

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
September 30, 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



Sunday Worship
on website

We continue to record worship on Saturday mornings at 11:00. If you would like to participate, we are open to a **few people** (max. 5). Reading Scripture and offering the Prayers of Intercession from the Celebrate insert. Or if you would just like to come to worship, you can have an entire pew all to yourself! Call 476-4700 to schedule.

Thursday Bible Studies

Zoom with Pastor Jim
(check email on Weds. for link)
11am -12noon
and
7pm—8pm

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.



Outdoor Worship

Sunday, October 4 @ 10:30
&

Reformation Sunday, Oct. 25 @ 10:30
in the Church Parking Lot

Bring your own chairs & masks.

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

Nelleke Meerman's
Delight Ministry Newsletter



HAPPY OCTOBER - Bring on sweaters, movie nights and hot chocolate!! (well once it cools down I suppose). I can't believe it has been 5 weeks of being a Regional Director!!

Each day feels so different- new conversations, new girls to get to know, and lot's of planning and organizing (which I am a big fan of- all of my spreadsheets are color coded and it is one of the small joys of my life). I am still settling into my routine, but the time is already flying by!!

I have been having calls with leaders and hearing their stories & popping into different universities leader meetings to meet all the girls & encourage/pray for them and their semester! IT HAS BEEN SO SPECIAL!

ASIDE FROM WORK— This past month consisted of a lot of settling into living down South (painting my room and rearranging), time in the ocean & having movie nights with my new friend Taylor. Harry Potter has been our go-to lately.

My favorite sunset - swimming in the ocean this evening was so peaceful and a much needed break from working in the house all day!

DIVERSITY UPDATE - We at *Delight* HQ are starting our diversity conversation by reading a book together as a staff called "The Myth of Equality". We are starting by educating ourselves, inviting *Delight* women into the conversation and then creating resources for them that can aid in the creation of a safe space, a place for open dialogue and a space for women of color to feel heard & seen!!

I am so excited to start having these conversations and to understand how we can best serve all the women in *Delight*!!

I am so excited to meet girls and spend time getting to know them and seeing their schools and favorite places!! Travel is also my opportunity to experience their chapters and help with any problems they are running into!

Blessings, Nelleke (831) 421-2645 nmeerman@delightministries.com

September Special Benevolence Offering

St. Stephen's Child Development Center

We welcome families of all faiths and cultural backgrounds. We provide developmentally appropriate individualized curriculum, teaching to each child's learning style. We offer teacher-directed and emergent child-centered activities through play and discovery. As trained observers, we teach to each child's individual needs and interests. Our small class sizes, 1:6 teacher-child ratio, provide for a nurturing environment while building a solid academic foundation that is well-rounded and fosters love for learning. Social-emotional skills are developed through redirection and teaching problem-solving skills with an emphasis on kindness to self, others.

Each Wednesday Children's Chapel service is hosted by Pastor Jim who leads songs accompanied by his guitar, followed by a story from "The Beginners Bible."

This school year we must cancel our fundraiser Aebleskiver Breakfast due to Covid-19. The preschool enrollment and budget is cut in half due to Covid-19 class size limitations. Our goal is to retain our teachers until we can enroll more students. Your generosity will be greatly needed and appreciated more than ever before this October.

Sept. — Lutheran Campus Ministry = \$280 (as of Sept. 27)

St. Stephen's Scholarship

Congratulations Eli!

Elias McMilin has been awarded a St. Stephen's Scholarship for his first-year studies in Applied Physics at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

We wish Eli all the best in this difficult learning environment with COVID restrictions.



from Pastor Jim



As we approach a momentous Election Day, where the choice for US President is a particularly stark one with deep consequences, we also remember that most of what we can affect when it comes to our elected representatives in our democratic system of government, has to do with our local elections. As followers of God's ways revealed to us through Jesus Christ, one of our pursuits is that of "gentle justice" - the kind that God has always called for through the messages of the Bible since the dawn of creation. In particular, we are to especially work to improve the lives of those who are hurting the most and lift up the poor and lowly and sick.

This is why our work in COPA is so important, because it is a major way that we can hold our public officials accountable so that they do not neglect the needs of people who are easily forgotten. Yes, this can be done by us by providing direct help through feeding programs, our sock box, the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, our Sister Parish in El Salvador etc.. But we are also to keep our eye on the way that we all live together in our society and make sure that our public resources are used for these purposes as well, instead of only serving human greed and the market culture we are in many ways enslaved to.

To that end, COPA is holding a Zoom Accountability Session for the election of the District 1 County Supervisor, which is the district the church facility is in. In the past, our relationship with our Supervisor has resulted in \$5 million used from our public funds in order to help build the low-income senior housing on church property. This was a way we helped bring God's hoped-for justice to folks who may have otherwise been homeless in their later years.

