one another. When we do that, we become one, and when we are one, the world can see God's love in us.

Creator of all, Thank you for summer!

Thank you for the warmth of the sun

And the increased daylight.

Thank you for the beauty I see all around me

And for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy your creation.

Thank you for the increased time I have

To be with my friends and family,

And for the more casual pace of the summer season.

Draw me closer to you this summer.

Teach me how I can pray

No matter where I am

Or what I am doing.

Warm my soul

With the awareness of your presence

And light my path

With your Word and Counsel.

As I enjoy your creation,

Create in me a pure heart

And a hunger and a thirst for you. Amen.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

July Birthdays

7-2 Vi Olly
 7-6 Scott Poetzinger
 7-9 Sandi Crouser
 7-10 Kyle Lapp
 7-12 Arijia Buswell
 7-17 Don Ray
 7-18 Gary Meeker
 7-19 Darvin Awe
 7-20 Michael Lyons, Jr
 7-21 Cheryl Bartee
 7-22 Kevin Meek
 7-23 Martha Balogh
 7-24 Sherilyn Jager
 7-24 Ingrid Lanoue
 7-24 Julia Poetzinger
 7-25 Terri Adams
 7-25 Eve Roberson
 7-27 Mark Linder
 7-29 Kylie Ronning
 7-29 Beckett Ruble
 7-31 Barbie Grow

August Birthdays

8-3 Robert Gipson
 8-7 Pastor Herb Schmidt
 8-9 Lydia Abler
 8-10 Daniel Grow
 8-14 Renee Rice
 8-15 Susan Oldfield
 8-17 Brad Cramer
 8-18 Derek Poetzinger
 8-19 Evelien Millang
 8-20 Imagin Abler
 8-23 Kasey Garden
 8-25 Lea Powers
 8-27 Leslie Lapp
 8-27 Delores Price
 8-28 Rachel Lapp
 8-30 Emma Gipson

July Anniversaries

7-1 Robert & Dusty Gipson
 7-18 Manny & Patricia Travers
 7-28 Charles & Sandra Eldridge

August Anniversaries

8-3 Steve & Theresa Loback - Campbell
 8-6 Mark Linder & Mary Dean
 8-15 Ross & Barbara Johnston
 8-18 Vern & Linda Lillehaugen
 8-28 Dan & Barbie Grow
 8-30 Scott Ruble & Leslie Radford
 8-31 John & Lana Schneider

Mary Martha / Ruth Rebecca Circle

As you know the women's circle is on hiatus during the summer months.

We will see you on **Sept. 12, Thursday at 10:30 am**

in the Fireside Room, ready for a new year.

Please join us for special devotions, socializing, service and relevant speakers. We are open to all women from St. Stephens.

Have a blessed summer and stop to smell the roses along the way.

Thrivent Churches BBQ

"Connecting Faithful Friends"

Sunday, August 25 from 1 to 4 pm

Harvey West Park - Evergreen Picnic Area

"Everyone is Welcome, Lots of Fun for all Ages, Music, Games and Food.
No Cost, just RSVP (Sign up at church)"

More information: call Mary Elizabeth Bellezzi: 688-1788

Women's Café Group

Wednesday, August 21
6:00 pm

Come for Devotions & Potluck Dinner
More info 476-4700



Child Development Center



SING like no one is listening.

DANCE like no one is watching.

LOVE like you'll never get hurt.

LIVE like you're in heaven on earth.

Pr. Joel shared this message with us on Trinity Sunday. I had never heard this before. Reflecting on these words, I thought about our Preschool children. They do sing, dance, love, and live this message every day. However, they want to be heard, they want to be seen, they love freely, and they live each day fully. I must wonder when do we as human beings switch our thinking to a more reserved way of expression? When do we feel we must tone down core joy from being expressed around others? When does shyness, or fear of open expression become something we keep more to ourselves? Life experiences and socialization weathers and shapes us as we age while experiencing good times and bad.

Working with children during Early Childhood Development at SSCDC, children arrive at the age of two and leave us when they are five. In our pre-school environment we encourage self-expression and confidence which manifests in each individual child. We created a place where children thrive in the love of Jesus through kindness and respect to foster the freedom to be who they really are. Once they go to Kindergarten they begin to mold more to greater sociological development of expectations. Our gift for them to take is the foundation of confidence in their own expressions in heart and mind. This way they can share their pure witness and sensory pleasure in feeling free to sing, dance, love, and live, sharing joy with people around them.

I did not have these words to share before hearing them last Sunday, but they frame how I was led by the Lord to build this school, along with the help from all of you. I can picture how these expressions work because I get to witness the innocence of expressions in young children every day. If we see that a child is not optimizing their joy of life, we comfort and guide them to return to love and joy. For all of us, joy can give way to challenge and sadness, however reflecting on this saying redirects us to asking why not, why not redirect back to joyful expressions? Feel joy in the love of Jesus. Summertime is a great opportunity to slow things down and truly enjoy these gifts from our lord shared between our children their teachers. Thanks be to God! Kathy Berens

Treasurer Notes ...

Budget Information – May 2019

| | May | May | YTD | YTD | Net |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| | Actual | Budget | Actual | Budget | |
| Contribution Income | \$10,971 | \$11,745 | \$68,912 | \$63,485 | \$5,427 |
| Facility Use Income * | \$1,558 | \$792 | \$8,773 | \$3,958 | \$4,815 |
| Investment Income | \$3,185 | \$3,583 | \$17,043 | \$17,917 | \$--874 |
| Total Income | \$15,714 | \$16,120 | \$94,728 | \$85,360 | \$9,368 |
| | | | | | |
| Expenses | \$20,658 | \$20,061 | \$96,061 | \$96,618 | \$-556 |
| | | | | | |
| Net | \$-4,944 | \$-3,941 | \$-1,333 | \$-11,258 | \$9,924 |

* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month for 11 months + Misc. Income. Income is showing weakness in May, but YTD continues strong thanks to a one-time gift of \$2K earlier in the year and above-budget receipts in Contribution income and Facilities Use Income. For the year our expenses exceed our income by \$1.3K. Please remember St. Stephen's during summer vacation!

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

| | May | Reserve | Needed to Payoff |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------|------------------|
| Organ | \$-1,214 | \$-249 | \$249 |
| Piano | \$0 | \$95 | |
| Hearing Impaired Equip | \$0 | \$320 | |
| Solar Electric Payback | \$338 | | \$19,290 |
| Narthex Bathroom | \$130 | | \$3,391 |

8

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

| 2019 through May | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention | \$615 |
| SS Scholarships | \$497 |
| Live Oak Resource Center | \$191 |
| Habitat for Humanity | \$396 |
| Mt. Cross | \$500 |
| World Hunger | \$0 |
| Homeless Service Center | \$0 |
| CLU/PLTS | \$0 |
| Lutheran Campus Ministry | \$51 |
| SS CDC | \$0 |
| | |
| El Salvador Sister Parish | \$0 |
| Lutheran World Relief | \$0 |
| ELCA Synod | \$450 |
| COPA | \$500 |
| Lutheran Immigration | \$0 |
| Total | \$3,200 |
| 2019 Benevolence Target (10%) | \$14,800 |
| % of Target | 22% |

Kent Madsen
Treasurer

