

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 Statement

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 circum-
stances, 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

Music Directors: Gary Roberts

Sunday School: Leslie Lapp

Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens

Custodian: John Hopping

Music used by permission Onelicense #A-706539

3rd Sunday of Easter

April 18, 2021

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians and faiths 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 & questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate & sorrow, rejoice & recover. This is a place where lives are made new.

Welcome on this GLORIOUS day!

Instructions: Please fill out the enclosed orange "Worship Slip" and place it in the offering plate with your offering, as a sign of thanksgiving for all of God's blessings.

Prelude

The Gathering

*Call to Worship

P: Alleluia! Christ has risen!

C: **Christ has risen indeed, Alleluia!**

P: Welcome to God's new day!

C: **Everywhere we look we see new life!**

P: Alleluia! Today is a new day!

C: **Alleluia! New life is within and among us!**

P: Today we are challenged to live fully in God's love!

C: **So we will greet one another in love, and praise the God who lifts us up in grace!**

P: Alleluia! Today is a new day!

C: **We come with the past behind us, and the future open!**

P: This is the day that the Lord has made!

C: **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

April Special Offering

Habitat For Humanity

Outdoor Worship Dates

(Inclement weather cancels)

May 9th & 23rd

2nd and 4th Sundays thereafter.

Please remember to wear a mask or two, bring your own chair, or remain in your car. Holy Communion will be offered with pre-sealed cups and wafer.

For all other Sundays, a recorded service on our Website is provided:
"www.ststephenslutheran.org"

Thursday Bible Studies

Zoom with Pastor Jim

(check email on Weds. for link)

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 together in spirit and community.

Please call the church office at 476-4700 to offer flowers for worship.



Prayer Concerns

Short Term: Lu Sluiter, Leslie Lapp and Family, Healthcare workers, teachers, Marla Meek and family, Kathy Allen and Family, Beth Stiles, Nancy and Sam, Marisa, Margot Wilson, Corinne, The Wickham Family, Kent, Donna, Betsy, Tom, Anna, Krispa, Patsy, Zachary, Family of Al Mitchell, Jean Patterson, Frank Giammona, Heather, Kevin, Vanessa, Rose, Shelly Barker & family, Sam, George Webber & Family, Cox Family, Becky & Aaron Johnson, Lorraine Chavez, Lora Schraft Poulson, Nelleke, Hendrick, 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:** Leslie Lapp, 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.

*Opening Hymn

Alleluia! Jesus is Risen! Red #377

**Alleluia! Jesus is risen!
Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb, heaven forever!
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight!**

REFRAIN

**Jesus is risen and we shall arise.
Give God the glory! Alleluia!**

**Walking the way, Christ in the center
Telling the story to open our eyes;
Breaking our bread, giving us glory:
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise.**

REFRAIN

**Jesus the vine, we are the branches;
Life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;
Heaven to earth, Christ to the people,
Gift of the future now flowing to me.**

REFRAIN

**Weeping, be gone; sorrow, be silent;
Death put asunder, and Easter is bright.
Cherubim sing: O grave, be open!
Clothe us in wonder, adorn us in light.**

REFRAIN

**City of God, Easter forever,
Golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
River of life, saints and archangels,
Sing with creation to God the I AM!**

REFRAIN

Greeting

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen

C: **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

P: The grace of our risen Savior, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you**

*Prayer of the Day

P: God of the empty tomb and abundant surprises, who announces new life in the face of death, dry our tears of grief and calm the anguish of our losses as we listen for amazing good news. Help us to find our identity in the person of Jesus Christ. Be to us a living presence, that the story of Easter may become our story, and we can embody its hope for the whole world.
C: Amen.

The Word of God

First Reading Acts 3:12-19 Celebrate pg. 1

Second Reading 1 John 3:1-7 Celebrate pg. 2

*Alleluia “Halle, Halle, Halelujah” Red #172

**Halle, halle, halle—lu-u-jah!
Halle, halle, halle—lu-u-jah!
Halle, halle, halle—lu-u-jah!
Halleujah! Halle-lu-jah!**

*Gospel Reading Luke 24:36b-48 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Luke, the 24th chapter.

