

ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE
resumes April 12 pending approval

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
March 24, 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

April 2020

Celebrating 65 Years of Ministry

Worship Resumes
With Easter Celebration April 12
(Pending Corona Virus Restrictions)

Easter Sunday Worship

with Brass Ensemble

8:15 am Worship

10:30 am Worship with Children's time



Children's Egg Hunt 11:30 am



Easter
Breakfast 9:30
and 11:30 am



Celebrate the Resurrection with food & friends!

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

Bargetto Wine Tasting

We originally scheduled our annual Wine Tasting fundraiser for April 25th. While we haven't yet officially cancelled the event, it is very likely it will be cancelled. Please consider making a donation to Santa Cruz al Salvador in lieu of attending the event. You may donate via our website at santacruzalsalvador.org or through St. Stephen's.

Good News!

Last month I told you about something new for us — working directly with El Pilar community leaders to build the next group of composting latrines. Previously we worked through an NGO with people on the ground in El Salvador to handle funds and oversee the construction activity. We negotiated an agreement during the January 2020 delegation and put the final version together once we returned home. Eliminating the "middle man" saves a considerable amount of money. Communication is also key. Due to the expanded use of smartphones in El Salvador and the availability of messaging software WhatsApp we can readily exchange information. Construction started in February with the transfer of funds; the industrious Salvadorans went right to work. You are seeing here one of the first three completed latrines under this plan. The fourth is under construction. Thanks be to God!



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



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

For many people in the ELCA it means coming to worship with the assistance of a mobility, audio, visual or sensory device. Unfortunately, in many of our churches or places of worship it is our siblings in Christ who have disabilities and need such devices who feel the least welcome at the table. Why? A lack of ramps, braille or large print hymnals, or elevators are not the only (or first) obstacle encountered. Many times it is the language used when talking about or concerning disability that is problematic or unwelcoming to many.

Talking about disability can feel awkward sometimes. The language doesn't feel right. We often don't know what to say or how to speak publicly in our liturgy, sermons and prayers. At times we will fall into the trap of affirming who a person is "despite" their disability, rather than simply honoring who they are. A beloved child of God. Whole, complete. Just as they are. What needs to change? Where do hospitality and authentic welcome to worship begin?

Using person-first language is a great place to start. This language is meant to acknowledge that a person is not their diagnosis or disability in a negative way. It reminds us that someone is a person first and foremost, whose identity is rooted in being a child of God. Also, in person-first language, we avoid language that talks about suffering, or that victimizes or infantilizes the person.

Example: a wheelchair bound person vs. a person who uses a wheelchair.

Disability Ministries has prepared a document that can help us think about how to use person-first language in worship and in the whole of our lives together. The document helps us understand what person-first language is and provides examples for how it can be used in worship. It also serves as a reminder to us that language around disability is constantly evolving and is often contextual.

Disability vs. varied ability vs. differently abled

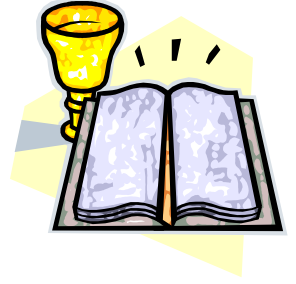
"For myself (Lisa Heffernan), terms like varied ability and differently abled wrap up disability into too nice of a little bow. This language feels condescending to me. I have a disability. I own it. I'm OK with it. This is how I was made. Yes, we all have varied and different abilities. I am a paraplegic. I use a wheelchair. Saying I have a disability does not take away my identity or sense of self and who God made me to be. 'Varied' and 'differently abled' don't own that part of who I am enough for me. I am not 'disabled'; my wheelchair and spina bifida do not hinder my life. They, largely, make it the gift it is. I HAVE a disability, and that's OK. The self I bring to worship has a disability but is not broken or 'less than' because of it."

We hope this document is a starting point or a conversation starter as we work toward making our worship and the language we use in it more inclusive and barrier free. Our language isn't perfect, but we serve a God who guides us as we come together as the whole body of Christ, where all are truly welcome.

*Written by Anita K. Smallin and the Rev. Lisa Heffernan
of the ELCA Disability Ministries Advisory Team*

from Pastor Jim...

Ministry During Coronavirus Restrictions



As we each face the unimaginable circumstances surrounding the coronavirus pandemic, I am trying to feel my way through how we can continue to be church despite not being able to gather in person for some time. As a Christian church it is clear that we need to support the efforts to protect those who are the most vulnerable by doing what we can to slow the spread on the disease. We are also called to dig deeper into what our faith means to us in these days when so much that we are used to being able to do, can't be done right now.

