

## **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

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email: [office@ststephenslutheran.org](mailto:office@ststephenslutheran.org)

Web Address: [www.ststephenslutheran.org](http://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

# 7th Sunday of Easter

May 16, 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 is risen!

C: **Christ is 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!**

## Outdoor Worship Dates

(Inclement weather cancels)

**May 23rd & June 13th at 10am.**

(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"**

## 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:** Jan Wagner, 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.

## 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.*

## \*Opening Hymn

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today" Red #365

**Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Our triumphant holy day, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Who did once upon the cross, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Suffer to redeem our loss. Al - le - lu - ia!**

**Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Unto Christ, our heav'nly king, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Who endured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Sinners to redeem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!**

**But the pains which he endured, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Our salvation have procured; Al - le - lu - ia!  
Now above the sky he's king, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Where the angels ever sing. Al - le - lu - ia!**

**Sing we to our God above, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Praise eternal as his love; Al - le - lu - ia!  
Praise him all you heav'nly host, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia!**

## 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: Gracious and glorious God, you have chosen us as your own, and by the powerful name of Christ you protect us from evil. By your Spirit transform us and your beloved world, that we may find our joy in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
C: **Amen.**

## The Word of God

First Reading Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 Celebrate pg. 1

Second Reading 1 John 5: 9-13 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 17:6-19 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. John, the 17th 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

\*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.

To Spirit blest, most holy God,  
All the glory, never ending!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

\*Dismissal

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



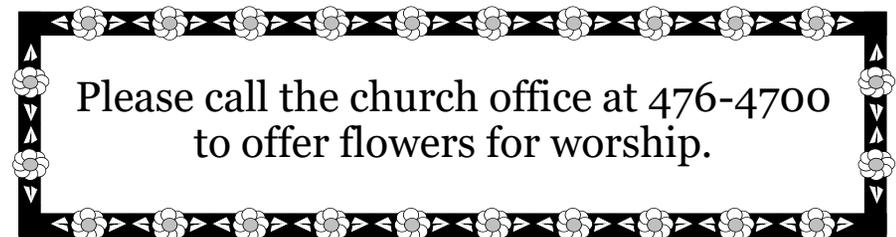
**C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!**

Postlude

Gary Roberts

## May Special Offering

**Mt. Cross**



\*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

*"Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds"*

**Red #367**

**Now all the vault of heav'n resounds  
In praise of love that still abounds:  
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"  
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!  
Repeat their song of glory here:  
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Eternal is the gift he brings,  
Therefore our heart with rapture sings:  
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"  
Now still he comes to give us life  
and by his presence stills all strife.  
Christ has triumphed! He is living!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Oh, fill us, Lord, with dauntless love;  
Set heart and will on things above  
That we conquer through your triumph;  
Grant grace sufficient for life's day  
That by our lives we truly say:  
Christ has triumphed! He is living!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Adoring praises now we bring  
And with the heav'nly blessed sing:  
"Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!"  
Be to the Father, and our Lord,**

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

Communion Hymn

*"Be Not Afraid"*

Red #388 (Sing 4 times)

**Be not afraid, sing out for joy!  
Christ is risen, alleluia!  
Be not afraid, sing out for joy!  
Christ is risen, alleluia!**

## 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**