

ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE
resumes May 10 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
April 29, 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

May 2020

Celebrating 65 Years of Ministry

Sunday Worship and Wed. Bible Study
From the Comfort of Your Home!

(but, sadly, only if you have internet access)

Sunday Worship: Available on our website
as a recording - www.stephenslutheran.org
*(Print the bulletin and Celebrate so you can read, sing and pray
with Pastor Jim and Leslie. Have some bread and
wine/grape juice ready for Holy Communion)*

Wednesday Bible Study: Livestream via
Zoom

11a -12noon and 7p -8p with Pastor Jim
*(We will be looking at the upcoming scripture readings for Sun-
day, in order to enrich our worship experience and uncover
some of the deeper truths of our faith)*
Please check your email on Tuesday for the Zoom link

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

(Lutheran World Relief continued)

churches, and a unified support of healthcare workers. Love that crosses all borders and barriers. Love that is bigger than the fear enticing us to turn inward. Love that reaches out to our most vulnerable and too often forgotten neighbors around the world. Love that never ends.

There's a story in the Bible to which I keep returning. It's a little early in the church year to be sharing it, but there's a moment after Jesus' resurrection when the disciples are gathered in fear behind closed doors. It's almost as though they too are sheltering in place. And then Jesus enters and stands before them. What does he offer? Peace. Deep peace.

"Peace be with you," Jesus says. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). Dear friends, may you all experience this deep peace that Jesus offers. Peace that deepens your breath and calms your fears. Peace that fills your soul and connects you to the world. Peace that turns your hearts outward and sends you forth until God's love reaches every neighbor.

Rev. Lisa Kipp serves on LWR's outreach and engagement team as an advisor for

Mary Martha / Ruth Rebecca Circle

MMRR will not meet in May, due to the uncertainties around distancing restrictions. However, we are going to try to meet in June, on Thurs. June 11 (the second Thursday) with a pot luck luncheon. Hopefully, we will be ready and able to get together and celebrate being able to get out of the house.

Other news: we have received confirmation from Lutheran World Relief that the first of our donations of Baby Care Kits have been sent to Zambia.

“Loving through closed doors”
by Lisa Kipp

I can’t recall a time when our global world felt more connected. I talk on the phone with my best friend in eastern Africa and his fears are the same as mine: will we be able to keep our families safe? Do we have access to the necessities we need? What is going to happen to this world that we both love? Even as we shelter in place behind closed doors, it’s nearly impossible to deny our interconnectedness.

Our well-being depends on the well being of others – all others around the world. We are facing a disease that crosses all borders. It connects us all. COVID-19 spreads regardless of political affiliation, class, gender, or nationality. It takes lives. It isolates. It induces fear.

It can be tempting to let that fear win; to look inward and worry about only ourselves and those closest to us.

But our faith urges us to see the world differently.

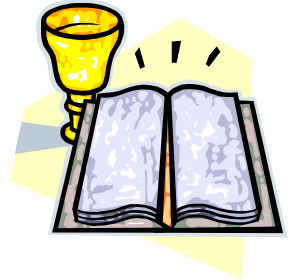
LWR marks its 75th anniversary this year. It hardly feels like the time to celebrate, but this moment also pushes us to look back at our roots. LWR began in 1945. The U.S. had just made its way through the Great Depression. World War 2 was finally coming to a close. Surely there was despair and rebuilding work to do at home ... and yet U.S. Lutherans refused to turn inward. Brothers and sisters around the world were suffering. Faith propelled them to respond with love for their neighbors.

“Now you are the body of Christ,” Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “and individually members of it ... if one member suffers, all suffer together with it” (1 Cor. 12:26-27). As we take stock of the world around us and the suffering caused by this pandemic, Paul points us toward a response: *LOVE*.

“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends” (1 Cor.13:7-8). The only response that can stand up against this is *LOVE*.

Love in its most universal, purest form. Love in the form of social distancing, empty

from Pastor Jim...



Hello to our dear, dear church family, whom we all miss so much! We certainly are more deeply appreciating what it means to be part of a church family these days as we find comfort in turning to our faith together, and realizing how important our relationships really are.