This Accountability Session is just that—a way to hold our potential public officials accountable to an agenda that we have built as COPA by gathering the stories of the ways people are hurting in our communities and asking the candidates if they will agree to work with us to address those issues.

COPA never endorses any candidate or political party. We only set our own agenda and seek to hold our public officials accountable to helping us work on it. This Accountability Session will be a very heartfelt look at what is going on with people in churches like ours, listening to their stories and then finding out how we think the problems can be addressed, and then finding out if John Leopold and Manu Koenig will go on record as agreeing to help us solve these issues. We expect about 300 participants, which will be the largest event either candidate has been a part of.

It will be held on Sun. Oct. 4th at 4pm via Zoom.

Please check your email for the invitation to quickly register.

You will receive an email with the Zoom link so that you can join!

It is an exciting way to act on your faith and engage in the Godly work of loving and pursuing justice.

Council Highlights

1. Devotions were based on the scripture readings for September 13, which focused on the theme of forgiveness, living graciously & non-judgmentally with others, and the grace & mercy of God.
2. Pastor Jim reported that the Curry family remained evacuated from their Bonny Doon home (they returned after power was restored—see p. 7 “After the Fire”). They all continued to express their gratitude for having such a loving church family and safe place to live during the wildfire in the Santa Cruz mountains. One hamster did escape for 24 hrs., but was safely found scurrying down the center aisle the next day! Also, Pastor Jim communicated with our Sierra Pacific Synod Bishop Mark Holmerud who offered his support and prayers. He will be working with Lutheran Disaster Response so they can contribute funds to our local non-profit, Community Bridges, which has provided many services to the victims of the wildfires in our area. Community Bridges is the organization that oversees the various Resource Centers in Santa Cruz County, including the one in San Lorenzo Valley and the one in Live Oak near the church at 17th and Capitola, which we have supported for many years. Funds from Lutheran Disaster Response will also be given to the Davenport Resource Center, which also provided services to the victims of the wildfire.
3. Plans for our first in-person outdoor worship service on Sunday, Sept. 20 have been made. A recorded worship service led by Lutherans Restoring Creation with a sermon offered by Rev. Barbara Rossing, New Testament Professor at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (Pastor Jim’s seminary), will be posted on our website for those who are unable or choose not to attend the outdoor service. (The service went very well and was appreciated by everyone since it has been 6 months since we had gathered last. No Holy Communion will be offered at our in-person worship services. About 50 people attended.

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.”

Birthdays & Anniversaries

10-3 Pastor Lapp	10-21 Kathy Berens	10-2 Joel & Maryann
10-3 Becky Judd	10-22 Abigail Davis	Hurttgam
10-8 Amelia Davis	10-24 Tom Eagle	
10-13 Toby Abler	10-24 Noelia	10-11 Darwin & Patrice
10-13 Janet Slay	Monteagudo	Awe
10-14 Thomas Dawson	10-25 Bill Schraft	
10-18 Naomi Florin-	10-27 Kim Frey	10-30 Robert & Cheryl
Gosciminski	10-29 Michael Cappelloni	Bartee



Short Term: Fire fighters and evacuees, Healthcare workers & teachers, Kent Madsen, Grace Schmidt, Sherilyn Jager & family, Family of Delores Price, Family of Al Mitchell, Family of Cheryl Denny, Jean Patterson, Nicholas Gross & family, Sheila & Terri, Frank Giammona, Derek, Heather, Kevin, Family of Suzanne Du-

val, Vanessa, Rose, Shelly Barker & family, Sam, George Webber & Family, Cox Family, Becky & Aaron Johnson, Marlene Simmen & family, Lorraine Chavez, Kimberly & Danny, Lora Schraft Poulson, Chuck, Michael, Kayla, Don, Lina, Sal, 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, 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.

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

Contact church office if you can provide
Sandwiches, Fruit, Chips or Cookies



Dear Friends,

We are strong supporters of Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay. Habitat builds affordable homes for low income families in our area. We just finished a seven home subdivision on Los Esteros Court in Live Oak and have started an 11 homes subdivision on Rodeo Creek Court just off Harper Street. Santa Cruz is one of the least affordable areas in the US and with the pandemic and fires this year housing has become an even more critical solution to our problems. But we can't continue to build homes without support from the community.

In recent years we have hosted a fundraising event called Hearts and Hammers as we bring people together for food, talks by community leaders and staff, and a silent auction. Unfortunately, this year we had to cancel the event due to Covid 19. Instead, we are hosting a virtual online auction called Deck the Halls on November 21st, 5-7pm. Please consider participating in our auction and help us to continue to build homes, communities, and hope in the Monterey Bay area. More information about the auction will be forthcoming in the near future.

