

ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SERVICE

Ready for your participation each Sunday at 10am.

In-person, Live Streamed on our website, or as a recording.

Go to 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)

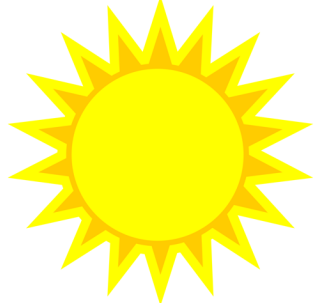
**NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON
January 28, 2022**

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St Stephen's Lutheran Church
2500 Soquel Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



SUN

February 2022

IN MEMORIAM

Our beloved brother in Christ and former shepherd of our congregation ('76-'90), Rev. Glenn Johnson died peacefully of natural causes on Saturday, January 15th at his daughter Lisa's home here in Santa Cruz, surrounded by his family. He was 90 years old and had descended from 200 years of Swedish Lutheran pastors. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Barbara in 2004.



Glenn had moved from La Posada to Lisa's home within the past year due to his deteriorating memory, but was still active in his long-time volunteer work with Grey Bears as he accompanied his granddaughter Marta for deliveries of food to senior residents. He did this up until the end of the year, when his physical health went into a sharper decline.

I was able to visit with Glenn, Lisa and Marta about a week before. It was a lovely time together as we prayed over Glenn and sang one of his favorite Swedish hymns – *Children of the Heavenly Father*. I also thanked Glenn for his service as an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament in the Lutheran Church, and his continued service to St. Stephen's for almost 25 years after his retirement from a congregation in Seal Beach, CA

Glenn will be remembered for the many faithful ways he lived his life like his prayers offered for the church and his family out loud in his beautiful baritone voice each Sunday, his jolly presence that often broke through in the form of his Swedish heritage and Scandinavian accent, his leading of our Eucharistic Ministers team for several years (complete with home-baked apple pie at each meeting), his friendly presence at La Posada where he often stationed himself near the entrance to engage socially with his fellow residents.

I deeply appreciated Glenn's support of me as his Pastor and his continual concern and prayers for the well-being of our family.

No service is being planned at this time due to Covid-19 restrictions. There will be a time to gather and remember this joyful servant of God as a church family at a later date.

Blessed be the memory of this Child of God. May light perpetual shine upon him.

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 - Alyssa Burkhardt
Treasurer— Kent Madsen
Shelly Barker, Bill Schraft, Jay Johnston,
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.—Fri. 12:00—5:00 pm (new hours)
Pastor Jim's Contact Hours — Mon.—Thurs. 9am—5pm at 831-325-9095

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



Birthdays & Anniversaries

2-4	Kyle Travers	2-19	Connie Creel	
2-7	Marla Meek	2-19	Charles Eldridge	2—6 Pastor Jim & Leslie
2-8	James Russell			
2- 10	Paul Powers	2-21	Caitlin Hopping	
2-12	Beverly Giladett	2-24	Miller Mouw	
2-18	Kathy Hopping	2-29	Beth Stiles	
2-18	Jay Johnston			



Prayers Please

SHORT TERM: Family of Pr. Glenn Johnson, Kent Madsen, Family of Ryan Barker, Chris & Tyler Slay, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), Family of Rick Oldfield, Family of Ron Buswell, Family of Edna Lindquist, Chris & Patty, Gaye Cornell, Harriet Edsall, Dorothy, Laura, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Jane Davis, Kirsten Skiles, Healthcare workers, teachers, Jane, Nancy, Marisa, Margot Wilson, Rose, Sam, Aaron Johnson, Don, Lina, Sal, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, .

LONG TERM: Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Jan Wagner, The Sanders Family, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, John B., Michelle, Josh, CJ, Bobbie Erickson, Susan Anderson, Richard C., Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Chris & Lorie Juhl, Karin, Will, Chris, Pearl Runquist, Volpi & Robe Family, Cabel, Miller, Noah, Esdras, Immigrant families, The Homeless, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family,), men and women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.



THANK YOU FOR
BUILDING A KINDER,
STRONGER COMMUNITY.

Dear St. Stephen's,

We had hoped that this year would see the end to the Covid 19 pandemic and a return to work and school for our Santa Cruz County neighbors. While there are hopeful signs about the economy and the approval of vaccines for school-age children, the return to normalcy hasn't come as quickly or as completely for all of our community.

Because of you (benevolence offering) we have been able to meet the steep challenges of 2021 by...

