

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 circumstances, 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

5th Sunday of Easter

May 2, 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!**

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.

May Special Offering

Mt. Cross

Outdoor Worship Dates

(Inclement weather cancels)

May 9th & 23rd at 10am.

(2nd and 4th Sundays thereafter.)

Please remember to wear a mask or two, bring your own chair, or remain in your car.

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.

*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



Prayer Concerns

Short Term: Family of Jean Petersen, Family of Betty Kivlan, Bobbie Erickson, Lu Sluiter, Eugene Gross, Leslie Lapp and Family, Healthcare workers, teachers, Marla Meek and family, Kathy Allen and Family, Beth Stiles, Nancy and Sam, Marisa, Margot Wilson, 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, 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,

*Opening Hymn

Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing Red #389

**Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.**

**Christ is alive! No longer bound
To distant years in Palestine,
But saving, healing, here and now,
And touching ev'ry place and time.**

**In ev'ry insult, rift, and war,
Where color, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
And lives, where even hope has died.**

**Women and men, in age and youth,
Can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
And find the way, the life, the truth,
Revealed in Jesus, freed for all.**

**Christ is alive, and comes to bring
Good news to this and ev'ry age,
Till earth and sky and ocean ring
With joy, with justice, love, and praise.**

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 8: 26-40 Celebrate pg. 1

Second Reading 1 John 4: 7-21 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 John 15: 1-8 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 the Amen"

Red #826

**Thine the amen thine the praise alleluias angels raise
Thine the everlasting head thine the breaking of the bread
Thine the glory thine the story thine the harvest then the cup
thine the vineyard then the cup is lifted up lifted up.**

**Thine the life eternally thine the promise let there be
Thine the vision thine the tree all the earth on bended knee
Gone the nailing gone the railing gone the pleading gone the cry
gone the sighing gone the dying what was loss lifted high.**

**Thine the truly thine the yes thine the table we the guest
Thine the mercy all from thee thine the glory yet to be
Then the ringing and the singing then the end of all the war
Thine the living thine the loving evermore evermore**

**Thine the kingdom thine the prize thine the wonder full surprise
Thine the banquet then the praise then the justice of thy ways
Thine the glory thine the story then the welcome to the least
Then the wonder all increasing at thy feast at thy feast.**

**Thine the glory in the night no more dying only light
Thine the river thine the tree then the Lamb eternally
Then the holy holy holy celebration jubilee
Thine the splendor thine the brightness only thee only thee.**

Communion Hymn

"You Satisfy the Hungry Heart"

Red #484

REFRAIN: You satisfy the hungry heart
with gift of finest wheat.
Come give to us, O saving Lord,
the bread of life to eat.

As when the shepherd calls his sheep,
They know and heed his voice;
So when you call your fam'ly, Lord,
We follow and rejoice. *REFRAIN*

The myst'ry of your presence, Lord,
No mortal tongue can tell:
Whom all the world cannot contain
Comes in our hearts to dwell. *REFRAIN*

You give yourself to us, O Lord;
Then selfless let us be,
To serve each other in your name
In truth and charity. *REFRAIN*

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

"Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!"

Red #383

- 1. Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna!
Celebrate this day of days!
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder;
All creation is amazed.
In the desert all surrounding,
See, a spreading tree has grown.
Healing leaves of grace abounding
Bring a taste of love unknown.**
- 2. Christ is risen! Raise your spirits
From the caverns of despair.
Walk with gladness in the morning.
See what love can do and dare.
Drink the wine of resurrection,
Not a servant, but a friend.
Jesus is our strong companion.
Joy and peace shall never end.**
- 3. Christ is risen! Earth and heaven
Nevermore shall be the same.
Break the bread of new creation
Where the world is still in pain.
Tell it grim, demonic chorus:
"Christ is risen! Get you gone!"
God the First and Last is with us.
Sing Hosanna, everyone!**

*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. Please commune yourself or a loved one with you with the words: "The Body of Christ given." and "The Blood of Christ shed."