

### **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](mailto:office@ststephenslutheran.org)  
Web Address: [www.ststephenslutheran.org](http://www.ststephenslutheran.org)  
Office Hours: Mon.—Fri. 12—5:00 pm

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's  
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp  
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp  
Church Musician: Gary Roberts  
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp  
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens  
Custodian: John Hopping  
Videographers: Kent Madsen & Barb Rice

Music used by permission Onelicense #A-706539

# First Sunday in Advent

## November 28, 2021

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

### The Gathering

#### Advent Wreath Lighting

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown  
That marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.  
As we light the first candle on this wreath,  
Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord  
When he comes with all the saints and angels.  
Enlighten us with your grace,  
And prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord,  
Whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

#### \*Opening Hymn

*"Awake , Awake, and Greet the New Morn"* #242

**Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,  
for angels herald its dawning.  
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,  
Behold the Child of our longing.  
Come as a baby weak and poor,  
to bring all hearts together,  
he opens wide the heav'nly door  
and lives now inside us forever.**

## Give a Gift. Change a Life.



What better way to celebrate the season of Jesus' birth than to give gifts of comfort and joy to those who are in need. Give meaningful gifts that inspire leadership, nourish the hungry and heal the sick.

### **Lutheran World Relief**

provides gifts that improve the lives of people living in poverty around the world. For example: A Goat not only provides a woman farmer with milk to sell, but also helps her build a herd. Coffee seedlings help a farmer grow a lucrative crop that has the potential to significantly improve income. Seeds help farmers grow more and better crops when climate conditions are challenging. Emergency Water delivers immediate, potable water after disaster strikes. **LWR.org/gifts or 1-800-597-5972**

### **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service**

stands ready to welcome the most vulnerable refugees who are seeking safety and hope in America. Our gifts are essential in rebuilding their lives. Gifts from "Basic Needs Kit" to "Ready for Work kit" can mean so much to those who have nothing but the clothes on their backs. **LIRS.org or 877-291-7061**

### **Sponsor a Prayer Child**

With our Sister Parish in El Salvador. Contact Kent Madsen for more info: 408-812-1141

### **S.P.I.N.** Socks for People in Need (box in narthex)

NEW socks are a blessing for many reasons, especially health, but also because they provide comfort and a sense of dignity. Basic white crew socks are appreciated by everyone. You may also choose socks for women and children. Sponsored by the Association of Faith Communities.

## The Season of Giving

This holiday season, we thank everyone who has supported St. Stephen's this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions and look forward to support from all of our members in the year ahead.

If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings or if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to check out our electronic giving options. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions.

For more info. contact Janet Slay 475-5668

Your 2022 Offering envelopes are here, if you'd like to stop by and pick them up.

### **God uses money to confirm direction.**

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
and do not rely on your own insight.  
In all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make your paths straight."  
Proverbs 3:5-6*

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear,  
Emmanuel comes a singing,  
his humble song is quiet and near,  
yet fills the earth with its ringing;  
music to heal the broken soul  
and hymns of loving kindness,  
the thunder of his anthems roll  
to shatter all hatred and blindness.**

**In darkest night his coming shall be  
when all the world is despairing,  
as morning light so quiet and free,  
so warm and gentle and caring.  
Then shall the mute break forth in song,  
the lame shall leap in wonder,  
the weak be raised above the strong,  
and weapons be broken asunder.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night,  
though dark the winter and cheerless,  
the rising sun shall crown you with light,  
be strong and loving and fearless.  
Love be our song and love our prayer  
and love our endless story;  
may God fill ev'ry day we share  
and bring us at last into glory.**

### \*Greeting

**P:** The steadfast love of God, the life of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C:** **And also with you.**

Kyrie "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" # 257 vs. 1 - 2

O come, O come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.

**REFRAIN**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O Wisdom from on high  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
Teach us your will and guide our way. **REFRAIN**

Hymn of Praise

*"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"* #270 vs 1 & 3

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise;  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