One aspect of our faith that is certainly helpful is that we believe that God's Spirit draws especially closer during times of uncertainty and difficulty like now. So I encourage you to really look for the ways that God's grace and love will surprise you as we endure this time together. Already, I sense that we are becoming a much closer congregation, and we are drawing a deeper strength from our understanding of how living God's ways prepares us well for the living of these days. Here are a few ways to sustain our spirits in the coming weeks:

Sunday Worship Service Recordings: We will offer a recording of the worship service on our website. Please gather your family or just yourself on Sunday morning March 29 and April 5th (Palm Sunday), and bring some bread and wine or grape juice for when Pastor Jim celebrates Holy Communion.

Wednesday Lenten Worship, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday: Pastor Jim will offer a livestream opportunity for us to gather online for worship at 7pm on Wed. April 1, Thursday April 9 & Friday April 10. An email will be sent to you with a link to a Zoom meeting. Just click on the link and join the gathering.

Phone Calling Connection: Our Sustainability Task Force members, led by Chair Mark Linder, will be checking in with members of the congregation to learn how they are doing and to find out if they need anything. It is important that our congregation remains a strong community. This is a continuation of Task Force efforts to keep fostering a relational culture at St. Stephen's that strengthens the Body of Christ that we are trying to be in our community.

Activities resume

April 12th

(Pending County Restrictions)

Centering Prayer

Tuesdays 12:30 with Pr. Joel

Knitting Group

Thursdays at 6:45pm

Alcoholics Anonymous

Fridays at 7:00 pm

Finance Committee

May 1 @ 8:30 am

MMRR Circle

May 14 @ 10:30

Church Council Retreat

TBA

Embroider's Guild

April 20 @ 7 pm

Women's Café Group

April 15 @ 6:00 pm

Provide Habitat Lunches

April 28 @ 10:30 am

Newsletter Collating

April 28@ 10:00 am

Ushers, Readers & Coffee needed

Council Highlights

1. With Pastor Jim on vacation in a more remote part of Mexico without reliable wifi, while all of the coronavirus events and decisions were rapidly developing, we were unable to make many decisions about how our ministry would adapt until he returned on March 14. President Renee Rice and Pastor Jim made the decision to cancel the Council retreat and regular meeting, which was to have taken place the next day, Sunday March 15. At that time there was only a restriction in place that prohibited gatherings of over 50 people and it was too late in the week to notify everyone of a cancellation, so Pastor Jim employed safe distancing among those gathered, did not offer Holy Communion of Sharing of the Peace, and sanitized doors and handles. About a dozen people attended each service, none of which were from the “vulnerable” population. The next day an email vote was taken by Council to cancel all church and outside group activities through April 7th in order to comply with the County Public Health Order. Future plans will be contingent upon what the County, State and Federal Governments require as we support the efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Below is a correspondence we received from former member and Council President Erik Larson, who now lives in the San Jose area. We rejoice with him and his new congregation at this wonderful news! It is yet another extension of the fruit that was born through St. Stephen's pursuit and development of our land for affordable housing.

“I am pleased to announce that the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors has just approved allocating \$16 million of measure A funds to construct housing for the homeless at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church property (1710 Moorpark Ave. San Jose). We are one step closer to realizing our vision of renewing the mission at IELC. Hallelujah!”

Lent Statement on building homes for the homeless

(Sent to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors)

My name is Erik Larsen. I am the Church Council President of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church of San Jose. We are a small congregation at the corner of Leigh and Moorpark. And we have big plans. For two years we have grown a partnership with Mid Pen Housing to develop 106 units for the formerly homeless. It's an exciting project.

During these two years we have been guided by scripture and prayer. Hebrews Chapter 13: verses 1-3 talks about Welcoming the Stranger. Hebrews says, keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. ²Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. ³Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Poverty in Santa Clara County is crushing families and individuals. The majority of working people are unable to earn a living wage. The stress of just paying \$2000 to \$3,000 per month rent is unbearable. People are pushed out of homes. And there are the long commutes. If you cannot find a place on a couch, if you cannot find a car/RV to sleep in, if you cannot find a room to sub rent, you end up on the green ways of HWY 280 and other places. You see it every day.

I am tired of remembering those imprisoned by poverty, suffering from alcohol or drugs abuse to numb the pain, or going crazy because of how damn hard it is to live here. Our church is called to LOVE and show HOSPITALITY to strangers. We are called to liberate the oppressed. And I am here today on behalf of my church to take one small step towards to creating a new reality right here and right now.

