

ST. STEPHEN'S FALL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:15 am Worship Service
and Coffee Fellowship
9:30 am Adult Forum
Choir rehearsal
10:30 am Worship & Children's Church
and Coffee Fellowship

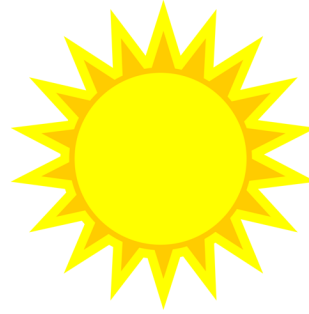
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December 19, 2019

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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

January 2020

Celebrating 65 Years of Ministry

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, January 26 at 9:30 am

Followed by

Annual Congregational Meeting

(Please Request Child Care if needed)

We gather together to elect leadership to council, elect voting members for Synod Assembly, and approve a budget for 2020 that reflects our mission. Please plan on attending to support your church as we continue to seek God's will for our ministry together. Contact the office if you can assist with the coffee hour (set up, cleanup, provide finger foods).

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,
 Jay Johnston, 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 Open: Mon.—Thurs. 8:30am—2:30pm

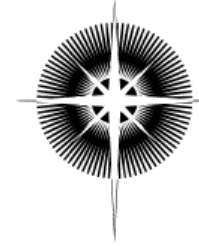
Pastor Jim's Office Hours — Weds. & Thurs. 10 am to 1 pm

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



Epiphany

. . . Means “to show” or “to make known.” It was first observed in the East as a feast commemorating Jesus’ baptism as an adult. Later it became a celebration of Christ being made known to the Gentiles, beginning with the Wisemen (Magi) who came from the East to worship the Christ child. Another theme of Epiphany is God’s light overcoming the darkness of evil and sin.

The color of Epiphany Day is white for light and purity. The Baptism and the Transfiguration of Jesus are celebrated during this season, so white is a reminder of Baptism robes and the gleaming white color of Jesus’ clothes when he went up the mountain of transfiguration. On other Sundays in Epiphany the color is green.

The star that guided the wisemen to Bethlehem is a symbol of Epiphany.

Winter Shelter Meals Needed

The Association of Faith communities will be hosting meals at the Faith Community Shelter. We have been invited to provide meals for up to 20 people once or twice per week. Follow Jesus call to feed the hungry in our midst.

Sign up on the sheet in the narthex if you would like to participate in this service. You will be paired with another family, and contacted regarding dates and further details.

Contact Pastor Herb 277-8476 for more information.

Habitat for Humanity says "Thank You!"

***May kindness return to you
in the same beautiful way that it was given.***

On behalf of the Habitat for Humanity volunteers, Ron and I thank Candace, Connie, Gwyn, Janet, Joanne, Kathy, Kim, Margaret, Mary, and Matthew for contributing to lunches consisting of sandwiches, fruit, chips and/or cookies during past the year. We appreciate your faithfulness each month for feeding the hungry workers.

We also want to thank Maryann for delivering the lunches to the worksite each month, and Leslie for being the connecting thread in the church office.

Thanks for your support, generosity, and kindness! We appreciate you.

Sheila and Ron Buswell

P.S. You, too, can help providing lunches by signing up on the chart at the church. You will receive reminders the weekend before the lunch item is due to the church. Lunches are provided the 4th Tuesday of each month.



Mary Martha / Ruth Rebecca

Thursday, Jan. 9
10:30 am in the Fireside Rm

Women's Café Group

Wednesday, Jan.15 @ 6:00 pm
Devotions & Potluck

from Pastor Jim...



It has been a difficult beginning to the holiday season for our little church this year. As you will see in this newsletter, we are grieving the loss of three faithful women of our church family in a very short span of time. It is a little jarring to come to church and not see these dear sisters gathered with us and to realize that we won't be hearing their voices or sharing the peace with them before Holy Communion anymore.

At the same time, we are reminded that death awaits each of us, and that Judy, Bonnie, and Ginny have only just now claimed the same ultimate promise that each of us also look toward some day. We are reminded that although our grief is just beginning as we move forward without their gifts and blessings, we are the ones who always believe in new life. As followers of the risen Jesus Christ, we know that death does not have the last word and that God's will is for new life and new beginnings. And although we don't completely know what that means now for our beloved who have gone before us, we trust in God's Word that they have been well prepared for and that they live in a new way with God.

I recently visited my grandparents graves with my mother. It's not something I do very often given that I live so far away, so it was a very special time. I was flooded with the good memories and love that they shared with me over the many years I got to know them. They had given me so much, both directly and through the ways they lived their lives and worked hard to bring themselves out of the poverty of their ancestors. The privileges and standard of living that I and my family enjoy are a result of their lives has brought new life to their subsequent generations.

