

# ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## Together in Spirit

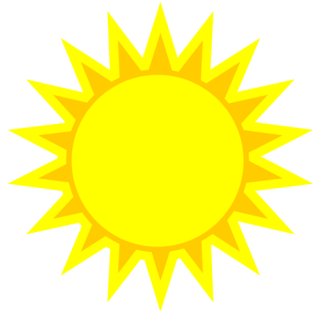
Worship in the comfort of your own home.

Recorded on [www.stephenslutheran.org](http://www.stephenslutheran.org)

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May 28, 2020

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

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# St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

# Sun

## June 2020

## Celebrating 66 Years of Ministry

## Trinity Sunday - June 7

### **Worship with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton**

This is another wonderful opportunity that our extraordinary circumstances are providing. It is a faithful reminder that we are part of a larger church expression that is part of our church family. The Sierra Pacific Synod Office of Bishop Mark Holmerud will provide a recorded Service of the Word (no Holy Communion) - and incorporate the sermon that churchwide Presiding Bishop Eaton is providing for all ELCA churches. Just go to our website, as usual, and click on the link to the recorded worship service. Pr. Jim and our regular recorded worship will return on June 14.

## June 14, 21, 28—Sunday Worship

Available on our website as a recording - [www.stephenslutheran.org](http://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)*

## Wednesday Bible Study

Livestream via Zoom (check email on Tues. for link)  
11a -12noon and 7p -8p with Pastor Jim

*(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)*

***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

(Building the Kingdom continued)

ing to others tell about their experiences here on earth.

Next, we learned how to facilitate meetings with a small group of people. When two or more people gather together we experience the power of God. Our church invited people to a 1<sup>st</sup> community meeting of all the groups that use our church. In this large community meeting, we had 6 to 8 mini meetings where we asked neighbors to imagine a different church.

From those meetings, we identified leaders who might want to take the next step to understand power and to analyze how the powerful get things done, including understanding how millions of dollars flow to needed community projects like building housing for the poor.

Did I mention that our Bishop, Mark Holmerud and Reverend Tita of the Sierra Pacific Synod got involved? They helped us by being a sounding board for ideas, and they pointed us to resources such as the Lutheran Office for Public Policy. They gave us a real experience of "church together." We learned how to lobby public officials such as our City Council member Dev Davis and our County Supervisor Susan Ellenberg. Lobbying is just a fancy word for building relationships.

The most basic of relationships are those we have with neighbors who live near our church. We figured that those who might be the most interested in our housing project would be those who lived within 1000 feet of the church's door step. Leaders armored ourselves by practicing an outline of a conversation, and then we went forth. We met people who were hungry for human contact and communication. Each person we spoke with got an invitation to a large community meeting to be held within four days at our church. It helped that they also got an invitation mailed to them.

About fifty people attended a 2<sup>nd</sup> community meeting! They were neighbors. And they were people from neighborhood associations. Some attendees heard about the meeting from the internet. Allies attended who we had gotten to know through building a strategic list of leaders in the non-profit and homeless services community and by making phone calls and visits to them.

Snowballing is the effect of every action building upon the one before. As the snowball rolls down the hill the more snow sticks to the cold ball of ice and it grows and grows in size. A movement is built through the combination of all the actions that we took above. It becomes a force of its own that cannot be ignored by elected leaders. In fact, it becomes a movement that everyone wants to be a part of.

Our small church is poised to be a place where alcoholics come for AA meetings, homeless go to be fed, people learn job skills, neighbors seek sanctuary, families celebrate important anniversaries, and a small number of folk called Lutherans worship. And even in the midst of social distancing and shelter in place that temporarily hinder us from serving these communities, God's Spirit strengthens us to look forward to grow these relationships in the next breath of new life at Immanuel. We are glad and sometimes amazed that God isn't done with us yet.

## **BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN TODAY**

**By Erik Larsen, Church Council President**  
**Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church San Jose**  
(former St. Stephen's member)

Pentecost is one of my favorite seasons of the church calendar. According to Wikipedia, "Pentecost, celebrated fifty days after Easter Sunday, commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:1–31)." We celebrate every year the fire of the Holy Spirit landing on each one of us, inspiring us and setting us on fire to engage in the building of the church.