I have decided to record our worship services instead of live-stream, in order to hopefully be more accessible to more people. Perhaps some of our folks without a computer will have a family member able to share the service with them in this way. Plus you can find the best time for you and your family to join me in worship, which we all know is the most important factor! Ha ha! Or is it that you can just stay in your pajamas or sweats and nobody will ever know!

On a more serious note, I have also chosen to offer “virtual” Holy Communion, as a part of our worship life in these difficult circumstances. This is a reflection of a deep understanding of my role as your pastor, which has always been to try and make sure I don’t get in God’s way. As the weekly means of God’s grace that comes to us, I cannot in good conscience withhold Holy Communion because it’s full meaning and power is ultimately a mystery that cannot be limited. However, I completely understand those who would rather not join with me in receiving it, and wait until we can gather again.

A recorded worship service does lack in the ability to be present with each other through something like the Zoom meetings where you can see and talk with those participating. So that is why I am also offering the two Bible Study times where we can interact more. I find these to be very uplifting to my spirit even though we aren’t physically near. I hope more of you will be able to join us in the weeks ahead. I see us continuing to meet via Zoom even after these public health restrictions are lifted.

Another opportunity that I am participating in is called: **“Shelter In Faith”**. Our very own Judy Russell has been the impetus for our County Libraries to sponsor a live-stream series of panelists of local religious leaders who will offer insight about coping with all that is taking place in our world these days. **Monday, May 4th from 10a-11:30a** I will join with 3 other interfaith leaders in “learning from our faith traditions that have experienced crisis and recovery, and how our stories can provide wisdom and hope while we Shelter in Place”.

Look for an email shortly before May 3 with the link to the webinar. It will include time for a Q & A for the panelists: Father Robby Sullivan- Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Rev. Deborah L. Johnson - Inner Light Ministries, Rev. Jay Shineski - Watsonville Buddhist Temple, and myself. You are all in my prayers. Peace be with you.

Some Activities resume

May 10th

(Pending County Restrictions)

Centering Prayer

Tuesdays 12:30 with Pr. Joel

ZOOM Bible Study

Wednesdays 11 am & 7 pm
with Pastor Jim

Knitting Group

Thursdays at 6:45pm

Alcoholics Anonymous

Fridays at 7:00 pm

Finance Committee

June 5 @ 8:30 am

MMRR Circle

June 11 @ 10:30

Church Council Retreat

TBA

Embroider's Guild

May 18 @ 7 pm

Women's Café Group)

May 20 @ 6:00 pm

Provide Habitat Lunches

May 26 @ 10:30 am

Newsletter Collating

May 26@ 10:00 am

Council Highlights

1. With the devastating news of the loss of our dear Church Musician Suzanne, we spent our devotion time debriefing and grieving together. Pastor Jim has contacted her brother and sister who live over the hill, and they are very grateful for all the care St. Stephens has given to Suzanne. They are looking forward to attending the memorial service when it is planned.
2. The Council met via Zoom for the first time. Everyone attended. We spent some time checking in with each other. We learned of the death of Robert Bartee's mother and lifted her witness and his family up in prayer. Pastor Jim reported on his calls and prayers with the homebound and those who do not have email. They are doing well considering the circumstances. He also reported the Zoom Bible studies have gone well, and that it is something that we will most likely continue to offer when restrictions are lifted. Pastor Jim also leads the Preschool Chapel via Zoom, which is well attended.
3. Council unanimously passed a resolution required for us to apply for the Payroll Protection funds from the federal government for the church and preschool staff. Contact our Treasurer, Kent Madsen for more info.
4. The Bathroom Fund is now closed. Thank you to all who faithfully gave in order to pay ourselves back for our new and much more hospitable narthex bathroom. It is hoped that those gifts will now be directed to the General Fund.
5. Margaret Schraft was unanimously approved as a new Child Development Center board member.

Child Development Center



SSCDC has been looking for ways to stay connected to the children and their families each week since our closure on March 13. The process started with Pastor Jim offering to do Zoom Chapel. Most of our families continue to attend each week, Thursday 10:30-11:00. Church families are welcome to join. Please contact Leslie for the Zoom link and password if you have preschoolers.