**REFRAIN**

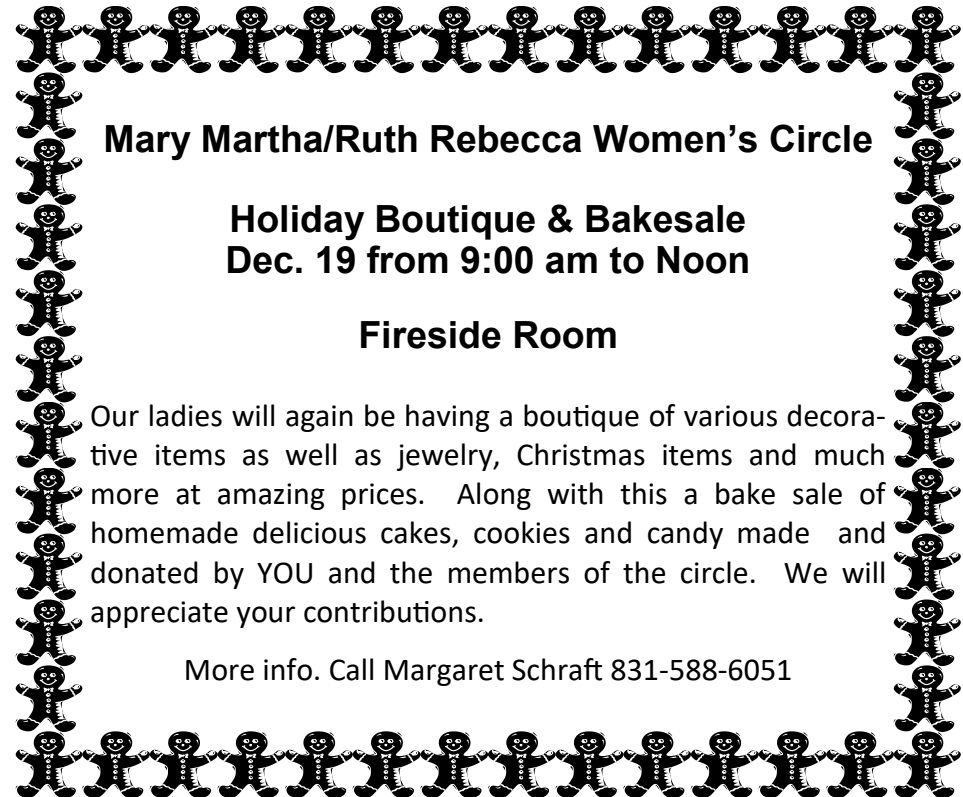
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
Ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth **REFRAIN**



## Poinsettias

Help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve. Poinsettias may be donated in honor or in memory of loved ones and will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Call the office or sign up in the narthex (by Dec. 10). Cost is \$15. Please make the check payable to St. Stephen's, but keep it separate from your regular offering to make bookkeeping easier. You may take your plant home after 8:30 pm December 24 to enjoy. Proceeds benefit our church ministries.



### Mary Martha/Ruth Rebecca Women's Circle

**Holiday Boutique & Bakesale  
Dec. 19 from 9:00 am to Noon**

#### **Fireside Room**

Our ladies will again be having a boutique of various decorative items as well as jewelry, Christmas items and much more at amazing prices. Along with this a bake sale of homemade delicious cakes, cookies and candy made and donated by YOU and the members of the circle. We will appreciate your contributions.

More info. Call Margaret Schraft 831-588-6051

# CHRISTMAS EVE

## Candlelight Worship

**Friday, Dec. 24**  
**5:00 pm & 7:30 pm**



A recorded Christmas Eve Service will be available on our website.

### Upcoming Events:

November Benevolence Offering =  
Sister Parish / Santa Cruz al Salvador

- Nov. 29 Newsletter Collating 2:00 pm (helpers needed)
- Nov. 30 Boy Scouts 7:00 pm
- Dec. 1 Women's Café Group 6:00 pm
- Dec. 2 Bible Study 11:00 & 7:30 pm (Zoom)
- Dec. 5 & 19 Confirmation 6:30 pm
- Dec. 14 Church Council 6:30 pm
- Dec. 20 Embroider's Guild 7:00 pm Fireside

**Pastor's Office Hours Weds. & Thurs. 10:00 to 1:00**

### \*Prayer of the Day

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us Pray.

