

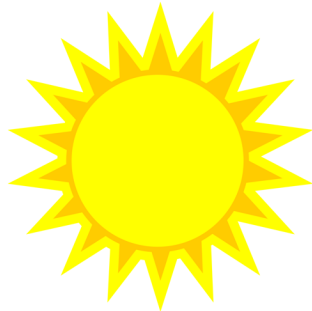
## ST. STEPHEN'S FALL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON  
February 27, 2020  
POST OFFICE:  
DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

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

Non-Profit Org.  
Postage Paid  
Permit #7079  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060-9998

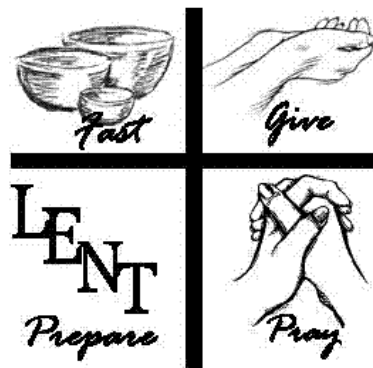


# St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

# Sun

## March 2020

## Celebrating 65 Years of Ministry



## We Gather Together

**Every Wednesday  
March 4 — April 1**

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 helping those in need. This helps us prepare for the miracle of the Resurrection at Easter. Please make a commitment to join together on both Sundays and Weds. Re-focusing our direction toward God is our calling for these 6 weeks. Come and be filled!



***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 - Jay Johnston Treasurer— Kent Madsen  
 David Balogh, Bill Schraft, Alyssa Burkhardt,  
 Paul Cunningham, and Steven Hendrickson

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

## **El Salvador Sister Parish**

### **Annual Wine Tasting Event**

3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 25

Bargetto Winery

3535 N. Main Street • Soquel



Come and enjoy fine wines and yummy finger foods at our annual fundraiser. There will be music and updates on our communities in El Salvador. Note that this year we're back at a familiar venue.

### **More on the January 2020 Delegation Trip**

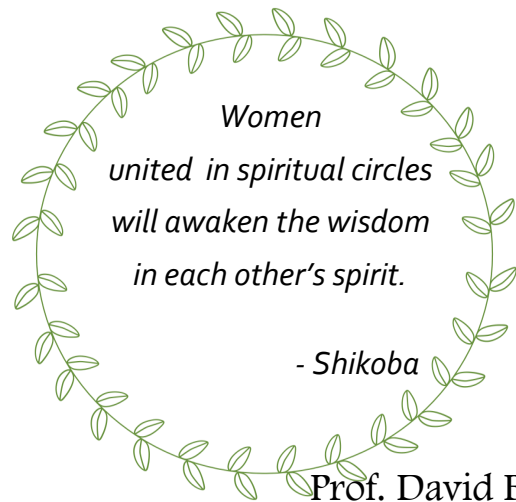
I mentioned some highlights last month: the Scholarship Ceremony and meeting prayer children and their families as we visited homes in the communities of Guillermo Ungo.

One new destination this year was the historic and beautiful town of Panchimalco, located southwest of San Salvador. The colonial church, Santa Cruz de Roma (Holy Cross of Rome), is shown above. According to Wikipedia, it is the oldest surviving colonial structure in El Salvador. Panchimalco is known as one of two surviving settlements with an indigenous Pipil population. It also is the home of many artists and galleries.

We spent a night in Suchitoto, where we stayed at the hostel in the "Centro", the Art Center for Peace. The Center is always bustling with art projects and classes. It is the local institution that handles our scholarship money for Guillermo Ungo. Sister Peggy, President, always has a creative take on current events; and she also works in a little theology for good measure.

Since we started the water and sanitation projects in El Pilar, comprised of Bendicion de Dios and Las Orquideas, it's important to include them. This year was no exception. While part of our group hosted a craft project for the kids, the board members met with the leadership of the two communities to discuss our ongoing latrine project. We have been using an NGO, ESNA, to be our people "on the ground" for the project. This year, we are trying something different: we have forged an agreement to work directly with community leaders and have worked out a way to transfer funds. We hope to save money this way and build more latrines!

Kent Madsen for Santa Cruz al Salvador  
*"Building Relationships for Better Lives"*



## Mary Martha / Ruth Rebecca Circle

Thursday, March 12  
10:30 am in the Fireside Rm  
All women are welcome!

