

ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SERVICE

Ready for your participation each Sunday morning.
"Together in Spirit"

Worship in the comfort of your own home.

Go to the recording at www.stephenslutheran.org

*(Print the bulletin and Celebrate so you can read, sing
and pray with Pastor Jim. Have some bread and
wine/grape juice ready for Holy Communion)*

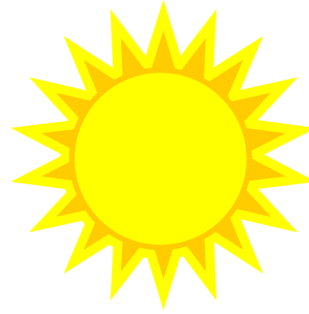
NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON
March 29, 2021

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

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

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



Sun
April 2021

Easter and Holy Week Worship

Palm Sunday—March 28 at 10 am– Outdoors & Livestream
(Recording posted to our website after 5pm.)

Maundy Thursday/Good Friday- April 1 & 2—Website recording

Easter Sunday– April 4 at 10 am—Outdoors & Livestream
(Recording posted to our website after 5pm.)

Sunday Worship Schedule for April and May

April 11 & 25—Website recording

April 18 at 10am- In-person Outdoor & Livestream

May 2, 16, 30—Website recording

May 9 & 23 at 10am- In-person Outdoor & Livestream

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

Director of Music: 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

Birthdays & Anniversaries

4-1 Joel Hurttgam		
4-8 Robbin Heppe	4-6 Alex & Kirstin	4-24 John & Rebecca
4-11 Anne Johnston	Csik Hughes	Wickham
4-12 Ron Buswell		
4-13 Tempest Abler	4-8 Stephen & Kim	4-29 Hilding & Dorothy
4-13 Gary Roberts	Cappelloni	Ronning
4-16 Manny Travers		
4-26 Maya Gipson	4-13 Nick & Becky Judd	
4-29 Nelleke Meerman		



Short Term: Lu Sluiter, Leslie Lapp and Family, Betty Kievlan, Healthcare workers, teachers, Marla Meek and family, Kathy Allen and Family, Beth Stiles, Nancy, Marisa, Margot Wilson, Kent, Family of Al Mitchell, Shelly Barker & family, Sam, George Webber & Family, Becky & Aaron Johnson, Lorraine

Chavez, Lora Schraft Poulson, Nelleke, Hendrick, Don, Lina, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, Cabel, Miller, Kyle, Noah, Esdras, 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, Jeff Tarantino, 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.

Zoom with Pastor Jim

Check your email on Weds.
For the Celebrate & Zoom link

THURSDAYS 11am -12noon AND 7:30 pm—8:30 pm

We will be looking at the upcoming scripture readings for Sunday, to enrich our worship experience and uncover some of the deeper truths of our faith. As we grow in our faith, we grow in community.



Celebrate Music

We all miss in-person worship gatherings, being part of many voices and singing together.

We have a suggestion. Form a VIRTUAL CHOIR. We have all the ingredients: talent, voices, and software. From home or church you can be part of a choir. No weekly meetings. Thanks to Shay Barsabe who has the software program.

Ideas for 2021:

- *Forming our music team.*
- *Building a brass choir*
- *Inviting in-house musicians to sing & play instruments.*
- *Rent or use our space for rehearsals in the future.*
- *Looking for woodwinds (flutes, clarinet and oboe) to join our music program.*
- *Strings are always welcome.*
- *Do you play the piano?*
- *Family singers, and instruments.*

*Consider joining the Music Ministry. All ideas and members are welcome!
Contact beachhillgary@comcast.net or church office.*

Yours in Christ, Gary Roberts

A Message From our Church Administrator

Dear Family of God—

My heart is full of all the love you have showered on me and my family. What a testament you all have been. You have fed our bodies and our spirits during our massive time of need. I don't feel that my words come close to expressing how grateful we are.

I am astonished by how much in life I have taken for granted. Now, every day I remind myself to be very grateful. After all, I am fortunate to even be alive...even though I can't walk or do much of anything by myself yet. It is a rare day that passes without a tear. Sadness awaits at each corner and requires my diligence to resist, BUT... my friends, I am fighting hard!

At one point, the doctors had me taking 22 pills a day! We literally had a chart that spells it all out, or else we would certainly forget. I'm pleased to tell you that as I heal, my medication is already decreasing a lot. What a joy it is to cross them off that chart. That is progress I cannot argue with. However, I'm not going to be fully satisfied until I can join my daughter in her "Cardio-Funk" dance class!

