

Worship online at www.ststephenslutheran.org

Recorded for you to view anytime.

Please participate by having your worship bulletin and Celebrate ready

Zoom Bible Studies with Pastor Jim on Thursdays 11am & 7:30pm.

Check your email on Wednesday for the link to the Zoom meeting.

Our 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,
invite people to share the joy of the spirit.

Reconciling in Christ

"We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace.

We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race
or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity,
gender expression, or relationship status.

We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or
mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances,
or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ."

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church E.L.C.A.

2500 Soquel Avenue Santa Cruz, CA 95062

831/476-4700 FAX 831/476-3918

email: office@ststephenslutheran.org

Web Address: www.ststephenslutheran.org

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

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's

Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp

Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp

Church Musician: Gary Roberts

Sunday School: Leslie Lapp

Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens

Custodian: John Hopping

Videographers: Kent Madsen & Barb Rice

Music used by permission Onelicense #A-706539

Second Sunday in Advent

December 6, 2020

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians from every tradition. Welcome to all who have no church home, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. Welcome to new visitors and old friends. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation and marital status, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners and questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate and sorrow, rejoice and recover. This is a place where lives are made new. Welcome on this day.

The Gathering

Advent Wreath Lighting

Blessed are you, God of hope, for you promise to bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse who will bring justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal of hope for all people.

As we light these candles, turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.

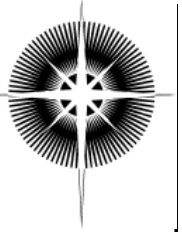
O people of hope, come,
Let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen.

*Opening Hymn

"Prepare the Royal Highway" Red #264

- 1. Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory,
Foretold in sacred story: REFRAIN**

Give a Gift. Change a Life.



What better way to celebrate the season of Jesus' birth than to give gifts of comfort and joy to those who are in need. Give meaningful gifts that inspire leadership, nourish the hungry and heal the sick.

Lutheran World Relief

provides gifts that improve the lives of people living in poverty around the world. For example: A Goat not only provides a woman farmer with milk to sell, but also helps her build a herd. Coffee seedlings help a farmer grow a lucrative crop that has the potential to significantly improve income. Seeds help farmers grow more and better crops when climate conditions are challenging. Emergency Water delivers immediate, potable water after disaster strikes. **LWR.org/gifts or 1-800-597-5972**

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

stands ready to welcome the most vulnerable refugees who are seeking safety and hope in America. Our gifts are essential in rebuilding their lives. Gifts from "Basic Needs Kit" to "Ready for Work kit" can mean so much to those who have nothing but the clothes on their backs. **LIRS.org or 877-291-7061**

Continued help for Fire Victims

Lutheran Social Services of Nor. Cal. and Lutheran Disaster Response. 100% of these monies will be given directly to churches and ministries that have been affected by the fires.

S.P.I.N. Socks for People in Need (box in narthex)

NEW socks are a blessing for many reasons, especially health, but also because they provide comfort and a sense of dignity. Basic white crew socks are appreciated by everyone. But you may also choose socks for women and children.

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 electronic giving options. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions.

For more info. contact Janet Slay 475-5668
Your 2021 Offering envelopes are here, if you'd like to stop by and pick them up.

God uses money to confirm direction.

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight."*

Proverbs 3:5-6

REFRAIN

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God's Word!

2. **God's people, see him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! REFRAIN**
3. **Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
Their voices join your singing: REFRAIN**
4. **His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness so abounding; REFRAIN**

*Greeting

P: The steadfast love of God, the life of Jesus Christ
and the power of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Kyrie "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" # 257 vs. 1 - 2

**O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.**

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,

Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O Wisdom from on high
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
Teach us your will and guide our way. **REFRAIN**

Hymn of Praise

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" #270 vs 1 & 3

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

REFRAIN

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

**Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth** **REFRAIN**

*Prayer of the Day

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us Pray.

Celebrate, Page 1

Sister Parish Prayer Children



We all know this has been a trying year in so many ways ... we will not be able to send a delegation to El Salvador in January. This means we will not be asking you to make a gift bag for the delegation to deliver to your prayer child. We are asking that you open up your hearts and make an additional contribution in lieu of a gift bag. It only takes a little from us to make a big difference in the lives of the children we have come to know and love in Ungo. We are requesting an additional \$50 donation to provide for the families this year. We will be very happy should you decide to give more, the need is ever greater this year.

Holiday Alternative Gifting We have a Donation Acknowledgement Card with a picture greeting from Salvadorian children and notation inside that "A donation has been made in your honor" On the back is our motto: "Building Relationships for Better Lives" with the explanation that donations provide scholarships, school supplies, pure water and composting toilets in two rural poverty communities. Contact Kent Madsen to make donations & receive Donation Acknowledgment Card(s). Thanks for supporting our friends in El Salvador.