Prof. David Balogh will speak on Climate Change

At our February meeting, we assembled 30 baby care kits, made possible by the Christmas Project donations of sleepwear, outerwear, cash, and support of our Christmas Boutique/bake sale. These have been shipped to Lutheran World Relief. We also made a donation to the Narthex Bathroom fund in memory of the four members we lost in 2019:

Doris Ray, Lois Meeker, Bonnie Bell & Ginny Ruble.

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## Craft Day ~ Beeswax Food Wrap

Hosted by the Women's Café Group

Saturday, March 21 from 10 — noon

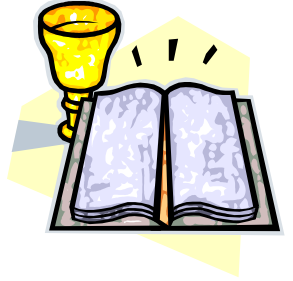
We will be making Reusable Beeswax food storage wraps. An eco friendly alternative to plastic baggies. Suggested donation \$5 for supplies. Note: they sell for twice that price!

Invite Friends! ~including men and children 13+

Info 476-4700  
14



*from Pastor Jim...*



The final chapter of the book study ("From the Steeple to the Street" by Travis Collins of Fresh Expressions US) we have been doing as a Church Council for the last year and a half, is entitled, "You and Your Church Can Do This".

All along, the main theme of the book has been to help churches live up to our true calling, purpose and mission: To share the message of God through Jesus Christ with those outside of the church. Beginning a Fresh Expression of the church out in the community and away from the church building is proving to be a worthwhile endeavor for many churches like ours who are more traditional and experiencing decline.

However, this idea is one we are not accustomed to undertaking and involves venturing out into a kind of wilderness and take some risks. Here are some of the most common questions that arise:

1. **"Is this going to grow our church?"** - Possibly. Some who attend the Fresh Expression of church eventually want a fuller experience with the Body of Christ, so they become part of the existing church.

Some in the larger community are drawn to a church that is being boldly creative. That witness opens up doors to people's hearts and helps them overcome perceived barriers to becoming part of the existing church community.

Alan Hirsch observed: "It seems that when the church engages at the fringes, it almost always brings life to the center."

Another biblical and spiritual concept is that when the church takes risks, gives away and sends itself out, it creates spaces that God can fill with even more than what was thought.

We must remember that numerical growth is never the point of the work of the church. The point is to be the kind of selfless, loving effort that embodies Christ for the world. Beginning a Fresh Expression of church is not really about *us*!

Steven Croft offers this helpful reminder: "Church never finds its true center by turning in on itself. When preoccupation with its own survival takes center stage, then the church ceases to live in harmony with its very life-force. When it loses sight of its very reason of existence, inevitable dysfunction and atrophy set in."

As we move in this direction as a church we will need to continually face these kinds of questions with a faithful focus and hope. Next month I'll talk about more of these kinds of common questions.

## **March Happenings**



**Spring  
Forward  
March 8**

### **Centering Prayer**

Tuesdays 12:30 with Pr. Joel

### **Knitting Group**

Thursdays at 6:45pm

### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Fridays at 7:00 pm

### **Finance Committee**

March 6 @ 8:30 am

### **MMRR Circle**

March 12 @ 10:30

### **Church Council Retreat**

March 15 @ 12 noon

### **Embroider's Guild**

March 16 @ 7 pm

### **Craft Day (Café Group)**

March 21 @ 10:00 am

### **Provide Habitat Lunches**

March 24 @ 10:30 am

### **Newsletter Collating**

March 24@ 10:00 am

## **Council Highlights**

1. For our devotion time we completed our study of "From the Steeple to the Street". Please see Pastor Jim's article for a summary of the last chapter.
2. Four people from the Sustainability Task Force attended our COPA Delegates Assembly which was held in Moss Landing. The upcoming year's agenda was ratified and we heard about the actions taken this past year. We will be welcoming a new lead organizer on March 1, Arturo Aguilar. He has been an organizer in L.A., San Antonio, El Paso and most recently Phoenix. He is a former commercial banker with Wells Fargo and was born in Mexico. He will join the Sustainability Task Force on Sun. March 15 at noon. All are welcome to come and meet Arturo.
3. The annual Council retreat date and time was set for March 15 after church from 12-4pm. We will begin to strategize the beginning of a Fresh Expression of the church and start getting a clearer picture about what it might look like for our context.
4. Officers were elected: President-Renee Rice, V.P.-TBA at the retreat, Secretary-Jay Johnston, Treasurer-Kent Madsen.
5. Pastor Jim met with the Community Youth Director from St. John the Baptist Episcopal to plan some joint programs.