Saying that my attitude has changed a bit since the accident is an understatement. I have a quick sarcastic humor that helps bring levity to our heavy days. One of my many therapists told me that dealing with this trauma will force me to shed much of the "exterior stuff" that bogs me down; stuff that I don't like or want. I am not who I was yesterday, nor who I will be tomorrow. I'm in the middle of becoming. I will be more authentic and my best self. I am in God's waiting room right now, as one of my devotions put it. Though I'm not able to do very much, God is all around me doing lots. My job right now is to wait & see. And you all know how fun that is. Ha-ha.

This is the faith that I hold on to. With God by my side, victory is certain! I AM stronger than I feel. "I am able to do all things through God who strengthens me." Philippians 4:15. And more importantly, "Not by strength or by might, but by my Spirit" Zachariah 4:6. And my mother in laws favorite cliché: "This too shall pass". They all are contributing to my healing.

What a privilege to have this opportunity to write to you. I miss you! I pray that you feel my Blessings and are moved with gratitude for your life as well.

With Love, Leslie

Council Highlights

Devotions were reflective of our Lenten focus on spending more time in prayer. We engaged in a practice of prayer that we have done from time to time called: “Kyries [*pron. Keer-ee-ay*] and Glorias”. It’s a form of communal prayer where we think about something or someone that we are seeking God’s help or care or mercy for (*Kyrie is Greek for “Lord have mercy”. It is the oldest form of prayer that we have in the Christian church that remains in our worship today*).

Then one person offers it up out loud just as a conversational concern, as opposed to using our typical prayer-type language. When the person is finished they say the word: “Kyrie”. Then the rest of the group responds with the word: “Kyrie” as a way for us all to offer up the prayer of that person. After everyone has had an opportunity to offer their “Kyrie”, then we do the same for the “Glorias” - which are things that we are praising and giving thanks to God for.

Pastor Jim reported on how he is managing the Church Administration in Leslie’s absence. There are two volunteers, Sherilyn Jager and Kathy Allen. Kathy is able to be in the office from 10 –12noon on Tuesdays, and Sherilyn is able to be there from 10-12noon on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. She has been working with Leslie for several years now and is familiar with some of the basic duties to keep things going, albeit at a minimum. One newsletter was skipped but the April newsletter is able to go out thanks to Leslie coming in to the office one afternoon to set it up the labels for the bulk mailing process for Pastor Jim. It was a surprising and wonderful encounter because our Child Development Center Director Kathy was also there on a Saturday so she could gather up the gift basket she had put together from the preschool parents and staff and deliver it to their home. Both have worked very closely together for the past 8 years, so there were some tears of joy to see one another.

The Council voted to have another outdoor service on Sun. April 18 at 10 am. Then for the near future it was approved to have an outdoor service every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. This will probably continue through the summer with a hoped for return to indoor worship in Sept. (Please see the Bishop’s message on pgs. 12 & 13). The Council will monitor the County Health Dept. recommendations and if things continue to go well a determination will be made at that time.

Reconciled In Christ Welcome Statement

(Approved at January 2020 Congregational Meeting)

“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.”

+ we would take time to empathize with African American communities which have lost their churches to arson – how has our being prevented from worshiping in our sanctuaries helped us to understand the losses of worship spaces experienced in these communities? How will we address systems of racism and white supremacy that have led to such acts of terror?

+ we would also recognize the meaning of the word “sanctuary” as it pertains to those who are seeking sanctuary in this country; people who have been waiting at our borders for freedom from the violence and oppression that has driven them to seek a new life in this country. How does their suffering influence our understanding of the need to offer safe and sacred space for all?

+ we will continue to offer online worship for those who have recently found their way to worshiping with us – let us not leave them behind in our exuberance at being able to worship in person. I don’t make this suggestion lightly – I know this will take more time and energy. I feel may this be a greater part of our future as a church which truly seeks to connect with our wider communities.

I know Easter will soon be upon us, and we may have hopes that April 4th will be a time when we will be able to gather in person for indoor worship. Realistically, I would encourage us to think about Rally Day, early September, as a more realistic and advisable goal. In the meantime, the warming weather should allow for outdoor worship that has proven to be far less risky in terms of spreading Coronavirus. Could we take advantage of this as a step towards eventually moving towards indoor worship?

The coming months will likely be time to prepare for the joyous celebrations of being able to return to worship in our sanctuaries. To quote Ezra 6:16 -- “The people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.” A litany to celebrate this return is being prepared by our ministry partners at the Churchwide Offices of the ELCA. We will share it with you as soon as it is available.