The School Board decided a tentative re-open date of June 1 (provided the shelter is lifted). Each Monday at 9:30, I provide a Circletime for 30 minutes which includes: Hello to each student with their name-card and picture so they are seen and recognized with a familiar item from school, then count 22 name-cards. We do some science with butterfly metamorphosis, then moving into vegetables and farm life. The families were provided with a journal page and attendance sign-in sheet so children can sign in each day at home; a weekly journal topic is offered for the children to draw a picture and then dictate their parent what the picture is about. Last week they drew their favorite activity at home outside, and this week Easter. The objective is connection with familiar friends and activities. I share 2 stories and sing at least one time. Last week we pulled some movements out of our yoga routine and sang together. They also get to see Shanti, our 10-year-old rabbit! Friday the weekly emails go out with pictures sent in of the children doing an activity at home to share.

Updates continue from the Department of Social Services monitoring Covid-19 progress and protocol. As a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (ELEA) I receive many email conversations of Lutheran school Directors in the U.S. about all the logistics of reopening, applying for payroll protection, and ideas of how to communicate with families. It is helpful to have knowledge of what other places like ours are doing. Most are closed, or open to serve essential workers already enrolled in their program.

I want to introduce you to **Zach Smith** (SSCDC Parent of Nolan and Julia). He is servicing twice a month, our gopher problem here at St. Stephen's both church and school **at no cost** to show appreciation for their experience at SSCDC. Please contact him for your gopher, rodent, and pest eradication needs. You can contact him at Z.Smith@gopher-trapping.com or call (408) 871-6988. Please consider giving him the business referred by St. Stephens.

Stay well! Kathy Berens

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

Mt. Cross Lutheran Outdoor Ministries

"Providing profound experiences in God's creation"

Please visit "mtcross.org" for program updates

Memorial Day Work Weekend: Cancelled

Summer Camp: Cancelled

Men's Retreat

Women's Retreat: September

Elementary Retreat: October

Middle School Retreat: November

UFO (UnFinished Objects) Retreat: November

Advent Retreat: December

April — Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay = \$ 0 (as of 4/22)

STEWARD OF GOD'S GIFTS

Mark Linder & Kent Madsen

As the chair of our Sustainability Task Force / COPA Core Team, Mark has been especially helpful in these days of coronavirus restrictions. He quickly organized the team to contact our families to stay connected in unprecedented circumstances, and offer assistance. He has also represented COPA nationally as we organize to meet the needs of the most vulnerable among us. Kent has been producing and distributing our recorded worship services, with Barbara Rice's help. He and Kathy Allen have been working extra hard to make sure our church and preschool receive the Payroll Protection funds from the federal govt, applying to 3 separate financial institutions in a very confusing process. Thanks be to God for their efforts on our behalf!

El Salvador Sister Parish

Bargetto Wine Tasting Fundraiser

We originally scheduled our annual Wine Tasting fundraiser for April 25th. We have officially rescheduled the event for the fall, when we will, hopefully, be able to gather again without restrictions or fear of contracting COVID-19. Please consider making a donation to Santa Cruz al Salvador; you may donate online at santacruzalsalvador.org or through St. Stephen's.

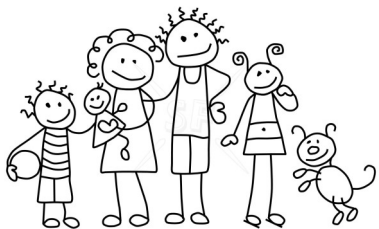
Good News! Projects Completing.

The last few months I told you about the in-process project of building ten composting latrines, working directly with El Pilar community leaders. This group of ten latrines has been completed! At the bottom, you see one of the beneficiary families with their new latrine. This project proceeded quickly and efficiently, exceeding our expectations. El Salvador is currently under shelter-in-place orders similar to us here in the U.S., so we have not started the next group of latrines.

Overall, we have completed 51 latrines out of the original request of 83. Thank you for your support of the people of El Salvador! Thanks be to God!