Be well.
Sheila and Ron Buswell

SAVE THE DATE: Deck the Halls Virtual Online Auction
November 21, 5-7pm

Child Development Center

October is when our preschool traditionally invites you to our **Aebleskiver Breakfast Fundraiser**. This fundraiser was a gift from the congregation when we opened the school and is rich with tradition. The same loyal volunteers from our church continued to make this event possible each year. We have appreciated hosting and benefiting from this event. Usually we purchase items for the preschool such as wood chips for the playground or classroom materials. This year we just want to make it to the other side of this pandemic continuing to provide affordable childcare **service to the community** and continued **stable employment** for our teachers.

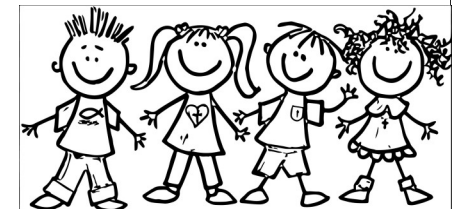
Covid-19 will keep us from enjoying our **fellowship** together this year. We will miss the tradition of enjoying this meal that gathers church and school families together. This is our only fundraiser of the year, and this is a year we can really use the funds as we strive to keep open while serving only 14 children. Over one-third of the 14 children are attending part time for various reasons due to Covid-19.

October is benevolence month for the preschool. I invite you to donate, if you can, the amount you would have spent on a breakfast ticket/s to help keep us going. If you can contribute just a little, or maybe more, we will put it to good use as we await returning to regular operations.

If you are unable to donate, please **keep us in your prayers**. This ministry has been built on faith, trusting the journey God has provided for our community.

Thanks be to God!

Kathy Berens



El Salvador Sister Parish News

There is good news from El Pilar, the community where we have been funding water and sanitation projects for several years. El Salvador lifted its restrictions on movement and commerce in August. The community contacted us to say they were ready to start another group of 10 latrines with our help. The project began on August 31, 2020 and there is excellent progress! There are three completed latrines and several in progress.

Here is a completed composting latrine for the Franco Lopez family. Once again, we're off to a great start working directly with community members.

We're currently raising money for latrines in El Pilar as well as University scholarships in Guillermo Ungo. Soon, we will also be contacting you about sponsoring, or continuing to sponsor, your prayer children. Contributions to sponsor the prayer children also fund scholarships, but this time at the primary and secondary school levels.

You may donate in several ways:

At the santacruzalsalvador.org web site

By making out a check to Santa Cruz al Salvador and sending or dropping it off at St. Stephen's (please indicate the project to which you are donating)

By making out a check to St. Stephen's, indicate your gift is for El Salvador and sending or dropping it off at Church

As always, thank you for all you do for our work in El Salvador.

Kent Madsen
For Santa Cruz al Salvador



After the Fire . . .

Gratitude from Cheryl Curry: I'm finding it difficult to find the right words to express how much it meant to me to be able for all of us, including the pets, to be able to stay together (at church), safe and secure. There aren't many places that allow pets, and boarding them is not easy, either. To be able to have their pets, to be able to play with and cuddle was a life saver for the kids.

Life is sort of normal, but we're still cleaning up. Our neighborhood was largely untouched, although there was a hot spot about 1/4 mile from our house. The damage is strange. Driving along the roads, there is mostly no sign of fire damage then you come upon a burnt out spot. I haven't been to the areas on upper Empire Grade or Braemoor, which were wiped out. Going down Felton Empire Grade, there is a lot of fire damage. Everywhere the undergrowth is all ash (which is good) but the trees are just fine. They are Redwoods, after all, which are adapted to periodic fires. That should bring on some discussion about forest management and Cal Fire policies.

In terms of profound spiritual insights, I don't know that I have anything better than what most people say about setting priorities. However, during my time there, I did get into a new topic. I did more reading in that month than I had in the past year. Two books which I would recommend are "Just Mercy" by Bryan Stevenson (non-fiction) and "The Guardians" by John Grisham (fiction). Both feature a lawyer who is part of a group helping wrongfully convicted inmates to be freed. They say a lot about our justice system and our real objectives as a society as to rehabilitation vs retribution.

Greetings from Tara McMilin: I'm hoping that you might know someone who has something for rent. With so many hundreds of SLV folk presently in search of new homes, it's slim pickings out there, and I'm entering the quest a little late because I *just* learned that we will NOT be able to resume residency on Sweetwater Lane, the place we've called home for the last seven years. Boo-hoo!

We need a permanent place to move. I am not a fan of moving frequently; I prefer staying in a home for decades/a lifetime. We owned a home for 36 years; for the last seven I've been renting. We want a home.

Maybe someone you know is selling. Buying is a possibility for us, too. However, I question the wisdom in buying under pressure, and my time for all the business around purchasing (if I could even qualify for anything currently available) is null. Moving now is due to unforeseen, uncontrollable circumstances. The school year has just begun and my work days are quite long. The season in which I'd choose to move would be summer, of course, when my time is flexible and there are fewer demands on my schedule. Thank you. 831-234-9909