But the best gift that they passed on was the gift of faith lived out through their local church. It is a gift that has sustained me and our family in both celebrations and trials, and I can't imagine life otherwise. But it is also a gift that is being lost more and more in our culture. This has put a great deal of pressure on churches like ours as we wonder and struggle what our future will look like with fewer and fewer resources available to us.

We will gather at our Annual Meeting Jan.25th to make some decisions with these things in mind. It won't be easy, but we will remember that we are a people who always believe in the ways of God which are always moving toward new life. Thank you, gracious God, for the new life that awaits all of us now and with our sisters. Amen.

January Happenings

Knitting Group

Thursdays at 6:45pm

Alcoholics Anonymous

Fridays at 7:00 pm

Alanon Family Group

Saturdays at 10:00 am

Finance Committee

Jan. 3 @ 8:30 am

Church Council

Jan. 8 @ 6:30 pm

MMRR Circle

Jan. 9 @ 10:30

Women's Café Group

Jan. 15 @ 6:00 pm

Embroider's Guild

Jan. 20 @ 7 pm

Provide Habitat Lunches

Jan. 27 @ 10:30 am

Newsletter Collating

Jan. 28 @ 10:00 am

Faith Community Shelter

Help Provide meals all winter.
Dates TBD Pr. Herb 277-8476

Ushers, Readers & Coffee needed

Council Highlights

1. For our devotion time, we all offered prayers of Kyrie and Gloria, as we do each Sunday in worship. As leaders we seek to hold our church in prayer as we seek God's will for our church.

2. Bill Anderson attended from the Finance Committee in order to plan an informative session on the church's \$1.5 million investment portfolio and how it is run. It has been scheduled for Sunday January 12th during the Adult Class at 9:30am.

3. Pastor Jim shared that Rev. Bonnie Bell was in her last days and that he had visited her for prayers of Commendation of the Dying. He also shared that Judy Webber had died suddenly.

4. Pastor Jim has been providing more leadership for COPA pastors and institutional leaders. They will be gathering quarterly now to build more of a relational culture among them because they are key communicators of what COPA is and the kind of work we do.

5. The drain replacement for the bathrooms and kitchen has been scheduled for Jan.2 and 3rd.

6. A motion was unanimously approved to recommend a budget to the congregation. Discussion centered around making our mission a priority for the next five years, which means maintaining our current level of staffing and pastoral leadership. A rationale, developed by a Council task force of Kent Madsen, Jeannette Dawson, Bill Schraft and Robert Bartee, will accompany the budget, explaining the Council's reasons for recommending that some of the principal of our reserves be used to meet our budget in the coming five years time. It will be available in the narthex on January 12th, two weeks before the Annual Meeting per our Constitution.



El Salvador Sister Parish

"Building Relationships for Better Lives"

By the time you read this, a group of 11, including three from St. Stephen's, will be making their final preparations for traveling to El Salvador this month. We leave late in the evening of January 9th and return on the 18th. Included on the itinerary are visits to our two communities of Guillermo Ungo and El Pilar as well as historical sites in San Salvador and elsewhere in the country. The highlight of our time in Guillermo Ungo is always the Scholarship Award Ceremony, where students are given their uniforms, school supplies, and gift bags from you, their sponsors. We take photos and the students write a letter to their sponsor. We will also spend time in Suchitoto, the town nearest to Guillermo Ungo. While in Suchitoto we hope to visit with Sister Peggy of the Center of Art for Peace. She usually has a unique perspective on current events in El Salvador.

Thank you to all recent donors as well as to the prayer child sponsors who have provided gifts for their students. This is an important part of our program -- scholarship recipients in El Salvador are connected with a person or family in the U.S. who cares about them, prays for them, and is interested in their education. Ask us about the trip when we return as we will have good stories to tell!

Kent Madsen

COPA Behavioral Health Civic Academy

Sat., Feb. 8th from 10a-12p - St. Stephens

Led by James Russell and Pastor Jim

One of our community's biggest needs is behavioral health services. Come and hear one of our own leading experts in this field, James Russell LMF, as he helps us better understand that need and how we might address it. We are inviting our neighboring community so we might build relationships with each other and learn how we can act together so that these services are provided to the families who are lacking them.