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





Sunday School for ALL

from Ms. Leslie

Can you think of a moment when you got some much-needed good news? What did that feel like?

We could all use some good news these days, right? That was exactly the kind of thinking that inspired

John Krazinski, star of *The Office*, to launch a heartwarming series of videos called "Some Good News" from his own home, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Krazinski sets up at a makeshift news desk to tell the world about the good things happening in the midst of so much bad. He talks about the bravery of healthcare workers and teachers going the extra mile for students.

Krazinski made a young girl's day, by planning to fly her out to New York to see *Hamilton* when it's safe to travel, and inviting Lin-Manuel Miranda and the Original Cast of *Hamilton* to sing the title song over Zoom. Krazinski is honest about the bad stuff, acknowledging that there's pain in the world. But in the midst of fear, confusion, and pain, he points us all back to what is good. Like a fresh breath of air into these troubled times, *Good News* is just what everyone needs.

Discussion Questions

- Have you been focused on good news or bad news lately?
- When we find ourselves in the midst of global pandemic, how can we balance the joy of Easter with our need to be honest about the bad news and dangers?
- What has some good news been from your week?
- What has been the bad news?

John 20:19-31 The disciples are locked in their meeting house together, fearful and desperate. Perhaps this lesson is too relevant these days! Like those of us living through this pandemic, the stresses of physical distancing, and the general climate of fear, Christ's disciples are in a similar situation. They are completely lost, nothing makes sense, and they don't know what is coming next. How can anything go back to normal after they've followed Jesus? How could their lives be normal after their friend betrayed their master? How can their lives ever be safe when they may be recognized and killed as disciples of this self-proclaimed "Son of God"? They are right to be scared.

It's in this place of fear that Jesus comes to them. Through their locked doors, through their fear, through their worry for whatever the future may hold, Christ comes to them and says, "Peace be with you."

Christ's peace in this situation is a curious thing. Christ's peace changes nothing, and yet it changes everything. Think about it... The disciples already knew that he is risen. They have heard this from the mouths of the faithful women who were the first to find the tomb empty. And yet they hide in fear. Jesus says "Peace be with you" but the threat of recognition and death still remains, should they leave their

Birthdays & Anniversaries

5-3	Margaret Schraft	5-20	Aria Bartee	5-27	Barbara Rice
5-5	Kathleen Allen	5-24	Travis Awe	5-27	Mary Robe
5-5	Kent Madsen	5-25	Trent Hopping	5-28	Mitch Ronning
5-6	Cheryl Curry	5-25	Nancy Loya	5-29	Elke Spires
5-6	Renee Robe	5-26	Andrew Davis	5-31	Scott Ruble
5-7	Ross Johnston	5-26	Epimenio		
5-10	Julie Mouw		Valencia		
5-15	Jesse McMilin	5-27	Mark Brouse	5-24	Paul & Leah Powers
5-18	Jordan Ayers	5-27	Tyleigha		
5-19	Laney Johnson		Brouse- Jones	5-26	Epimenio & Emily



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



Savannah Rose Laufer

Born: March 30 - 6lbs 11 oz

Parents: Stephanie (Dawson) & Jared Laufer

Grandparents: Jeanette and Tom Dawson

Congratulations! Thanks be to God!

In Memoriam - Suzanne Duval - Church Musician

It was with a very heavy heart and profound sorrow that I share with you that our beloved Music Director for the last 20 years or so, Suzanne Duval, has died due to the illness of depression. and Lyme's Disease.

As many of us knew, Suzanne was struggling mightily with chronic pain related to the advancement of Lyme's Disease and had recently taken a medical leave of absence. Her condition was not improving and became debilitating to the point where it triggered a major depressive episode.

Suzanne was with us for our Palm Sunday worship, which was recorded for the congregation and placed on our website. She had contacted me and was really wanting to come back and help lend her voice to the congregational singing, like she had done most every Sunday for many years. It was a beautiful reunion after the last 3 months, and it seemed that she was doing better and was starting to get back to some of her regular activities. We were all blessed by her presence.

She has a brother and sister who live nearby and I will be coordinating with them about a Memorial Service sometime when we are able to fully gather as her beloved community.