Celebrate, Page 1

### The Word of God

#### First Reading

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Celebrate pg. 1

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

#### Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Celebrate pg. 3

P: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*(Please stand as you are able)*

#### Gospel Acclamation

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

#289 vs. 1

**Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains**

***Gloria... in excelsis Deo***  
***Gloria... in excelsis Deo***

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

\*Gospel Reading Luke 2:25-36 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Gospel of the Lord.  
C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon Rev. James Lapp

\*Hymn of the Day

*"We Are Waiting for Jesus"* (New) ACS #905

**We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.  
Sun of justice, shine upon us;  
We are trusting in your promise.  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.**

**We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.  
Loving Shepherd, walk beside us;  
Stir our hearts, and gently guide us.  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.**

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.**

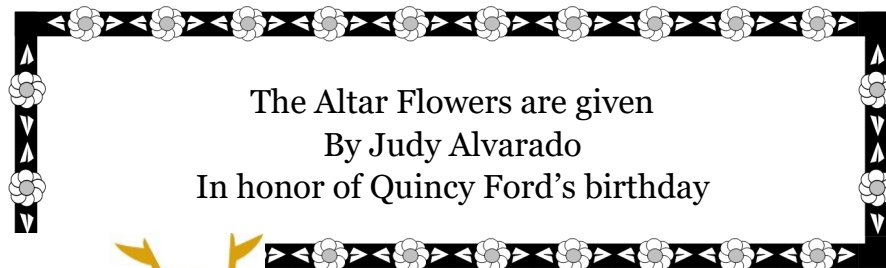
**With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see  
The day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!**

\*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.  
C: **Thanks be to God.**

Serving Today

Usher—Shelly Barker  
Reader — Janet Slay  
Coffee Host — Nancy & Sam Loya  
(Celebrating 3 yrs of marriage)



**SHORT TERM:** Tyler Slay, Family of Rick Oldfield, Family of Ron Buswell, Family of Edna Lindquist, Chris & Patty, Gaye Cornell, Harriet Edsall, Dorothy, Laura, Bobbie Erickson, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Jane Davis, Kirsten Skiles, Jane, Nancy, Marisa, Margot Wilson, Rose, Sam, Aaron Johnson, Don, Lina, Sal, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Cabel, Miller, Noah, Esdras, Healthcare workers, teachers, Immigrant families, The Homeless, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family.

**LONG TERM:** Kyle Lapp, Jan Wagner, The Sanders Family, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, John B., Michelle, Josh, CJ, Susan Anderson, Richard C., Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Chris & Lorie Juhl, Karin, Will, Chris, Pearl Runquist, Volpi & Robe Family, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), men and women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.

## The Sending

### \*Prayer after Communion

P: Most High God,  
You have come among us at this table.  
By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,  
Sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,  
Through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

C: **Amen.**

### \*Blessing

P: The God of hope  
Fill us with all joy and peace in believing,  
So that we may abound in hope  
By the power of the Holy Spirit,  
Through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest..

C: **Amen.**

\*Closing Hymn      "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"      Red #244

**Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;  
The evening is advancing, and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**

**The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;  
Go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.  
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.  
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.**

**The saints, who here in patience  
their cross and suff'rings bore,  
Shall live and reign forever when sorrow is no more.  
Around the throne of glory the Lamb they shall behold;  
In triumph cast before him their diadems of gold.**

**Our hope and expectations, O Jesus, now appear;  
Arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.**

Offering — We honor and worship God by returning some of  
the gifts with which we have been blessed.

### Offertory

"Come Now, O Prince of Peace"      Red #247 vs. 1 & 2

1. Come, now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.  
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
2. Come now, O God of love, make us one body.  
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

### Offering Prayer

P: God of our waiting and watching,  
We offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives  
To the service of all your people.  
Prepare the way before us  
As we meet you in this simple meal,  
Through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

C: **Amen**

### \*Great Thanksgiving

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord**

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

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

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....

\*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 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: Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.  
Share in the feast of salvation.

*(You may be seated)*

Holy Communion

*Guests: You are welcome to come forward to receive  
Communion as part of this church family! Children are  
welcome to come forward and receive a special blessing if they  
have never communed before.*

Invitation to Communion

Come to Christ's banquet.  
Feast on God's gift of grace.

Lamb of God

*"Love Has Come"*

Red #292 vs. 1 & 3

**Love has come a light in the darkness!  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;  
Hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!  
Love! Love! Glory to God on high!**

**Love has come and never will leave us!  
Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us,  
Hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!**

Communion Hymn

*"What Feast of Love"*

#487

**1- What feast of love is offered here,  
what banquet come from heaven?  
What food of everlasting life, what gracious gift is given?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
the bread come down from heaven.  
Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the manna given!**

**2- What light of truth is offered here,  
what covenant from heaven?  
What hope of everlasting life, what wondrous word is given?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
the sun come down from heaven.  
Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is given!**

**3- What wine of love is offered here,  
what holy drink from heaven?  
What stream of everlasting life,  
what precious blood is given?  
This, this is Christ the king, the sweetest wine of heaven.  
Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is given!**