Our small church, is involved in a project to renew our mission. Like the story of Tabitha being breathed new life by Apostle Peter, our church is being given new life by a project to build housing for the homeless on the northern portion of our church property. Peter tells Tabitha that because of her good works, God is not done with her. We often feel the same way - - that God is not done with us.

Immanuel is a small church in the heart of Silicon Valley. We are situated at the corner of Leigh and Moorpark avenues and right across from San Jose City College. On a good Sunday, we worship 10 members. Our pastor works full time as a psychologist and we are thankful he leads Sunday worship and Tuesday Bible studies.

Two years ago, we were faced with difficult decisions. Saddled with a \$800,000 loan that we couldn't pay off, the church council looked at a number of options, including selling the church and leasing out our fellowship hall to a non-profit organization. After much deliberation, we decided to partner with a non-profit developer to build affordable housing.

We had a bold vision for partnering with Mid Pen Housing to construct 106 units for the homeless and to provide them with wrap around services provided by the County of Santa Clara. In exchange for providing a 99-year lease to the non-profit developer, we would get a lump sum payment of \$2.6 million to help us pay off the huge mortgage, rebuild our fellowship hall, and give us a needed infusion of cash.

Oftentimes, when the topic of building housing for the homeless is brought up, there is a reaction of "don't build it here - - not in my back yard." In our case, we didn't get any such reaction. In fact, there has been nothing but support for helping meet a critical need in the heart of Silicon Valley, the home to unaffordable rents of \$2,500 per month for a family of four.

We were smart about taking on this project. We approached re-building our mission like leaders intent on building the Jesus movement. And all movement building starts with bringing people together and training them up for a long march. One foot in front of the other is what we did for two years.

Together we learned how to talk with people which really means we learned how to listen to people's stories. Too often evangelizing is construed as proclaiming the word of God from heaven. A more powerful approach is listen-

*from Pastor Jim...*



**Churches are essential...  
we already knew that.**

**When the faithful are scattered in every age  
due to persecution, disaster, or plague,  
we persist in worship and service, in sacrament and sacrifice—  
feeding the hungry, clothing the naked,  
welcoming the stranger, being good news for the poor,  
working to free the captives and oppressed.**

**Our highest and holy calling  
is to be the church,  
not go to church.**

**-Cody J. Sanders-**

The statement above reflects how I, our California ELCA Bishops (Rev. Mark Holmerud, Rev. Guy Erwin, Rev. Andy Taylor), and our Churchwide Bishop (Rev. Elizabeth Eaton) are approaching the question of "When should our churches re-open?"

As the news came out just today (Wed. May 27) that the public health officials gave the go-ahead for churches to begin some form of in-person gatherings, your Church Council will be discussing what this will mean for us at it's regular meeting on Wed. June 10 at 6:30pm. We are meeting via Zoom online. If you want to attend, please contact President Renee Rice.

We will likely not be changing anything in the near future. Our local Bishop Holmerud has counseled us to proceed with the utmost caution, and that we should consider a time toward the end of July as a way to be patient and see if the pressure to "get back to normal" will produce an increased in the spread of Covid-19 or not.

To begin gathering as we are used to doing is not going to be possible for a much longer time—perhaps over a year or more. Also, the changes that have to be made may too cumbersome and prohibitive to warrant gathering again in-person. No singing, no Holy Communion, masks, limits on the number of people allowed in the sanctuary, and worst of all... no coffee fellowship time! So please keep us in prayer as we discern God's Spirit.

## Council Highlights

1. Our devotions came from a poem by Anne Hillman and Acts 7:55-60, which is the account of the martyrdom of our namesake—Stephen. The poem is entitled:

### **We Look With Uncertainty**

**We look with uncertainty  
beyond the old choices for  
clear cut answers  
to a softer, more permeable aliveness  
which is every moment  
at the brink of death;  
for something new is being born in us  
if we but let it.**

**We stand at a new doorway,  
awaiting that which comes...  
daring to be human creatures,  
vulnerable to the beauty of existence.**

**Learning to love.**

We reflected on how we and Stephen faced uncertainties about life and death, and how even in the midst of the most frightening circumstances, we are called to learn to love in whatever situation we find ourselves in. We are to respond to fear with love and faithfulness to the ways that God would have us live in the world.