Suzanne shared her beautiful gift of music in so many ways in our church and community. She shined in the Santa Cruz Chorale, Ariose Singers, and NextStage productions. She will be dearly missed and has left us with a very meaningful witness of faith and spiritual connection. She was a faithful partner in the leading of our choir and worship gatherings.

I was privileged to have been the pastor for her baptism here at St. Stephen's. It was very moving to me that she sought baptism as a result of gradually becoming closer to the Body of Christ through our worshiping community over her first few years of her service here. We draw comfort from God's promises made to her in baptism that can never be broken.

Blessed be the memory of this child of God. May light perpetual shine upon her.

home. Their pain at betrayal by a friend and horror at the crucifixion they witnessed remains. Even after this scene they lock themselves away in fear again.

The disciples proclaim to Thomas, when he returns, that they were witnesses to the Resurrection. Christ's resurrection peace changes something in this group. Even if it takes a while for them to leave the safety of their locked home, the disciples' lives are never the same again. They have received, like a breath of fresh air, the Spirit of the living, resurrected God. Christ's peace changes nothing, and yet it changes everything.

The Peace of Christ is not a magic trick, a supernatural cure-all, or a get out of jail free card that just makes all bad things go away. This peace surpasses all understanding. It is a defiant hope that all things will be made new in the love of Christ, and that death, fear, despair, and betrayal will never have the last word.

Knowing that Christ is truly present with us, shut up in our homes or when we make a dangerous journey out, does nothing to change that COVID-19 is serious. We are right to take precautions. Christ's peace does not dismiss our doubts and fears, but acknowledges them. Christ's peace doesn't ignore our failures and sins, but it's big enough to hold them in grace. We need the story of the fearful disciples and Thomas' moment of doubt as we figure out how to live as Easter people.

Christ's peace acknowledges our pain, but it doesn't leave us there. Christ's peace is making all things new. Christ's peace is the good news in the midst of the bad news. Christ's peace comes to us again and again, in good times and bad, "so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name."

Discussion Questions

- Do you have doubts and fears? Share some of them.
- What does it say about Jesus that he meets the disciples in the midst of their fear and weakness?
- How can we understand Christ's peace in the midst of COVID-19?

Activity Suggestions

- Share with one another the Good News, Bad News, and Peace/Hope of your past week. Be *honest* and *thoughtful* about each category, especially when acknowledging the Bad News. Discuss what it means that Christ's love is big enough to hold your Bad News too.
- Start a Journal this week that is honest about these things.

Closing Prayer

God of peace, meet us in the locked rooms of fear we find in our lives. Your love is deeper than the depths of despair, higher than any joy. Give us eyes to see the Good News around us, and give us grace to bear the bad news. Breathe your living Spirit on us, and raise us up to proclaim your peace and hope to a weary world. We pray these things in the name of your risen Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Quoted from "ELCA Faith Lens"

Treasurer Notes ...

Budget Information · March 2020

	March	March	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution Income	\$11,714	\$12,855	\$33,938	\$36,564	\$-2,686
Facility Use Income *	\$2,471	\$1,535	\$4,300	\$4,604	\$-304
Investment Income	\$3,800	\$3,759	\$11,347	\$11,250	\$97
Total Income	\$17,986	\$18,139	\$49,586	\$52,418	\$-2,832
Expenses	\$19,084	\$19,292	\$62,957	\$58,318	\$4,639
Net	\$-1,098	\$-1,153	\$-13,371	\$-5,900	\$-7,471

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

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.

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	8	\$520 Over

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2020 through March	
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$305
SS Scholarships	\$380
Live Oak Resource Center	\$185
Habitat for Humanity	\$0
Mt. Cross	\$0
World Hunger	\$0
Homeless Service Center	\$2
CLU/PLTS	\$0
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$100
SS CDC	\$0
El Salvador Sister Parish	\$0
Lutheran World Relief	\$0
ELCA Synod	\$250
COPA	\$500
Lutheran Immigration	\$0
Total	\$1,722
2020 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$14,658
% of Target	12%

