

### **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

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## **Forth Sunday in Advent**

### **December 19, 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 wheel of time  
That marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.  
As we light the candles on this wreath,  
Open our eyes to see your presence  
In the lowly ones of this earth.  
Enlighten us with your grace,  
That we may sing of your advent among us  
in the Word made flesh.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord,  
Whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

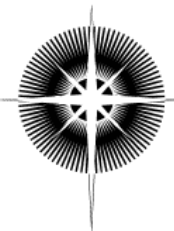
**Amen.**

#### \*Opening Hymn

"O God beyond all Praising" Red #880

**O God beyond all praising, we worship you today  
And sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay;  
For we can only wonder at ev'ry gift you send,  
At blessings without number and mercies without end:  
We lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word,  
We honor and adore you, our great and mighty Lord.**

## **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*

The flow'r of earthly splendor in time must surely die,  
It's fragile bloom surrender to you, the Lord most high;  
But hidden from all nature the eternal seed is sown -  
Though small in mortal stature, to heaven's garden grown:  
For Christ, your gift from heaven,  
from death has set us free,  
And we through him are given the final victory.

Then hear, O gracious Savior, accept the love we bring,  
That we who know your favor may serve you as our King;  
And whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill,  
We'll triumph through our sorrows  
and rise to less you still:  
To marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways,  
And make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.

### \*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

## \*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

Micah 5:2-5

Celebrate pg. 1

**L:** Word of God, Word of Life.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

## **Sunday Helpers Needed**

- ~ Setting up Communion
- ~ Greeting people
- ~ Reading the scripture lessons
- ~ Hosting Coffee

Sign up in the Narthex, or call the office

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

**Holiday Boutique & Bake sale  
TODAY 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. Word has it there will be Hummels and Pigs galore! 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.

# 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:

December Benevolence Offering =  
 Lutheran World Relief

TODAY	- Holiday Boutique 9 am to noon - Confirmation 6:30 pm
Dec. 20	Embroider's Guild 7:00 pm Fireside
Dec. 21	Boyscouts 7:00 pm
Dec. 23	Bible Study 11:00 & 7:30 pm (Zoom)
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Worship 5:00 & 7:30 pm
Dec. 28	Newsletter Collating 2:00 pm
Jan. 2	Confirmation 6:30 pm
Jan. 5 & 19	Women's Café Group 6:00 pm

Second Reading

Hebrews 10:5-10

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 1:39-55

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Rev. James Lapp

\*Hymn of the Day

*"Each Winter As the Year Grows Older" (New) #252*

**Each winter as the year grows older,  
 We each grow older too.  
 The chill sets in a little colder;  
 The verities we knew  
 Seem shaken and untrue.**

**(hymn continued)**

When race and class cry out for treason,  
When sirens call for war,  
They overshout the voice of reason  
And scream till we ignore  
All we held dear before.

Yet I believe beyond believing,  
That life can spring from death:  
That growth can flower from our grieving;  
That we can catch our breath  
And turn transfixed by faith.

So even as the sun is turning  
To journey to the north,  
The living flame, in secret burning,  
Can kindle on the earth  
And bring God's love to birth.

O Child of ecstasy and sorrows,  
O Prince of peace and pain,  
Brighten today's world by tomorrow's,  
Renew our lives again;  
Lord Jesus, come and reign!

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.**

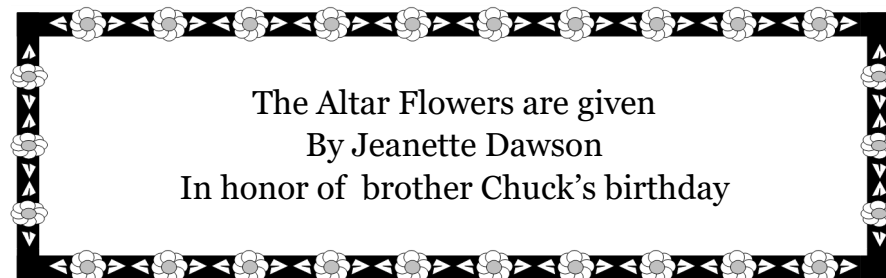
Offering— We honor and worship God by returning some of  
the gifts with which we have been blessed.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
Your welcome shall proclaim,  
And heav'n's eternal arches ring  
With your beloved name.

### \*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

C: **Thanks be to God.**



### Serving Today

Usher—

Reader — Renee Rice

Coffee Host — MMRR Circle

**SHORT TERM:** Family of Ryan Barker, 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, Shelby, 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

*"Hark, the Glad Sound!"*

Red #239

**Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
The Savior promised long;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne  
And ev'ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris'ners to release,  
In Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before him burst,  
The iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind,  
The bleeding soul to cure,  
And with the treasures of his grace  
To enrich the humble poor.**

(continued)

### 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

*"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"*

Red #240

- 1. Light one candle to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel,  
God fulfills the promise.**
- 2. Light two candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,  
gently lead them homeward.**
- 3. Light three candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel,  
God fulfills the promise.**
- 4. Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.  
Let your lights be shining!**