## **Remembering Rev. Bonnie Bell:**

### **Liturgical Choreographer and Inclusive Theologian**

by Steven Hendrickson

Our beloved Bonnie Bell bestowed a legacy gift through chosen selections at her Memorial Service. The liturgy had wonderful moments of creative spontaneity, especially in the hymn, Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ. Her note below the entry reads, "Maracas, sticks, whatever." A magical moment ensued as the instruments were distributed, and excited anticipation arose. Those who know Bonnie will attest to her desire for playful, not entirely serious approaches to worship.

Her inclusivity, from a theological perspective, shone forth in two distinctive ways. First, her musical selections had simple phrases, making it very easy for all to join into singing. She always wanted to include everyone, especially those who may not be versed in church hymnody. Another feature of her song selections is that they reflect human emotion, while praising and seeking Jesus. This is a beautiful synthesis of emotions and thought; for Bonnie was very much a feeling and emotional person, as well as being very competent in biblical knowledge and theology. Her well rounded spirituality extends to seeing all of creation in the Imago Dei, or the Image of God. This awareness was evident in her hymn selection: "All Creatures. Worship God Most High."

Along with the closing blessing which is attributed to St. Francis, Bonnie was encouraging us to expand our vision of the embodiment of God in the world. The closing hymn, "Lead Me, Guide Me," gives an emotional reminder of what was a favorite hymn during her years at Light of Life Lutheran Church. These examples of her parting words to us reveal a creative spirit that all can fondly remember. We pray for Bonnie's family and all who dearly love her. Praise be to God for her time with us, and an example of faithful creativity and inclusivity.

## **Attention Thrivent Members!**

Your Thrivent Choice Dollars are available! If you are a Thrivent Financial benefit member, you have Thrivent Choice Dollars available to designate to your church or charity (on the Thrivent qualifying list) of your choice. St. Stephen's, as well as the St. Stephen's Child Development Center, are on the list. Your Choice Dollars need to be designated by March 31. It doesn't cost you anything and your organization benefits! It is easy to do—just a few clicks on the Thrivent web site, or call Mary Elizabeth Bellizzi at 831-688-1788 for help.

## Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

### **March—Live Oak Community Resource Center**

This valuable community center serves many in our local neighborhood and is one of our COPA partners as we seek to meet the needs of families by organizing for changes and new opportunities. Below is an excerpt from the 'Thank You Letter' we received last year. It reminds us about the importance of our partnership with places who are serving the more vulnerable ones in our community.

"Thank you so much for your generous donations. Your contribution has already gone to work providing vital services for the Live Oak Families, including connecting them with health insurance and providing free summer sports leagues for kids."

### **February—St. Stephen's Scholarship Fund**

= \$260 ( as of Feb. 20)

## STEWARDS OF GOD'S GIFTS

### **Alyssa Burkhardt, Paul Cunningham, Steven Hendrickson**

We are all grateful for these three who are using their gifts of time and abilities to offer themselves to God's service in leadership of our church. Alyssa as a newer, younger person with a passion for sharing God's message through Christ and experience in campus ministry, Paul as a long-time part of St. Stephen's (confirmed here!) whose consistent dedication over those years has meant so much to so many, and Steven whose commitment to seeking the presence of God and how we can best care for all of God's creation, will bring a helpful depth to our endeavors.

## Plan for Easter Celebration - April 12

8:15 am Worship with "All that Brass"

9:30 am Breakfast

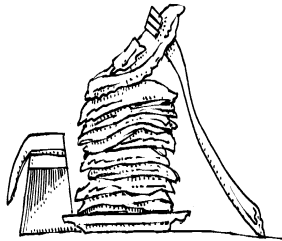
10:30 am Worship with "All that Brass"  
- Children's Church during the sermon

11:30 am Children's Egg Hunt

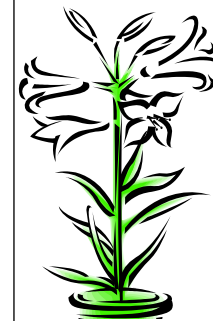


11:30am Breakfast

The Easter Breakfast benefits our many ministries. Come celebrate new life with food & friends! Your Help is needed! Please sign up to set up Saturday and cook, serve, and clean up on Sunday.