C: Glory to you. O God

(The Gospel is read)

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Rev. James P. Lapp

*Benediction

P: God, who raised Jesus from the dead,
Make you stand strong in faith.

C: Amen. Alleluia!

P: Jesus Christ, triumphant over the grave,
Make you bold to tell the good news.

C: Amen. Alleluia!

P: The Spirit of truth abide with you
And guide you into paths of service.

C: Amen. Alleluia!

*Closing Hymn

“Thine Is the Glory” Red #376

**Thine is the glory, risen, conqu’ring Son;
Endless is the vict’ry thou o’er death hast won!
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.**

REFRAIN

**Thine is the glory, risen, conqu’ring Son;
endless is the vict’ry thou o’er death hast won!**

**Lo, Jesus meets thee, risen from the tomb!
Lovingly he greets thee, scatters fear and gloom;
Let his church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
For the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting**

REFRAIN

**No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
Life is naught without thee; aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conqu’rors, through thy deathless love;
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.**

REFRAIN

*Dismissal

P: Go in the power of the Spirit.
Proclaim the risen Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Postlude

Gary Roberts

Communion Hymn

"Children of the heavenly Father" Red #781

**Children of the heavenly Father
Safely in his bosom gather
Nestling bird or star in heaven
Such a refuge ne'er was given**

**God his own doth tend and nourish
In his holy courts they flourish
From all evil things he spares them
In his mighty arms he bears them**

**Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord his children sever
Unto them his grace he showeth
And their sorrows all he knoweth**

**Though he giveth or he taketh
God his children ne'er forsaketh
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy**

The Sending

*Communion Blessing

P: May this Holy Communion of the risen Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in God's grace now and
forever.

C: Amen

*Post Communion Prayer

P: Let us pray:

O God, you have brought us together in love through
this meal. You have strengthened us by the risen life of
Jesus Christ. Send us by your Spirit
to live in peace with one another and to renew your
whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

*Hymn of the Day

"Now the Green Blade Rises" Red #379

**Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been;
Love is come again like wheat arising green.**

**In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,
Thinking that he would never wake again,
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;
Love is come again like wheat arising green.**

**Forth he came at Easter like the risen grain,
He that for three days in the grave had lain;
Raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;
Love is come again like wheat arising green.**

**When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Your touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;
Love is come again like wheat arising green.**

*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.

Offertory Prayer

P: Giver of life,

**C: We bring to your table what we have,
gifts from you, the one who makes all things new.
With these signs we bring ourselves,
that we may carry to the world
the love of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

*Great Thanksgiving

P: May God be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to God

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

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

*Prayer of Preparation

P: We prepare our hearts to receive God's grace by
confessing our sin and need of forgiveness:

**C: O God, our Creator, we celebrate the new life
Which you have given us.
We have experienced broken lives made whole,
Old wounds of alienation healed over,
And tired spirits rejuvenated with new vision.**

**Gracious God, we are so grateful for the purpose
And possibilities you have placed before us.
Yet there are times when doubt has overcome hope,
Cynicism has replaced dedication,
The world's values have captured us more than yours.
Forgive for those times, we pray.
Help us let go of the past
That we might live joyfully into a new future
That points to your love and justice.
Amen.**

*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 it is 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: The gifts of God for the people of God.
Come for all is ready!

Holy Communion

We have changed our practice in order to reflect our concern for the most vulnerable among us. Jesus often lifted up those who were most at risk in life as ones that we all need to care for lovingly. May this way of receiving draw us nearer to God's ways.

Please have your prepared elements ready to receive Holy Communion. There is both wine and grape juice available at the tables near where you are sitting. Commune yourself or a loved one with you with the words: "The Body of Christ given." and "The Blood of Christ shed."

For the wine, turn the cup upside down first and open the seal for the bread. Then turn the cup right side up and open the seal for the wine. For the grape juice, open the clear seal for the bread, and then the foil seal for the cup.