2. The federal government Payroll Loan was secured for the church and child development center staff. This loan will be forgiven when we show that 75% of the funds were used in 8 weeks time for payroll costs including healthcare benefits. Previously, the child development center staff were receiving unemployment benefits which do not cover health benefits and the preschool's reserve fund was being spent rather quickly in order to cover those benefits. It is hoped that by using the Payroll Loan program that the reserve will be able to remain at its present level, and that staff will be able to return to work in preparation for reopening in the near future. There is much work to be done to comply with the new regulations for reopening.

3. The Sustainability Task Force is organizing several house meetings that will happen either via Zoom online, or in person outdoors with no more than 8 people. Please respond when you are invited to participate as we continue to build a relational culture at our church.

## Habitat Monterey Bay — Update

Greetings! Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, like many other business, we shut down our construction sites, ReStores, and offices in mid-March. We did not lay anyone off and at the end of April were able to secure a Cares Act PPP loan to cover costs for eight weeks. Our last home at Los Esteros Court was almost done when we shut down, so a few people continued to work to finish that home, especially since the future homeowners had been kicked out of their rental and were living in a motel. Fortunately, 10 Los Esteros has now been completed.

We will be starting our new 11 home subdivision off Harper St, called Rodeo Creek Court, in late May. The first work will involve putting in the road, parking area, utilities and grading the site. Then we will be starting to build the first four homes later this year. In the meantime, we are going to put a new roof on the home that one of our employees and extended family live in on Swift Street. This family is not able to pay for it themselves so we going to help them. Work at Swift St will start in late May and then shift over to Rodeo Creek Court in June.

Our ReStores in Santa Cruz and Seaside are opening up in late May so we encourage you to visit them. We will follow all the Covid 19 requirements including wearing masks, social distancing, frequent hand washing, and a limitation on the number of people in the store at any one time.

*We will be hosting our first virtual, live auction on Saturday May 30 from 3 to 7 pm. There are many interesting items up for auction so please plan to attend. To join the auction, just log into [www.habitatmontereybay.org](http://www.habitatmontereybay.org) and follow the link to the auction on Facebook Live.*

We very much appreciate St. Stephen's continued support by providing lunch once a month (Fourth Tuesday) for our construction workers.

Be well. Ron Buswell

June 23 need — Sandwiches, Fruit, Chips & Cookies  
Contact church office if you can provide some food



## Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

### **World Hunger**

"It takes more than meals to feed the world ". ELCA World Hunger is a comprehensive and sustainable program that uses multiple strategies—**relief**, **development**, **education**, and **advocacy**—to address the root causes of hunger and poverty. ELCA World Hunger responds to neighbors around the corner and around the world. ELCA World Hunger responds to hunger and poverty in the United States and around the world by addressing root causes. People are connected to the resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty. Between 70-75 percent of ELCA World Hunger funds are spent internationally, and 20-25 percent are spent domestically.

Together, in Christ's name, we experience the transforming power of connection. As individuals, congregations, and synods, our humble offerings and actions are gathered, blessed, and multiplied. Together, we are ELCA World Hunger.

The international work of ELCA World Hunger is carried out through ELCA companion relationships as well as through trusted partners like Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Because of these long-held connections to partners around the world, ELCA World Hunger efforts are efficient and effective.

The domestic work of ELCA World Hunger is carried out primarily through the Domestic Hunger Grants Program (relief, development, and community organizing projects) and Education and Advocacy Grants.

ELCA World Hunger responds to Christ's call to "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37), serving with compassion people who are most vulnerable, paying focused attention to the full participation of women and the needs of children.

May—Mt. Cross Lutheran Outdoor Ministries \$105 given (as of 05/26)

## Child Development Center



Generally nothing has changed since my last SUN letter. We will continue to reach out to families through Zoom Circle time with Kathy and Zoom Chapel with Pastor Jim through June. We continue to communicate weekly with our families with updates. I am surveying them to see when they feel comfortable returning while monitoring the guidelines for that day. Our communication is as strong as ever as we reach out to our school ministry community. Our new date to reopen is now set for July 6<sup>th</sup>. This will be determined by shelter in place being lifted and planning for public schools in Santa Cruz.

Our School Board continues to work through the financial advantages and pitfalls of this time. We have partnered with Church Council in receiving the Paycheck Protection Loan and the implementation of the funds to retain staffing.

