

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)

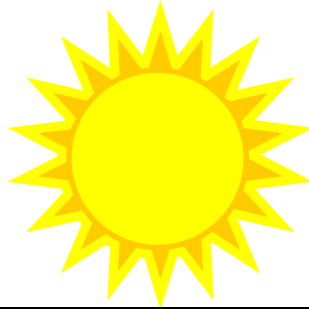
NEWSLETTER WAS SENT ON
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St Stephen's Lutheran Church
2500 Soquel Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

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St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



SUN

October 2022

Pastor Jim's presentation of his
Pilgrimage to the Holy Land!

Thurs. Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27
At 11am - Noon and 7:30pm - 8:30pm
(In-Person & Zoom) (Zoom only)

This will be in place of Bible Study for 6 weeks.

Please join via Zoom or plan to attend in-person at the church at the 11am time (not 7:30pm due to other groups here). Watch for the weekly e-mail for the Zoom invitation.

Exploring the world of the Bible, especially Jesus' ministry, will help us gain a better understanding of it's central messages for us today!

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. — Shelly Barker V.P.— Steven Hendrickson
Secretary - Alyssa Burkhardt
Treasurer— Kent Madsen
David Balogh, Paul Cunningham, and Jay Johnston
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
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

10-3 Pastor Lapp	10-21 Kathy Berens	
10-3 Becky Judd	10-22 Abigail Davis	10-2 Joel & Maryann
10-8 Amelia Davis	10-24 Tom Eagle	Hurttgam
10-13 Toby Abler	10-24 Noelia	10-11 Darwin & Patrice
10-13 Janet Slay	Monteagudo	Awe
10-14 Thomas Dawson	10-25 Bill Schraft	10-30 Robert & Cheryl
10-18 Naomi Florin-	10-27 Kim Frey	Bartee
Gosciminski	10-29 Michael Cappelloni	



SHORT TERM: Paul Cunningham, Beth Stiles, Barbara Rice, Mary Smith, Shiela Pethoud, Patrick Salandro & Family, Barbara Allen, Anita & Howard, The People of Ukraine, Sydnei Wilbywold, Paul Paustian, Kurt Bell, Will, Deborah Henry, Kathi Chavez, Carla, Ellie, Adrian Cameron, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Kirsten Skiles, Nancy, Marisa & Isaac, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Margot Wilson, Rose, Will, Sam, Aaron Johnson, Sal, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, Parents, Healthcare workers & teachers.

LONG TERM: Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Jan Wagner, Sandie & Dale, Sanders Family, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Michelle, Josh, CJ, Bobbie Erickson, Lupe, Joyce, Susan Anderson, Jan Wagner, Richard C., Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, 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.

El Salvador Sister Parish News

2022 Virtual Fundraiser - By the time you read this newsletter, you should have received your letter from Santa Cruz al Salvador describing our 2022 Fundraiser and asking for your generous donation.

A drawing entry will be awarded for every donation of \$100 or more. The prizes are as follows:

- ~ *Three baskets of special craft items from El Salvador;*
- ~ *Sailing adventure for up to six people on the "Salty Sheep" catamaran with Captain Ryan Althouse out of the Santa Cruz harbor;*
- ~ *Gift basket with items for the garden;*
- ~ *Gift basket with two bottles of nice wine and related items.*

2022 Delegation - We currently have 11 people signed up for the delegation leaving San Francisco on Monday, November 21st with return from San Salvador on Monday, November 28th. These are non-stop flights. Please let me know if you are interested in going to El Salvador this November. *Visiting El Salvador is a life-changing experience!*

Thank You - On behalf of the Board of Directors for Santa Cruz al Salvador (SCaS), I wish to thank all members of St. Stephen's who have contributed towards any of our projects. We cannot do our work without help from our donors.

Your gifts make a difference!

Peace in Christ,
Kent Madsen, St. Stephen's representative
on the SCaS Board of Directors



From Pastor Jim



7 REASONS

NOT TO FREAK-OUT ABOUT **THE DECLINE OF U.S. CHRISTIANITY**

This is the title of an article by Mitchell Atencio of Sojourners community magazine, which is a publication I have long respected, edited by Jim Wallis.