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

January—Society for the Prevention of Suicide

is the leader in the fight against suicide. To fully achieve its mission, AFSP engages in the following Five Core Strategies:

- #1 Fund scientific research
- #2 Offer educational programs for professionals
- #3 Educate the public about mood disorders and suicide prevention
- #4 Promote policies and legislation that impact suicide and prevention
- #5 Provide programs and resources for survivors of suicide loss and people at risk, and involve them in the work of the Foundation

December —Lutheran World Relief = \$ 225
(as of Dec. 16)

STEWARDS OF GOD'S GIFTS

Kyle Lapp

Have we ever seen a more memorable Angel Gabriel in our Children's Christmas Pageant?! Thank you Kyle, for offering your gifts of humor and long hair and helping us all remember the joy of the birth of God's love in Jesus Christ. Beyond that, Kyle has also been giving his time and youthful abilities to help stop the infamous church roof leak by climbing on the roof and clearing the gutters. He also trimmed several branches of the giant pine tree so that it would reduce the amount of debris that would fall into the gutters in the future. So far, so good, as the leak has not returned with these first heavy rains! Thanks for your gifts shared to take care of our church.

Adult Forum Series

Sundays at 9:30 am

“Into the Wilderness . . .

Share the Good News”

Continue the journey with Pastor Jim through photos and stories. Hear how he refreshed his mind, heart & soul through the wilderness. More Africa and the Grand Canyon National Park on the Colorado River for two weeks with Nathan.

EXCEPT January 12— Info. On Church investment portfolio
By the Finance Committee

The Season of Giving

This holiday season, we thank everyone who has supported St. Stephen's this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions and look forward to support from all of our members in the year ahead.

If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings or if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to check out our automated giving program. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions. Janet Slay 475-5668.

Your 2020 Offering envelopes are in the Narthex.



Sunday School

YOU told a magnificent story in our Pageant. Well done! People have been telling this story for over 2,000 years. But we might very well be the first to incorporate The Holiday Inn and the Comfort Inn. The message is still relevant today: *There is no room at the Inn!* People do not want to hear the deeper message that Jesus brings. Loving God and one another is not always easy or popular. It requires strength and commitment. I hope the exuberance of the children will help us world-weary adults experience anew the ponderings of a young mother, the astonishment of lowly shepherds, the adoration of wise people, and the Gift of a Holy Child from our loving God. Open our eyes and hearts—Come, Lord Jesus!

Luke 22:33-43 King Backward

Jesus was no ordinary King. From the very day he was born, you can tell that he was going to be different. He wasn't born in a palace, but a stable. He didn't have servants, he served others. This lesson was great prep for Christmas and a sweeping compilation of Christ's life. Jesus is our King, and Lord of Life!

Matthew 24:42 Be Ready

Boy / Girl Scouts are always prepared. Some of our kids remember their oath:

*"On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country,
To obey the Scout Law, to help other people at all times,
to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight."*

Living by that oath will certainly prepare us for whatever life throws our way. The same is true in preparing for Jesus' birth at Christmas. Our focus during Advent was Hope, Joy, Peace & Love. No better gift can we offer than ourselves.

Matthew 11:2-11 The Gifts that Jesus Brings

Perhaps Jesus isn't the type of messiah people were expecting. He healed the sick, and brought good news to the poor. He wielded the power of life-transforming love. We may wish for a savior who would do away with suffering, violence, and all that plagues us in one fell swoop. That certainly would be easier than our being called to *do justice, love, kindness, and walk humbly with God*. Where do we see God's power at work in this suffering world? How does God's love reach those who are sick or homeless?

As we ring in the New Year, I look forward to growing together, as WE help lay down the faith foundation for OUR children. Thank you for this gift.

- Miss Leslie

Birthdays & Anniversaries

1-1 Nathan Lapp

1-8 Katie Silva

1-9 Esdras Garden

1-10 Colby Hanson

1-11 Mitch Crews

1-12 Linda Hix

1-13 Jennifer Robe

1-14 Sofia Bartee

1-16 Ellie Russell

1-17 Emily Valencia

1-18 Patty Travers

1-21 Chris Turzo

1-23 Diane Hintz

1-25 Neil Crews

1-26 Iris Colclogh

1-26 John Wickham

1-27 Crystal Hintze

1-24 Lindsey & Becky
Cramer



Short Term: Family of Ginny Ruble, Family of Rev. Bonnie Bell, George Webber & Family, Family of Tony Guerrero, John, Kimberly & Danny, Matthew, Barbara Allen, Doug Hahn, Cheryl & David, Jay, John, Lisa Baker, Victor Zajdel, Stephanie Barker, Steven, Jenny Taylor, George, Kirstin, Steven, Michael, Kayla, Jim Chester, Bonnie, Nancy, Joyce, Don, Lina, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager,

Cabel, Kyle, Esdras, Jackson, Joe, Pat, Riley, Shelby, Kaitlyn, Daniel, Ryder, Immigrant families, The Homeless, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, Pastor Jim and Our Church Family.