I want to thank you for your leadership and for your support for this project and voting just a moment ago to allocate \$16 million in Measure A funds to build housing for the homeless at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church. LOVE, it is a powerful thing. The HOSPITALITY of cre-

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering **April — Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay**

Our Mission: Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

Our Vision: A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

We build decent, affordable homes and provide home ownership opportunities to qualified families who live and work in S.C. and Monterey Counties. Families purchase our homes with a down payment, sweat equity, and an affordable mortgage. Together, our volunteers and families have built 50+ homes, with further plans extending through the foreseeable future. Every home we build helps keep Santa Cruz a place where working class people can continue to raise their families. We rely on your generous donations to keep our organization funded and operational. Every little bit has a real and lasting effect.

This valuable community center serves many in our local neighborhood and is one of our COPA partners as we seek to meet

STEWARDS OF GOD'S GIFTS **Kent Madsen**

We thank Kent for using his gifts of understanding modern technology and maintaining our website for us, and being able to record the Sunday morning worship service, and posting it to the website for us- which took many hours to try and figure out. In the midst of this pandemic crisis it is a comfort and strength to have Kent's patience and knowledge and calm presence as we try to respond in ways we never anticipated.

Kent is also our Treasurer and puts in many hours taken good care of the church's finances, which are very complicated. He has recently taken on the additional task of filling the shoes of our former bookkeeper, which is also quite time-consuming. We are all very grateful for this faithful steward of God's gifts among us. May we follow his example and find ways to give back.



(PENDING COUNTY RESTRICTIONS) **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



Sunday School

Normally, Lent is my favorite time in the church year. To me it's just so real and personal. It's also the most challenging time to be a Sunday school teacher. So many tricky lessons that even adults struggle with. I planned to journey into the wilderness each week, climbing the mountain to receive God's message. But now, with all the fear and unknown, the Lenten wilderness has become our daily lives. I pray that within our family cocoons, we may see Jesus and remain hopeful that the darkness is only temporary...

Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus was led up by the Spirit to the wilderness and tempted.

Our focus was on Jesus saying NO to the evil in the world. I don't use the "D" word. We remember right from wrong = good vs evil. We climbed our virtual mountain to retrieve God's rules, and practice following them.

I've noticed that with this curriculum, there isn't the telling of all the traditional stories that we learned as kids. I will be trying to link some of them in. We read about Jonah. It was fun to see how interested they were because of the fantastical nature of the story. Jonah not only didn't want to do what God asked, but he actually thought he could hide from God. News Flash: God see's you! Eventually, after hardship, Jonah obeyed God and had quite the testimony because of it. We discussed what a parable is, and how obeying God produces good in everyone!!!

These are a few of the lessons we would have done together:

John 3:1-17 A new life in Christ / Born of Water and Spirit Nicodemus came to Jesus late one night because he was "Hungry". No he wasn't looking for a late night snack; he was hungry for spiritual food. He was hungry for the truth about the kingdom of God. He came to Jesus because he had questions and he knew that Jesus would have the answers.

Nicodemus reminds me of the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. He ate and ate but was still hungry. He built a small house (cocoon) and slept for weeks. He then pushed his way out transformed into a butterfly, a totally new creation. That's the way it is when we are born again and let Jesus re-create us!

John 9:1-13 Jesus Heals a Blind Man One day Jesus was walking with his disciples when they passed by a blind man. When they saw him the disciples asked Jesus who was to blame for his blindness. Was it because of his sin or was it because of his parents sins? Jesus answered them and told them that no one was to blame, he was blind so that God's works could be shown in him. Then Jesus healed the man and the people praised and glorified God for his goodness.

Dear Lord, the difficulties in our life seem small when compared to what others may be facing. Help us not to grumble and complain, but to praise and glorify you in every situation. Amen.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

4-1 Joel Hurttgam

4-8 Robbin Heppe

4-11 Lorie Coronado

4-11 Anne Johnston

4-12 Ron Buswell

4-13 Tempest Abler

4-13 Gary Roberts

4-16 Jason Awe

4-16 Manny Travers

4-26 Maya Gipson

4-29 Nelleke Meerman

4-6 Alex & Kirstin

Csik Hughes

4-8 Stephen & Kim

Cappelloni

4-13 Nick & Becky Judd

4-24 John & Rebecca

Wickham

4-29 Hilding & Dorothy

Ronning



Short Term: Suzanne Duval, Cheryl Denny, Vanessa, Shelly Barker & family, Scott Ruble & family, Family of Pr. Bonnie, George Webber & Family, 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

One of the silver lining blessings that has come with the shelter-in-place circumstances we are all in, is the time we have to spend in a quieter way outside. This poem, which was a favorite of my treasured spiritual mentor, my campus pastor at California Lutheran University Rev. Gerald K. Swanson, who deepened my journey of faith by moving me toward a stronger stewardship of God's creation

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs -
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

from the book HOPKINS : POEMS / Everyman's Library by Gerard Manley Hopkins

More Fasting for this Lent

- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressure and be prayerful
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.