Help decorate the sanctuary & outdoor worship area for Christmas. Donate in honor or in memory of loved ones and it will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. To order, call the office. Cost is \$15. Please make the check payable to St. Stephen's, with memo "poinsettia". You may take your plant home after worship to enjoy. Proceeds benefit our church ministries.

CHRISTMAS EVE

OUTDOOR

WORSHIP

Thursday, Dec. 24
3:00 pm
in the Parkinglot

A recorded Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
will be available on our website
featuring



“All That Brass”

Jazz ensemble from Soquel High School.
Donations for the band are appreciated.

The Word of God

First Reading Isaiah 40:1-11 Celebrate pg. 1

L: Word of God, Word of Life.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading 2 Peter 3:8-15 Celebrate pg. 3

P: Word of God, Word of Life.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand as you are able)

Gospel Acclamation

“Angels We Have Heard on High” #289 vs. 1

**Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o’er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains**

G l o r i a . . . in excelsis Deo
G l o r i a . . . in excelsis Deo

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark
C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Gospel Reading Mark 1:1-8 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Gospel of the Lord.
C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon
*Hymn of the Day

Rev. James Lapp

“Be Thou My Vision” Red #793

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
Thou my best thought both by day and by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord,
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,
Raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:
Thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Light of my soul, after victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

The Prayers of the Church

Celebrate, Page 4

The Communion Meal

*Passing of the Peace

P: May the peace of God be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offering— We honor and worship God by returning some of
the gifts with which we have been blessed.

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.**

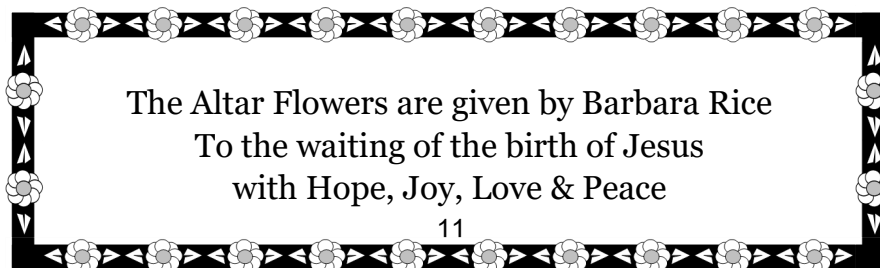
*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Prayer Concerns

Short Term: Healthcare workers, teachers, The Wickham Family, Barbara J., Kent, Family of Eleanor Zoellner, Donna, Betsy, Tom, Anna, Krispa, Patsy, Zachary, Family of Al Mitchell, Jennifer & family, Family of Cheryl Denny, Jean Patterson, Frank Giammona, Heather, Kevin, Vanessa, Rose, Shelly Barker & family, Sam, George Webber & Family, Cox Family, Becky & Aaron Johnson, Lorraine Chavez, Kimberly & Danny, Lora Schraft Poulson, Nelleke, Hendrick, Chuck, Michael, Kayla, Don, Lina, Sal, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, Cabel, Miller, Kyle, Noah, Esdras, Jackson, Immigrant families, The Homeless, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, Pastor Jim and Our Church Family. **Long Term:** The Sanders Family, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, John B., Michelle, Josh, CJ, 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, and the Youth of today.



*Prayer after Communion

P: God for whom we wait,
You come to us
In the broken bread and the cup we share.
Make us ready always
To welcome Christ into our hearts,
And send us forth to be your people in the world,
Announcing your coming among us
In Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

*Blessing

P: May God direct your ways in peace,
Make you abound in love for one another and for all,
And strengthen your hearts
as we wait for the coming of Christ
Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
Bless you now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

*Closing Hymn

"Hark, the Glad Sound!"

Red #239

**Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris'ners to release,
In Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.**

Offertory

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" Red #283 vs. 1

**O come, all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant**

**O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold him
Born the King of angels**

REFRAIN

**O come, let us adore him
O come, let us adore him
O come, let us adore him
Christ the Lord**

Offering Prayer

P: Savior of the nations, come.
Make your home here in us.
Feed us with you love,
That our faith shine ever new
And our lives reveal your light.

C: **Amen**

*Great Thanksgiving

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....

*Words of Institution

*Lord's Prayer

**C: Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today, our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
Now and forever. Amen**

P: Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.
Share in the feast of salvation.

(You may be seated)

Lamb of God

"Love Has Come" Red #292 vs. 1 & 3

**Love has come a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
Hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high!**

**Love has come and never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.**

**Love is Jesus within and among us,
Hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!**

Holy Communion

As we continue to worship at a distance, please provide your own bread and fruit of the vine to commune with. Use the words "The Body of Christ given" and "The Blood of Christ shed" when you receive each of the elements.

*Invitation to Communion

P: Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread,
and make us one with you.

Communion Hymn

"Wait for the Lord" **Red #262 (repeat often)**

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!**

The Sending

*Communion Blessing

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
Strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

C: Amen.