Pancake Breakfast



## Easter Lilies

**Help decorate our sanctuary & honor loved ones**

- ~ Make \$15 checks payable to St. Stephen's
- ~ Memo line "Lily"
- ~ List your dedication on the sign up sheet

You may take home your flower after the second Easter service.



## Sunday School

### **Luke 2:22-40 Simeon & Anna Rejoice at dedication of Jesus**

What is a community? A group of people gathered together for shared reasons. A community is helpful in a number of ways:

- it can teach you things that you don't yet know.
- It can remind you of things you know but have forgotten.
- It helps you to keep doing the things that the community cares about and why you joined it in the first place.
- It listens to you and cares about what you say.

Just like Jesus grew up in a community that supported and encouraged him to be a person who paid attention to God, so too do you and I have a community that reminds us and teaches us about paying attention to God here at St. Stephen's. Like Simeon and Anna, OUR church community rejoices when YOU are here.

### **Matthew 5:13-20 You are the Light of the World**

If a flashlight doesn't work, what might be the problem? They need batteries. If we are the flashlight, then God is our battery. Before our light will shine, we must be connected to God's power supply. We get that connection through worship and praise here at St. Stephen's.

Jesus the light of the world, calls us (his followers) to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ. "Be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, doing good works and keeping God's commandments." Just like dominos, and the ripple effect. We touch EVERYONE around us.

### **Deuteronomy 30:15-20 God's BIG 10**

We want our children to remember our values – kindness, integrity, responsibility, respect etc. Not just because we want "good" children who reflect favorably on us, but because we know that living fully in their identity as children of God will bring the greatest happiness.

We are called to choose life by loving and obeying God's rules. Behavior that honors both God and neighbor results in life and health for the whole community. When asked what commandment is the hardest for them, the older children replied #8 "You shall not lie". We rephrased it to "Always tell the truth". We all break the rules sometimes. Our job is not to be perfect. Simply be humble and keep praying that our lives may Glorify God.

**Note: NO CLASS March 8**

Farewell beautiful "Alleluia", we will celebrate with you on Easter ~ Miss Leslie

# Birthdays & Anniversaries

3-5	Steven Pond	3-22	Elizabeth Balogh	3-10	Steve & Julie Mouw
3-6	Bev Hickman	3-23	Sheila Buswell		
3-8	Judy Russell	3-23	Polly	3-16	Bill & Sherilyn Jager
3-12	Theresa Loback-Campbell		Cappelloni		
		3-24	Dean Slay	3-19	Brad & Shawn Cramer
3-18	Keith Slay	3-27	Chuck Davis		
3-18	Shelby Volpi				
3-19	Oliver Spires				
3-20	Peggy Crews				



**Short Term:** Shelly Barker & family, Scott Ruble & family, Family of Pr. Bonnie Bell, George Webber & Family, Suzanne Duval, The Cox Family, Kim, Mary Kelly, Trippel family, Grandma Joyce, Don Simmen, Lily Williams, Duke, Michael, Kimberly & Danny, Lora Schraft Poulson, Debbie, Julie, Nana, Kelly, Barbara Allen, Doug Hahn, Jay, Kirstin, Michael, Kayla, Sam, Nancy, Don, Lina, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, Cabel, Kyle, Esdras, Jackson, Joe, Pat, Riley, Shelby, Frank, Kaitlyn, Daniel, Ryder, Jenny, Abby, 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, 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



Resolving  
Homelessness  
Together

### Dear St. Stephen's -

We hope you feel proud to know that you join over 5,000 individuals and families who, in the past few years, have donated their time or money to Housing Matters in our collective community effort to end homelessness in SC County.

You gave a total of \$188 in 2019. Because of your generosity, last year, 133 households comprised of 268 adults and kids have moved into permanent homes.