It's quite an attention-grabber for sure, but it also expresses and addresses the very sentiment that I am picking up from our congregation's leaders and members, as we try to be faithful to our Christian calling to share the Good News.

It draws from the Sept. 13 Pew Research Center study that shows 4 hypothetical scenarios should current trends continue. The models **project** that the U.S. population who identify as Christian would decrease from 64% in 2020, to between 35-54% in 2070. (Clearly Santa Cruz is ahead of the curve on this!)

This projection continues the last 30 yrs of accelerated decline of people who identify as Christian in the U.S., and the increase of people who respond "None" when asked about their religion.

I will highlight a few of the 7 responses from various faith leaders, but I encourage you to look up the whole article.

Most of the responders agree in principle that what we are experiencing are the birth pangs of new expressions of Christianity that come when the "old things pass away, and the new has come". The predominant expression of Christianity in the U. S. declining is necessary because it has aligned itself too closely with the values of the state (strong emergence of Christian Nationalism in the last 30 yrs).

Some lift up the times in history when Christianity (including it's very beginning) was the minority and how that enabled it to correct itself as an institution more closely resembling what Jesus Christ came for, taught and ushered in for humanity. Parables about things like a small mustard seed provide the hope that something new and more beneficial will grow from a smaller expression of Christian faith in the U.S. Closely following Jesus seldom wins popularity contests in the New Testament.



Dear Friends at St. Stephens,

Thank you for your financial gift — July Benevolence Offering. Your support has a great impact on the hardworking families we serve, and we can help more families afford a home thanks to you.

We are so grateful for your commitment to our programs. You have given more families a chance at first time homeownership, which is so often out of reach in our community. Your support helps them find strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter. Thank you for being a part of our mission to provide affordable housing to our region.

Sincerely,

Satish Rishi
Chief Executive Officer

*Thank you for your support and
for all the lunches you provide for our volunteers.*

Synod “El Camino” Conference 9 Gathering

With Interim Bishop Clare Burkat
And Sierra Pacific Synod V.P. Simon Wong

Saturday, November 12th, Morgan Hill

Pastor Jim and our congregation Synod delegates Steven Hendrickson & Margaret Schraft invite you to join them at this important gathering about the direction of the larger church (190 congregations in N. CA & W. NV.), also know as our Sierra Pacific Synod. This will be a time of conversation about what has happened with the resignation of our former bishop and how we can begin to heal and plan for the future.

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2022 through August	
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$400
SS Scholarships	\$200
Live Oak Resource Center	\$275
Habitat for Humanity	\$550
Mt. Cross	\$285
World Hunger	\$640
Housing Matters	\$875
CLU/PLTS	\$270
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$172
SS CDC	\$250
El Salvador Sister Parish	\$0
Lutheran World Relief	\$50
ELCA Synod	\$500
COPA	\$750
Lutheran Immigration	\$0
Total	\$4,852
2021 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$14,360
% of Target	34%

Kent Madsen
Treasurer



Treasurer Notes ...
Budget Information · August 2022

	August	August	YTD	YTD	Net
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Contribution Income	\$8,057	\$11,625	\$90,755	\$96,000	\$-5,245
Facility Use Income *	\$500	\$1,216	\$9,416	\$9,732	\$-316
Investment Income	\$5,194	\$5,000	\$40,339	\$40,000	\$339
Total Income	\$13,751	\$17,841	\$140,510	\$127,891	\$-5,222
Expenses	\$16,833	\$20,592	\$152,642	\$162,231	\$-9,589
Net	\$-3,082	\$-2,751	\$-12,132	\$-16,499	\$ 4,367

* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month (when paid) + Misc. Income.
Contribution income for August was short of the budget by \$4,090; year-to-date expenses have exceeded income by \$12,132. In early September an additional \$12,000 was withdrawn from investments, making the year-to-date total \$17,000.