I am meeting with our lead teachers this week to discuss how we will design our school and safety regulations to meet Covid 19 guidelines of Community Care Licensing. This first begins with establishing a student cohort ratio that cannot mix with other cohorts. We will grow from there as appropriate or pull back if needed due to an outbreak. This is like doing an elaborate puzzle, finding out all the needs of families, health regulations and creating a sustainable budget. Fortunately, I do like this kind of work, forecasting, predicting, and having plans waiting for different scenarios.

We are planning our drive-in graduation for June 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am. The parking will be tight with 9 children graduating! I have had most of this group for 3 years and farewell will be heartfelt especially since our last day together was March 13<sup>th</sup>.

We have a small but mighty leadership team here at St. Stephen's that is so supportive. I know the Lord will guide us through just as he did when we first built our school. I look forward to when we can gather and share again. It may be different, but the love exchanged will remain the same.

Sending hugs to you all! Kathy Berens





## Sunday School for ALL

from Ms. Leslie

Can you think of a time you received a pep talk and it really helped? A few months ago, the Netflix docu-series *Cheer* dropped and instantly the hardworking college cheerleading team it profiles became famous. Maybe the breakout star is Jerry Harris, a young man who has had a tough life, but projects incredible positivity. He's magnetic in the series and has drawn a huge following because of his story and energizing "mat talks." Mat talks are the encouraging sideline cheers he offers for his teammates. His infectious spirit makes you feel like you can do anything!

It's not just cheerleading. Most people have received some kind of pep talk from a coach, teammate, parent, friend, or teacher. Jerry has taken his talks off the mat, encouraging people all over. He's even done one to encourage people on their way into another day at work.

At the end of March, as the pandemic was unfolding, Jerry offered a mat talk for us all. It ended, "I want you guys to all stay focused on what is good and happy, and always keep an attitude of gratitude, and always be strong. Because at the end of the day, we got this!" Hearing Jerry say it, even for a moment, you agree.

### Discussion Questions

- Who gives the best pep talks?
- Is there anyone famous whom you follow because of their positivity or videos which encourage you and make you feel stronger?
- What's the pep talk the world needs right now?

### Gospel Reflection John 14:15-21

Whose words do you cling to when you are in need? When you are sick, whose voice comes to mind to comfort or instruct you?

Once in a great while these people's words may be truly inspired, or the person delivering them may happen to be a master orator. But I think that for the most part, coaches or mentors don't have any uniquely brilliant words. If you read that coach's pep talk as a transcript, it might sound a little silly, even trite. Often, I feel like I don't have anything that special to say. But I know it's important to say the simple things, especially when it's hard: "God loves you." "You are forgiven." "Peace be with you."

It's not that Jesus had magical words that transformed people. This peace that Jesus talks about, the peace not like the world gives, which untangles your troubles and wards off fear, doesn't come from magic words, but from a relationship. It comes from love. Think about how it completely changes the words "peace" or

# Birthdays & Anniversaries

6-1	Jim Hanson	6-16	Tara McMillin	6-20	Gary & Diane Hintz
6-4	Anne Davis	6-18	Kaleb Orthner		
6-5	Lauren Pond	6-19	Kim Brouse		
6-6	Joseph Ronning	6-20	Abigail Robe	6-22	John & Lorie Coronado
6-8	Steve Young	6-21	Jenna Mabry		
6-10	Pr. Glenn Johnson	6-26	Mary Kelly		
6-12	Ruth Mitchell	6-29	Michael Nunes	6-28	Kirk & Terri Adams
6-12	Madeline Mouw	6-30	Susan Gross		
6-14	Kent Orthner				
6-14	Stephanie Laufer				



**Short Term:** Family of Suzanne Duval, Vanessa, Rose, Shelly Barker & family, Scott Ruble & family, Family of Pr. Bonnie, George Weber & Family, Cox Family, Becky & Aaron Johnson, Trippel family, Grandma Joyce, Marlene Simmen, Lily Williams, Duke, Michael, Kimberly & Danny, Lora Schraft Poulson, Debbie, Julie, Kelly, Doug Hahn, Michael, Kayla, Don, Lina, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, Cabel, Kyle, Esdras, Jackson, Joe, Pat, Riley, Shelby, Frank, Kaitlyn, Daniel, Ryder, Jenny, Abby, Healthcare workers, Immigrant families, The Homeless, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, Pastor Jim and Our Church Family. **Long Term:** Lee Arvid, people of the Bahamas, The Sanders Family, 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