- *Providing over \$950,000 dollars of direct financial assistance for food and rent to people that lost wages due to COVID 19 or homes in the CZU Lightning Complex Fires;*
- *Purchased a new facility for Elderday Adult Day Health Care with the support of a generous grant from Central California Alliance for Health for their future home;*
- *Served more than 360,000 meals to Meals on Wheels participants, doubling the number of meals served last year.*

Our neighbors continue to experience an increased need for the help these services provide. This need cannot be met without the partnership of friends like you. Your support creates a stronger, healthier community that helps everyone to succeed.

In the coming year, we will continue to work on the front lines to strengthen and support those that need it most. We wish the very best for you and yours, and we hope you will continue to join us in supporting one another and our community.

Through your gift, you empower lasting change across the entire spectrum of life ant throughout all of Santa Cruz County. We are deeply grateful.

Raymon Cancino, C.E.O. And Jack Jacobson, Board Chair

from Pastor Jim



Almost to the day of our annual meeting this year, our family will mark the passing of an entire year since Leslie almost lost her life. That was, of course, a particularly dark time for us. Waiting in the ER for hours, wondering if she would survive.

And then suddenly a little light broke through with the trauma surgeon's news that she was somehow miraculously spared so many expected injuries. Then a little more light came in when she woke up a few days later and we could see her waving to us on our first Zoom visit. And then...the floodlights came on as God's Spirit sustained us in countless beautiful ways and we were filled with the blessings of being part of a church family as Leslie progressed day by day and she returned to us.

Very few people escape this life without experiencing a major tragedy like our family experienced. But being a part of the Body of Christ as we walked through the valley of the shadow of death, has been a privilege for us because God's presence and love has abounded through you. We have seen and felt God's Spirit with us perhaps more than ever this past year.

Indeed, as we say each Lent: "The Light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overcome it."

We were by no means the only ones to experience a difficult year, as many in our church family claimed their baptismal promises from God to everlasting life. This was made even more trying because of the pandemic restrictions about gathering, and we were not able to share table fellowship with each other after services. We did hold a very special All Saints Day Memorial Service where we honored and remembered 7 saints that we were not able to gather for previously. It looks like we will be doing this again, given the start to 2022.

It was also a very hard year filled with other kinds of goodbyes as we wished some long-time members Godspeed and Farewell in their moves away to new homes. All these things seemed to be magnified this past year.

At the same time, we are not surprised that God's Light has shined through in many ways throughout our difficult year. As we began to finally worship together in-person at Easter, we celebrated the baptism of our little Ila – who attended our Child Development Center, and whose Great Grandparents were some of the first residents at St. Stephen's Senior Housing. New life had indeed begun for our congregation. We enjoyed the fine weather and worshipped outdoors until Sun. Sept. 12 when we welcomed everyone back into the sanctuary. Another sign of new life was the beginning of our Confirmation/Youth Group with 6 enthusiastic young people!

And there was a whole lot of new life discovered in our use of the available technology for livestreaming and recording our worship services to our website. A very special thanks to Kent Madsen, Barbara Rice and Jay Johnston for leading us with their gifts. And, yes, we even were able to receive a new family who live in Livingston CA through this online effort!

Dear Pastor Lapp,

It was nice to become acquainted with you on the phone the other day. Here is the article about my dad. I also included the one about my mother Eleanor, since she was the pianist / organist and choir director when my father was the minister. Some of your older members might remember my parents. Santa Cruz was always a very, very special place to all of us. It always will be.

Good luck and God's grace to the members of St. Stephen's! You are an incredible congregation who truly follows God's guidance on how to help those in your community and elsewhere! I am proud to say I was a member when I was just a baby!

-Susan Phillips and The family of Rev. Jack & Eleanor Zoellner

P.S. I have the St. Stephen's Church Picture Directory from 1978! It was my father's and he kept it all these years!

In MEMORIAM

Rev. Jack Zoellner died 12/23/2021 in Scottsdale, AZ. Pastor Zoellner served as the 2nd pastor to St. Stephen's from 1956-59. He was born in Saginaw, MI. He enlisted in the Marine Corps during WW2 and saw active duty in the Pacific with the 3rd Marine Division. He then served in Tientsin, China. He received his BA from Capital Univ., Columbus, Ohio and his M.Div. from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, PA.

He served as a Navy Chaplain in Japan and Korea. His 60 years in ministry took him to congregations in Georgia, California and Arizona. He served as an assistant to the Synod President of the Lutheran Church in America.