Like many across the nation, we are a community experiencing homelessness. We all know someone who has been affected by the lack of affordable housing and/or homelessness, whether directly or indirectly. Know that the team at Housing Matters, with the board and community's backing, works 24/7 to help our neighbors avoid homelessness or quickly get out of it. Your gifts show that SC has the compassion, innovative spirit, and steadfast commitment to build a future in which everyone has a home.

Our newest program, which serves young adults, housed its first client. We call it Youth Rapid Re-housing, which sounds more complicated than it is. Our community has identified that young adults ages 18-24 have unique needs, and in 2019 we launched a new program to serve them. A few months after launch, our first client is now in a home of his own. Now, he can focus on building a strong future, instead of worrying where he'll sleep tonight.

In 2019 our community rallied like never before. We hope you'll continue your commitment to resolving homelessness together in 2020. We are grateful for your continued support.

Thank you, Marsa Greenspan

### Try this Fast for this Lent

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope
- Fast from worries and have trust in God

## Child Development Center



St. Stephens Child Development Center invites you to **come support our fundraiser:**

**Pizza My Heart**

**Tuesday, March 10, 4:00-9:00**

**2180 41 Ave. Capitola**

you may dine in, or order take out, and 30% of your order will be donated to our preschool's scholarship fund. Be sure to mention our group when you place your order, so we receive the donation!

St. Stephen's continues to strive to provide an affordable preschool option for families. Our scholarship fund has reduced such that next year we can only offer a scholarship discount for one student. Typically, we have had 3 students per year who are provided a significant discount. Over the years we have provided quality care and education to over a dozen families who otherwise could not have had their child attend. This is due to the generosity of 3 women in our congregation who originated the scholarship fund with monthly donations each of \$150.00, for 5 - 7 years. This year we are down to one monthly contributing donor. Another generous church member donated one day a week, for this school year, to a child who could only afford 2 days. This student is thriving and needed the extra day as it will be her only year in Preschool before kindergarten. There are various reasons why people have needed the scholarships, but one common thread is the parents were working on their own education or improving their earning ability to provide for their family. Their gratitude has been great. Each year I provided a letter to our donors, so they knew the stories of the children they were contributing to, and the difference it made for each child and their family. We do offer the most affordable tuition rate in Santa Cruz County, but each year we must consider raising the tuition. This means each year it becomes more difficult for families to afford.

School Board President, Barbara Johnston, came up with the idea to designate this fundraiser as another opportunity to provide scholarship opportunities for young children. Last year it was so much fun to gather at Pizza My Heart, including the Lapp family, and fellowship at Pizza My Heart. We would love for church members to join in whether you eat in, take out, or ask your friends and family to participate. It all counts. If you have any questions or want to contribute in another way to our scholarship fund in the future, please contact Kathy. Thanks for your consideration!



Warmly, Kathy Berens

Treasurer Notes ...  
 Budget Information – January 2020

	January	January	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution Income	\$10,619	\$11,855	\$10,619	\$11,855	\$-1,236
Facility Use Income *	\$850	\$1,534	\$850	\$1,534	\$-684
Investment Income	\$3,385	\$3,750	\$3,385	\$3,750	\$-365
Total Income	\$14,854	\$17,139	\$14,854	\$17,139	\$-2,285
Expenses	\$24,014	\$19,117	\$24,014	\$19,117	\$4,897
Net	\$-9,160	\$-1,978	\$-9,160	\$-1,978	\$-7,182

\* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month for 11 months + Miscellaneous Income.  
 Total income for January was disappointing, and we had an extraordinary expense in January (sewer line); we ended the month with a deficit of about \$7k. We have withdrawn \$7.5k from investments to meet expenses.

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

	January	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Organ	\$0	\$30	
Piano	\$0	\$95	
Hearing Impaired Equipment	\$0	\$395	
Solar Electric Payback	\$147		\$17,813
Narthex Bathroom	\$75		\$1,472

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2020 through January	
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$265
SS Scholarships	\$0
Live Oak Resource Center	\$0
Habitat for Humanity	\$0
Mt. Cross	\$0
World Hunger	\$0
Homeless Service Center	\$0
CLU/PLTS	\$0
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$40
SS CDC	\$0
El Salvador Sister Parish	\$0
Lutheran World Relief	\$0
ELCA Synod	\$0
COPA	\$0
Lutheran Immigration	\$0
Total	\$305
2020 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$14,658
% of Target	2%