Chloe Johnston

Born: May 21 8 lbs 6 oz

Parents: Rachel Blankenbiller  
& Jay Johnston

Grandparents: Barbara & Ross Johnston

## Congrats to our Grads:

### Nelleke Meerman

California Lutheran University  
Bachelors Degree in Psychology

### Elias McMilin

San Lorenzo Valley High School  
Headed to UCSC to study Applied Physics



## STEWARD OF GOD'S GIFTS - Lu Sluiter

For many years, Lu has served as our newsletter mailing leader. Her gifts of organization and helpfulness have been offered to God in a humble and dedicated way, even during the pandemic restrictions. She is also a gifted gardener and loves nothing more than to appreciate the immense variety of ways that God beautifies our world through flowers and plants. Her backyard is a testament to the ways God's Spirit speaks to us in creation. Thank you for sharing your gifts to make our church a healthier body of Christ! But most of all... thanks for sharing your gifts of baking goodies for Pastor Jim, Leslie and family!

(Sunday School Continued)

"I love you" or "you've got this," depending on who it comes from.

It's the relationship that makes the words ring in your ears, long after the person is gone. The relationship makes the words matter. When you can feel that the person giving the encouragement really means it, really believes in you, it makes a difference.

This is Jesus' pep talk. Jesus is saying that when he leaves them, he won't leave them orphaned. He encourages them – and us – "you can do it, and you won't be alone." Jesus promises the presence of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, as a kind of permanent cheerleader, encourager, pep talker, for us. Jesus also promises the gift of peace.

That peace – you don't find it, earn it, or understand it. Jesus just gives it. It comes, not through magic words, but through the love and authentic encouragement of a relationship. When someone you trust says "you can do it" or "it's going to be ok" – you feel a sense of peace and believe that it will indeed be okay. This is one way the Holy Spirit works, ever on the sidelines encouraging us and offering Jesus' peace.

### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever gotten a pep talk from scripture, a hymn, or an experience in worship?
- Are there any of Jesus' words, in today's passage or elsewhere, which are encouraging to you and give you peace?
- Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." Be honest – how does that make you feel?

### Activity Suggestions

- Watch a couple of Jerry Harris' "mat talks" or other pep talks. Write a pep talk for someone who needs it -perhaps even yourself. If able, record it as a video to hype the person up and send it to them – or save it to remind yourself.
- What is the pep talk that the world needs right now? Write and record a pep talk for the world. Do you find yourself using any of the same words or themes that Jesus does in the gospel?

### Closing Prayer

Encouraging God, bring your peace. Help us feel that peace in all the places where we feel afraid. Thank you for giving us people in our lives who cheer us on and advocate for us. Help us to be an advocate for the voiceless and a cheerleader for those who are struggling, strengthened by your promise to never leave us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Quoted from "ELCA Faith Lens"

# Treasurer Notes ... Budget Information · April 2020

	April	April	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution Income	\$15,688	\$13,855	\$49,586	\$50,418	\$-832
Facility Use Income *	\$2,030	\$1,534	\$6,330	\$6,138	\$192
Investment Income	\$4,083	\$3,750	\$15,430	\$15,000	\$430
Total Income	\$21,801	\$19,139	\$71,346	\$71,556	\$-210
Expenses	\$18,062	\$19,342	\$81,018	\$77,659	\$-210
Net	\$3,739	\$-203	\$-9,672	\$-6,103	\$-3,569

\* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month + Miscellaneous Income.  
 Total income for April was above budget, congratulations and let’s keep it up! It helped offset the lower income and extraordinary sewer line expense in January; we are still running a deficit to budget of about \$3.6k.

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

	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 April	
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$305
SS Scholarships	\$380
Live Oak Resource Center	\$220
Habitat for Humanity	\$180
Mt. Cross	\$0
World Hunger	\$0
Homeless Service Center	\$2
CLU/PLTS	\$0
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$63
SS CDC	\$0
El Salvador Sister Parish	\$0
Lutheran World Relief	\$0
ELCA Synod	\$250
COPA	\$500
Lutheran Immigration	\$0
Total	\$1,900
2020 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$14,658
% of Target	13%