Even as we celebrate the advances being made in fighting this pandemic, we are being cautioned not to move too quickly. Consider the advice of Dr. Fauci – “Let’s not spike the ball on the five yard line!” Blessings and peace as you prayerfully consider the above for your worship, your witness, and your service. - Peace, Bp. Mark



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

A Message from Bishop Mark Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod Regarding Re-Opening for Indoor Public Worship

*"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that
God's Spirit dwells in you?" 1 Cor. 3:16*

Dear St. Stephen Lutheran Church,

Last week I received my first dose of the Coronavirus vaccine. My health care provider contacted me and told me I was in a group of people who should be vaccinated. Across the country, more and more people have received either one or both doses of the vaccine, or soon will. By the end of May, President Biden has said that vaccinations will be made available for all people in this country over the age of 18. Additionally, this week we have learned that more counties in California are being moved to less severe restrictions on social gatherings. It seems clear that we are moving forward to a time when "broad immunity" will be reached, and the question of how and where we can gather with family, friends, and for worship will be before us.

As we make plans for returning to in-person, indoor worship, I'd like to offer the following thoughts on **how** we will gather. My prayer is that:

- + we will think of moving back to in-person, indoor worship not as "reclaiming our sanctuaries" as much as our being "reclaimed" by these sacred spaces to enable us for service and witness in Christ's name.
- + we will be diligent in maintaining safeguards and recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, state and local authorities as it pertains to the number of people who can gather, physical distancing, mask-wearing, and advice on singing and chanting.
- + our goal will not be to "get back to normal" as we plan for worshiping in our sanctuaries – "normal" wasn't necessarily our best as a reflection of who Christ calls us to be. We must ask: how have we been less than welcoming to siblings of color as part of our worshiping communities? Why do our congregations not represent the diversity of the communities we serve? How can we acknowledge the fact that COVID-19 has had far more harmful effects on people of color?



Child Development Center

Happy Spring everyone! Our little school is growing again bit by bit. In March we enrolled Ethan B., Selene, and

Colton, all siblings that just turned two. They all transitioned well as they are familiar with us and were looking forward to coming to play like their older sibling. We have 5 enrolled in our Toddler room, and 12 enrolled in the preschool, so 17 students.

We await directives from Red Tier level and our local health officer so we can enroll a few more. We are a bit above break even and are slowly moving in the right direction to returning to pre-Covid enrollment.

Although shenanigans were cancelled on St. Patrick's Day due to the leprechauns unable to travel, there was a surprise in each cubby of a green cup with gold coins and a green beaded necklace.

We are excited about having an Easter Egg Hunt on March 26 on the playground and inviting parents to watch. These events mean so much to families and we are so glad we can do this in a safe way!

While Leslie is away, I have enjoyed visitors from the church dropping by for various reasons. I am always so happy to see everyone and help if I can with questions. We sure do miss Leslie and continue to pray for her recovery and return! Chapel continues to be a very bright experience in our week with Pastor Jim!

So now we are planning for summer. Once we get the Summer applications in, we will know if we can invite children from our waitlist. It is exciting to look towards growth rather than managing setbacks.

Once we return from spring break, we can begin to work in our garden again which is a favorite place for our children to be.

We are preparing progress reports for our ongoing Kindergartners and adding to their portfolios. This group will leave us in August well-equipped for the next step. We have been truly fortunate with all our students who have shown calm and flexibility throughout the school year. We are so blessed to enjoy the joy they share with us each day! Warmly, Kathy Berens

COPA Helps With Rental & Utility Financial Assistance

The Federal and State Governments are providing rental and utility assistance for people impacted by the pandemic. There is also a moratorium on evictions for those unable to pay all their rent because the pandemic may have impacted their job. The Moratorium is through June.

Santa Cruz County has been provided with over \$16 million for this assistance.

COPA is working together with a collaborative of non-profits to notify tenants and landlords of the assistance and how to receive it.

Other partners include Community Bridges, Community Action Board, FIT, Conflict Resolution Center. If you are a tenant or a landlord negatively impacted by the pandemic please let me know so I can connect you with an organization that can guide you to apply for assistance.

Mark Linder
co-chair, Sustainability Task Force
408-891-8912



Provide Lunches for Volunteers
Tuesday, April 27
(4th Tuesday of each month)

Contact church office if you can provide
Fruit or Cookies. (Everything else is covered)



Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2021 through February		
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention		\$235
SS Scholarships		\$115
Live Oak Resource Center		\$0
Habitat for Humanity		\$0
Mt. Cross		\$0
World Hunger		\$0
Housing Matters		\$0
CLU/PLTS		\$0
Lutheran Campus Ministry		\$0
SS CDC		\$90
El Salvador Sister Parish		\$50
Lutheran World Relief		\$65
ELCA Synod		\$0
COPA		\$0
Lutheran Immigration		\$0
Total		\$555
2021 Benevolence Target (10%)		\$14,360
% of Target	4%	