Long Term: people of the Bahamas, The Sanders Family, Sue Gibson, Ernestine Bartee, Barbara & John Bartee, Paul Compese, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Susan Anderson, Rick, Bobbie Erickson, Edna Lindquist, Richard C., Eric VonSchell, Lauri Hollist, Ken Pahel, Pat M., Gary, Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Barry & Barbara, Chris & Lorie Juhl, Karin, Will, Chris, Pat Hubbard, Cathy, Pearl Runquist, Volpi & Robe Family, men and women of Armed Forces, the President, and the Youth of today

In Memoriam

Rev. Bonnie Bell

Service - December 27, 2019 at 12:00pm

Reception immediately following in the Fellowship Hall

Our dear sister in Christ passed away surrounded by her family over a weeks time, and by singing of her favorite hymns, and by the prayers of the church that she had offered on behalf of so many others over her many years as a pastor in the Sierra Pacific Synod. So many have benefited from her gifts and ministry. We look forward to gathering with her family to worship God and thank God for her life and witness, through a service that she designed in anticipation of her claiming the promises of her baptism.

Ginny Ruble

Service - January 4, 2020 at 11:00 am

Dessert Reception in the Narthex afterwards

Our dear new friend Ginny passed away suddenly after having served and worshipped with us the Sunday before. She proudly was able to enjoy her two grandsons participation in the Children's Christmas Pageant a week before and shared her gifts as Secretary of the MMRR Circle, the Altar Guild, and the Newsletter crew. We will gather to commend her to God's eternal care, and surround her family with love.

Judy Webber

Our dear sister in Christ passed away suddenly over the Thanksgiving holiday. We will sorely miss her warm smile and loving eyes and encouraging words that she often shared with us on Sundays. We thank God for her beautiful witness of faith. We lift up our brother George in prayer as he mourns the loss of his beloved of 57 years.

Child Development Center



We were so excited to share our Christmas Pageant and all our students with you. Our children added 5 more songs to their part and sang it out LOUD. It was fun to combine with our Sunday School children and teens to bring the community together and share in the love of Jesus. My grandson even joined in the mix. He loved Pastor Jim, his guitar, and the Christmas music! Each child is photographed in their costume and takes home an ornament to remember this time together. As they get older, they can remember their time here at St. Stephen's and their time with Pastor Jim in Chapel. Mostly, they will remember where they learned about the love of Jesus.

One student left the next week for Germany. She was looking at different churches there where she said, "I am looking for Jesus in the churches." This is why we do what we do! Her picture is displayed on our board in the hallway.

Speaking of sharing, our children painted 40 St. Nicolas cards to be attached to a bag of goodies that were left at each door at the Senior Housing. We continue to collaborate with Leslie in ways to be neighborly and share our love.

After the rush of fall and the holidays we are ready to refocus on the activities we have for our children in 2020. Our Parent Teacher Conferences showed us teaching points for each child as they continue to learn through play. We are blessed with a full staff to provide rich curriculum and activities that will stir a child's sense of wonder.

It was an honor to share our teachers and school board members with you at the Christmas pageant. Thank you, Pastor Jim and congregation, for surrounding us with your encouragement and support. We are proud to share our school and the happiness it brings to our St. Stephen's Family.

I want to thank Pastor Jim, Leslie, John Hopping, Kathy Allen and Barbara Johnston for your support and partnership along with our dedicated board members as we begin New Year 2020!

Happy New Year, Kathy Berens

Treasurer Notes ...

Budget Information – November 2019

	November	November	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution Income	\$11,388	\$11,745	\$130,813	\$133,955	\$-3,142
Facility Use Income *	\$2,995	\$792	\$19,266	\$8,708	\$10,560
Investment Income	\$3,385	\$3,583	\$38,961	\$39,417	\$-456
Total Income	\$17,768	\$16,120	\$189,040	\$182,080	\$6,960
Expenses	\$18,307	\$18,349	\$208,599	\$210,484	\$-1,843
Net	\$-539	\$-2,229	\$-19,559	\$-28,404	\$8,845

* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month for 11 months + Miscellaneous Income. Contribution income for November was above budget, but the year-to-date deficit is almost \$20k. We have withdrawn funds from investments to meet expenses.

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

	November	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Organ	\$5	\$25	
Piano	\$0	\$95	
Hearing Impaired Equip	\$0	\$395	
Solar Electric Payback	\$150		\$17,501
Narthex Bathroom	\$175		\$1,746

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2019 through November	
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	\$189
CLU/PLTS	\$181
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$1,052
SS CDC	\$580
El Salvador Sister Parish	\$351
Lutheran World Relief	\$0
ELCA Synod	\$970
COPA	\$1,500
Lutheran Immigration	\$0
Total	\$7,022
2019 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$14,800
% of Target	47%

Kent Madsen
Treasurer