He was honored at the Vatican for his work in justice and peace.

Eleanor Zoellner died on 8/25/2020 in Scottsdale, AZ. She was born in Sparkill, NY. She graduated college Magna Cum Laude. She taught 4th grade and married Jack. She worked with her husband as church organist and choir director for many years. She also gave private piano lessons. She earned her private pilot's license and enjoyed flying. She then taught first grade, and became a librarian. She taught for 53 years and was married for 66 years.

(Full articles posted in the narthex)

MT. CROSS SUMMER CAMP 2022



Providing profound experiences in God's creation

Elementary, Middle School & High School Camps
Family & Group Camps

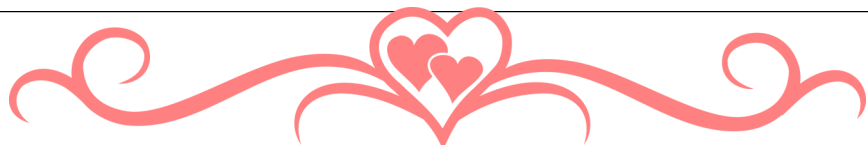
Woo Hoo! Registration is open now. Visit www.mtcross.org.
All participants must be fully vaccinated against COVID 19.



Zoom with Pastor Jim
check email on Weds. for link

THURSDAYS 11am -12noon & 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 in community.



Letters of the Heart

Hate has 4 letters, so does LOVE.
 Enemies has 7 letters, so does FRIENDS.
 Lying has 5, so does TRUTH.
 Negative has 8, so does POSITIVE.
 Under has 5, so does ABOVE.
 Cry has 3 letters, so does JOY.
 Anger has 5 letters, so does HAPPY.
 Right has 5 letters, so does WRONG.
 Hurt has 4 letters, so does HEAL.

*It means life is like a double edged sword ...
 So transform whatever negative we might encounter
 As we choose the better side of life.*

Church Council Highlights

(meets 2nd Tuesday at 6:30pm in the church.)

1. We moved our meeting to an online Zoom format, due to the highest number of active Covid-19 cases ever in our County that week. The February 8th meeting will likely be on Zoom as well.
2. We discussed our worship practices and decided to scale back some of the things we had been doing: Holy Communion will be received only through the pre-sealed elements. Masking over the nose will be emphasized. No Children’s Church of Coffee Fellowship for the time being. Pastor Jim will remain in the chancel area until the Recessional Hymn. We will re-evaluate on Feb. 8th.
3. David Balogh agreed to be nominated for a Church Council position. If the proposed Constitutional Change of reducing our Church Council from 9 to 7 is rejected at the Annual Meeting, then we will need to take nominations from the floor and fill the remaining 2 positions during the Annual Meeting.
4. Steven Hendrickson and Margaret Schraft have volunteered to be nominated as our Synod Assembly delegates, The Assembly takes place June 1-4 at the Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, NV.
5. The 2022 proposed budget with COLA increase was approved unanimously for the Annual Meeting.

Reconciling 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.”

STEWARD OF THE MONTH—Sam Loya

We are all very grateful for Sam’s gifts of time, supplies and expertise in the installation of our new security camera system. The hard wiring and installation of the 5 camera was a multi-day effort on his part. He has shown us what it means to take care of what God has blessed us with at our facility. Our Church Council decided it was time for this system as a deterrent to vandalism (church bell), and a more safe environment for our preschool staff and families. We could not have done this without you, Sam! He & John Stout also cleaned out and installed gutter guards for us!



Child Development Center

The name of the game at the preschool is patience, resilience, and pivoting. We returned from the holiday break, then closed for ten days due to a positive testing student. Our families are real champions at restructuring their daily lives as we navigate the latest surge. We returned on January 18th. Teacher Sam and I have been trained to test the children and teachers so after an initial return of testing every other day, we hope to put this surge behind us, yet have the tools to monitor if symptoms begin for any reason.

Socialization is the main goal for our students, it always is, but now even more important. During Circletime, the children really want to share what is on their minds. The story or another comment will trigger the hands to raise and anecdotes to be shared. The children are wiggly as they are not used to attending so we have creative ways to redirect. The day of this writing I observed the children in the classroom, for some their first day back. They were so quiet yet engaged with each other. Some were parallel playing rather than cooperative play. You could sense relief in the room. It was very evident that the main gift to give these children who are ages 2-4, who have not known a world without Covid, is the routine we offer. We offer them a place to be themselves, choosing what they would like to do, choosing who they would like to play with. Inside our preschool they are free yet stabilized with familiar structure that has not changed. Although we offer good curriculum it is not the same as before because their need to engage with each other socially is the priority while this latest surge passes.