Kent Madsen
Treasurer



Treasurer Notes ...
 Budget Information · February 2021

	February	February	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution Income	\$10,570	\$11,762	\$24,927	\$23,525	\$1,402
Facility Use Income *	\$538	\$917	\$1,126	\$1,833	\$-707
Investment Income	\$3,145	\$3,750	\$5,130	\$7,500	\$-2,370
Total Income	\$14,253	\$16,429	\$31,183	\$32,858	\$-1,675
Expenses	\$10,550	\$19,683	\$24,719	\$37,892	\$-13,173
Net	\$3,703	\$-3,254	\$6,464	\$-5,033	\$11,497

* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month (not able to be paid during pandemic paid) plus Misc. Income.
 Contribution income for February was below budget and we continue to fall behind with Facility Use Income. Expenses were helped by the grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation for Pastor and Administrator salaries. A Paycheck Protection Program loan in the amount of \$59,300 was granted to St. Stephen’s and the Child Development Center in 2020.

While the church has restricted activities to fight the coronavirus pandemic, our expenses continue. Thank you to those who have mailed contributions or made them online on our website.

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

	February	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Organ	\$0	\$260	
Piano	\$0	\$85	
Hearing Impaired Equip	\$0	\$395	
Solar Electric Pay-back	\$190		\$14,907

A Note From the Boy Scout Troop

This month we received a letter from our Boy Scout Troop #633. This Troop has been meeting at St. Stephen's for over 50 years! They have contributed so much to our church over the years, including several Eagle Scout Projects that would have cost the church tens of thousands of dollars if we had to do them ourselves. Most recently the entire church was painted with high quality paint that will last a very long time. There is a plaque commemorating the project next to Pastor Jim's door. The note reads:
 “This year has been quite a strange one when it come to scouting, especially for meetings! Our Troop has been doing its sincere hardest to continue what we do and we all miss going to church for activities and meetings. Thank you so much for doing so much for us and for what we represent as a Troop. Can't wait to be able to return to doing meetings at the church!”
 Signed by hand: Eleven scouts and Leader Scott Caldwell

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

April - Habitat for Humanity

Currently the group is working on their latest development—Rodeo Creek Court. It is very inspiring to drive by the completed development on Rodriguez Ave, just past the County Animal Shelter and then past Koopmans Ave. Affordable housing can be done very well and contribute to the overall improvement of the neighborhood.
 The dream of homeownership, which really helps people out of poverty and all the difficulties that come with it, becomes possible for hardworking families who help build their own home, because of financial assistance that we give.

A Note From Nelleke Meerman

(Recipient of a \$1000 scholarship from our Lois Meeker Memorial Fund for her year-long service as Regional Coord. for Delight Ministries)

THE VERSE SPEAKING TO ME- *"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God"-Micah 6:8*

This verse has been on my heart for a few months now but I have been sharing it with my girls a lot more and did a talk about it at our virtual retreat last weekend!

DIVERSITY UPDATE- Last weekend we hosted a virtual retreat for all of our delight leaders and it was SO GOOD!! So proud of my team! We had a guest speaker, Monica Zuniga, who is a speaker & director of a nonprofit called We Are Unveiled that is "A sacred virtual space that's exclusively run & led by Minority Female Leaders ●■●■●■●■". Her talk was so powerful and created really important and impactful conversations. It was seriously the coolest. Excited for more conversations to come and so proud to be part of an organization that is valuing having these conversations!

PRAYER REQUESTS- *God's provision with community and a living situation with girls that I am compatible with and will be more than just roommates!! *My family: continued health & safety and for hope & joy- it is a heavy time for so many of us. *Community, support & empowerment for all of my leaders *A smooth transition for me to the next RD!! *Please let me know how I can specifically support you in prayer, and know that I pray for you often.*

Reflection from Kathy Berens April 2021

I am so grateful to Kent and Barbara as they have been recording Worship and Lenten services for us all!

I raised my children at Our Saviors Lutheran in San Clemente and each year we attended evening Lenten services of Marty Haugen's "Holden Evening Prayer." It has great meaning to my children and me. This prayer is transformative for my soul.

Because of the recording I was able to share this with my two-year-old grandson Levi (Who lives near Sacramento) AND who is a big Pastor Jim fan from Zoom Chapel and our Christmas Program. He was so excited he applauded each song. My daughter broke out into her beautiful soprano voice remembering all the words while her infant son Luke marveled. Three generations together in Christ. It meant everything to share this with them.

Thank you, Pastor Jim, Gary, Kent, and Barbara, for making this a possibility, and bringing families together even when we must stay apart! My heart is full because I was able to share this tradition, whereas without the recordings it may never have happened as my family lives so far away.

Thanks Be to God!



**We all miss each other!
Let us know what's been happening
in your life.
Your notes help keep everyone
hopeful and joyful.
Email it to church:
"office@ststephenslutheran.org"**