Child Development Center



It is pretty quiet around here! Currently we are following the Santa Cruz City Schools closure dates and will be closed due to COVID19 beginning March 16 – April 10th. I have been attending meetings with Community Care Licensing and The Department of Education to keep updated. These meetings are by internet or phone. The goal is to keep our families informed while they shelter in place. Fortunately, all our families, however strained by this, are healthy and have food, unlike some of our neighbors. We are taking care of our teachers currently awaiting the recommendations and changes. I am also in communication with our School Board members as we navigate the financial ramifications of this closure.

Before we came to this unknown place of Coronavirus, we were having a great time at our preschool. We celebrated Dr. Seuss by reading the American and Italian versions to the children. Caryn is fluent in Italian and the children LOVED it! All but one child like eating green Eggs and Ham! Our caterpillars arrived, but metamorphosis observations will have to wait. Both classrooms have been doing a variety of art projects that are really creative. I often wonder who is having more fun doing these projects, the teachers or the students.

Thank you to all families who attended Pizza My Heart night. It was fun to gather.

We had started to plant a garden and the rain is helping to sustain it. I hope to return to that project and so many other things. I have always been grateful to be part of this preschool. As we reflect during this time, I wish for each of you to remain healthy, and look for gifts in a simpler existence as we get back to our basic core family and lift up the basic interactions that get lost in our busy lives. Again, I pray for you all to remain in good health. I look forward to a healthy restoration of our lives with perhaps newfound gratitude. May the peace of the Lord be with you all! You are all dear to my heart. Take Care!

Warmly, Kathy Berens
kathy@sscdcpreschool.com

"Our mission is to inspire children in their early years so they may have a sense of self and grow into competent, well-rounded and spiritual people"

Treasurer Notes ...
Budget Information – February 2020

| | February | February | YTD | YTD | Net |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | Actual | Budget | Actual | Budget | |
| Contribution Income | \$11,605 | \$11,855 | \$22,224 | \$23,709 | \$-1,485 |
| Facility Use Income * | \$978 | \$1,283 | \$1,828 | \$2,567 | \$-739 |
| Investment Income | \$4,163 | \$4,001 | \$7,547 | \$8,002 | \$-455 |
| Total Income | \$16,746 | \$17,139 | \$31,599 | \$34,278 | \$-2,679 |
| | | | | | |
| Expenses | \$19,859 | \$19,909 | \$43,873 | \$39,026 | \$4,847 |
| | | | | | |
| Net | \$-3,113 | \$-2,770 | \$-9,160 | \$-1,978 | \$-7,526 |

** Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month + Miscellaneous Income.*
Total income for February was close to our budget, but we had lower income and an extraordinary expense in January (\$5000 -sewer line replacement); we are still running a deficit of about \$7.5k. - Kent Madsen

While the church is closed to fight the coronavirus pandemic, many of our expenses continue. Please mail your contributions or make them online on our website. Thank You!

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

| | February | Reserve | Needed to Payoff |
|------------------------|----------|---------|------------------|
| Organ | \$5 | \$35 | |
| Piano | \$0 | \$95 | |
| Hearing Impaired Equip | \$0 | \$395 | |
| Solar Electric Payback | \$206 | | \$17,606 |
| Narthex Bathroom | \$1,992 | | \$520 Over |

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 2020 through February | |
| Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention | \$305 |
| SS Scholarships | \$330 |
| Live Oak Resource Center | \$0 |
| Habitat for Humanity | \$0 |
| Mt. Cross | \$0 |
| World Hunger | \$0 |
| Homeless Service Center | \$2 |
| CLU/PLTS | \$0 |
| Lutheran Campus Ministry | \$96 |
| SS CDC | \$0 |
| El Salvador Sister Parish | \$0 |
| Lutheran World Relief | \$0 |
| ELCA Synod | \$0 |
| COPA | \$0 |
| Lutheran Immigration | \$0 |
| Total | \$733 |
| 2020 Benevolence Target (10%) | \$14,658 |
| % of Target | 5% |