SSCDC is so very grateful for the benevolence donations in 2021. It was enough to purchase a new computer for the Preschool office. After years of troubleshooting, I am delighted to report that we have Wi-Fi in the office, with a new updated computer, connected to the printer that won't disconnect anymore. We also have 2 years of Geek Squad coverage which will be a great support. The balance of the donation will go toward improving the playground.

February is always a fun month for children, making valentine crafts, and our celebration. Please pray for our children and their families. This is a precious group of people who are really riding the waves. We pray that their lives will return to the kind of routines we remember when raising our children, or at least closer to, considering the changing times.

Warmly, Kathy Berens



I mask people even when they aren't wearing an actual mask.

I mask people even when they aren't wearing an actual mask. This person is white, or this person is young, or this person is Black, or this person is Asian/Pacific Islander, or this person is Arab/Middle Eastern, or this person is Latinx, or this person is old, or this person is a farmer, or this person is urban, or this person is Lutheran. You can fill out the list. I ascribe characteristics to all of these people without really seeing them.

And then, I wonder about the masks I wear. Wife, daughter, mother, sister. Pastor, friend, the PRESIDING BISHOP (yikes!). When interactions are fraught, the staff have identified what they call my "Queen Face."

What masks do we all wear? Some are appropriate—we don't have to emote all over everyone all the time. It's good to have boundaries—some are needed for safety. But none of these is who we truly are, and all of these take energy.

As we have been returning to in-person worship and once again celebrating communion, I've witnessed a beautiful phenomenon. When people come forward to receive the host, they momentarily remove their masks. One by one, in the face of our Lord's body, they reveal themselves and are revealed. Their faces appear. No mask. No covering. No defense. No need for defense. For that instant they no longer carry the burden of wearing the mask of their demographic, heritage or ethnicity. They are no longer called upon to be stoic.

At that moment they realize on earth what we shall know in heaven—God sees us. God loves us. In God we find our true selves. We find rest.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face.

*Now I know only in part; then I will know fully,
even as I have been fully known (1 Corinthians 13:12).*

WHAT MASKS DO WE ALL WEAR?

By Presiding ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (Living Lutheran 1/2022)

Getting ready to leave the house—for work or errands—takes a couple extra steps during a pandemic. Do I know how crowded my destination will be? Did I remember to take a mask? Of all the annoying things about this pandemic, I find remembering to take and to wear a mask is one of the most irksome. Masks aren't comfortable, they make it more difficult to understand conversations, and they are a daily reminder that we are not out of the woods yet.

Let me be clear—masks are an effective way to stop the spread of this terrible virus, and I will wear one for as long as it takes. I urge all of us to do the same. This isn't about personal choice, but it is a physical manifestation that in baptism “we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another” (Romans 12:5). Wearing a mask is as much for our protection as it is for protecting others. I will continue to mask up.

I always thought it was silly that bandits and robbers are depicted wearing only a mask from just below the eyes down. How could that possibly be a disguise? One's eyes, hair and ears are all visible. You can hear the voice. You can figure out a person's stature. What's the point?

It turns out that sighted people get an enormous number of nonverbal cues from someone's face. Infants can read faces even before their eyesight is fully developed. An amazing amount of communication is possible even when interacting with someone who speaks a different language.

I don't think I'm unique in this, but I mentally fill in what a person looks like behind the mask. I make determinations about a person's age and disposition, not to mention physical characteristics. When I do see someone's unmasked face, it turns out that I am always wrong. This could be as benign as not imagining a person had a moustache to more significant assumptions about the person's character.



Resolving
Homelessness
Together

Dear St. Stephen's,

I am so inspired by your thoughtful donation. With your gift of \$295 to Housing Matters, you are helping to end homelessness right here in Santa Cruz County. Your support is a source of encouragement and hope for your most vulnerable neighbors.

We all know someone who has been affected in some way by homelessness or the lack of affordable housing in Santa Cruz County—a friend, a family members, a colleague, or a neighbor. We all see our unhoused neighbors on the street, and have heard stories of families living in inadequate conditions—a car, a tent, an overcrowded apartment. Know that the team at Housing Matters, with you backing, works around the clock, 365 days a year, to help your neighbors avoid homelessness or get out of it as quickly as possible. Once a community member is housed, the true healing can begin.

As of October 2021, this year alone 223 adults and kids have moved from homelessness into permanent homes. Thank you for making that (and so much more to come) possible.

On behalf of our entire team, board, and all of our clients, thank you again for your thoughtful contribution. Your generosity inspires us all.

Warmly,

Mer Stafford
Chief Impact Officer



Provide Lunches for Volunteers Tuesday, February 22

4th Tuesday of each month

Please sign up in the narthex or call the church office if you can provide a lunch item: sandwiches, fruit, chips, or cookies. Bring your item to church and someone will deliver the lunch for you. Easy! Presently Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay is building eleven homes at Rodeo Creek Court (cross street Harper). These are homes for low income families, though they must have an income and provide 500 hours of sweat equity before they can take ownership of their new home.

Habitat "Cars for Homes" Program

Donate your vehicle & help build strength & stability for families in our communities. 100% of net proceeds from the sale of your vehicle will fund our work helping local families. Start your car donation today at <https://www.habitatmontereybay.com/donate-a-car> or (877)277-4344

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

February - St. Stephen's Scholarship Fund

Over the years we have been blessed to receive several bequests from former members that make up our present scholarship fund. Many of St. Stephen's youth have benefited from this fund as they further their education in college while costs continue to rise. We attempt to use the interest only from this fund, but sometimes we need to dip into the principal in order to fulfill the requests. This month you can give a special offering in addition to your regular offering in order to keep this fund healthy well into the future. Maybe you, too, could think about including the St. Stephen's Scholarship Fund in your will or estate plans as others before us have. This is a multiplying gift as it enables someone else to develop their God-given gifts in service to others.

January—Society for the Prevention of Suicide = \$255 (as of Jan. 27)

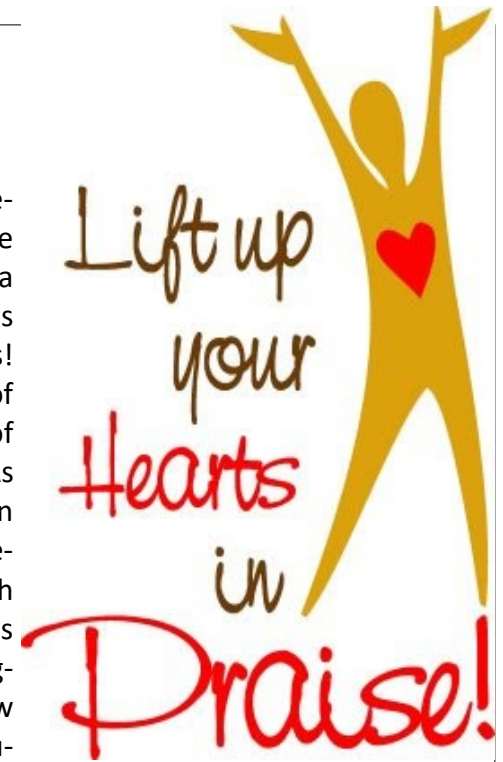
Full Body Worship

By Steven Hendrickson

When we worship the Triune God at St. Stephen's, an incredible opportunity is given to experience a Holy Presence in the Eternal Now. That means that a point of real contact is made that exists and stretches throughout all time, place, history, and consciousness!

All of our sisters and brothers in the family of God are with us in spirit. We are in the presence of Christ and interact experientially with God Almighty. As people of faith, this reality is awesome and beautiful in our liturgy, which is the work of the people. Our response is one of praise, thankfulness, and action with our voices, bodies, hearts, and souls, and all that is within us. This response can manifest in boisterous singing, body prayer expressions, and actions that show God that we are fully "in" relationship. I know that Lutherans are suspicious and wary of some of these ideas, but it is my intention to encourage all of us to step a little outside of our comfort zone sometimes. For instance, because many of our hymns are familiar and express heartfelt devotion, go ahead and really try to sing louder so your heart takes over the standard inhibitions. Along with folded hands, outstretched arms at our sides with palms open, or whatever the Spirit leads us to express through our bodies, it becomes an added dimension of our praise to God. We pray that a newcomer in our midst will marvel in joy at the heightened participation and devotion in our worship. We can do it!

May God's Grace and Peace be with you!



We all miss each other!
Let us know what's been happening in your life. Your notes help keep everyone hopeful and joyful. Email it to church: "office@ststephenslutheran.org"