*Please remember your church if you are away this fall.
Thank you to those who have contributed this year!*

Special funds for the Organ, Piano,
Hearing Impaired and Solar Electricity

	August	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Organ	\$85	\$0	\$259
Piano	\$0	\$120	
Hearing Impaired Equip	\$0	\$395	
Solar Electric Payback	\$352		\$9,632

Church Council Highlights

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

1. Present: Steven Hendrickson (VP), Alyssa Burkhardt (Sec.), Jay Johnston, David Balogh. Absent: Shelly Barker– out of town, Kent Madsen—caring for Barbara Rice, Paul Cunningham—health
2. Devotions from Frederich Buechner reminded us that despite King David’s many faults and shortcomings which might have led people to dismiss him, the time when he danced for God from his heart as a true expression of his worship and love for God, was enough for God to be seen. As we enter another uncertain time in the life of our church emerging from the effects of the pandemic and some decline in participation, we are seeking ways that we can offer our heart-felt dance and witness of faith, so others will want to be a part of our Christian community.
3. House Meetings will be organized for our congregation in early November as we seek to discern where God’s Spirit may be leading us in our ministry together. We will talk about where we’ve come from since March 2020, what is important to us about being a part of our church now, what pressures we are experiencing in our homes and families, and some hopes for our future. We will try to organize the gatherings around groups that already are familiar.
4. Discussion about mask-wearing in church as there has been a noticeable decline in their use. Decided to continue to leave it as a strong recommendation and not make any announcement. Still very concerned about our senior members and trying to reduce any possible spread, despite low infection numbers in our County.
5. The baptism of Evelyn Colclough (daughter of Jody and Renny) will take place on Sunday, October 16th!

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.”**



Child Development Center

For this article I will share some of the email entries I sent with pictures attached to the school families the first weeks of school. We are a play-based school who tailors the experience to each individual child. Parent education and explaining the learning in the play is how we foster the Home-School connection.

We welcomed new children Room 2, our Toddler class. It is a very big deal to begin school for the first time when you are used to being home with mommy. Each experience is different. The experience reminded me of the most important part of our ministry and school. Connecting with young hearts and gaining trust. All humans need time to feel familiar with surroundings and new routines before experimenting with the environment. To feel the trust of a young child is a privilege. Social emotional growth is the important gateway to gaining knowledge.

Today we read the "Kissing Hand" about a mother raccoon who kissed her child's hand and put it to his cheek. He was told when he missed his mother to hold his hand to his cheek and remember that mommy loves him. It is charming and a great back to school story. We read "Rawr". Did you know that is how a dinosaur says hello? We sang songs during transition times, and Brenda read the favorite, "Big Blue Truck".

To begin the year, at the sign in table, in the Preschool class, we start with name recognition. To stimulate thinking we have a Question of the Day. Today's question is "Which apple will you like the best?" They took their name and attached it to the apple row they chose. This is teaching them to predict today for tomorrow's tasting. After they taste they will decide and place their name on which they did like. This makes the activity scientific for them. Later for math, they will count apple seeds.

At Circletime, we started our first SEEDS literacy, Repeat Read-Aloud story accompanied by the flannel story pieces. Each child held a vocabulary word which they looked and listened for. Once heard they brought it up to the flannel board. We discussed what the word definition was as they were passed out. This interactive activity helps them to take in the knowledge through an activity that feels like play. Four of the vocab words were Bb words, the letter of the week. After, I extended the story by singing, "The old Oak Tree." "One little owl said who, who. Two little owls said who, who. Three little owls said who, who, as they sat in the old oak tree. (Lift arms like branches)" Each child picks an animal and tells us the sound it makes, and we sing

Sunday School



• Luke 15:1-10 "The Lost Sheep"
• This lesson speaks to me every time. A fun game of lost and found stuffed animals, reminds us that each of us matter. We are like sheep and sometimes stray away from God. That makes God very sad, but he NEVER gives up on us. He keeps searching for us and calling to us. He wants to draw us back regardless of how lost we are. This is termed "Holy Hope".

• Luke 16:1-13 "The Dishonest Manager"
• Our lesson was a little different than the adult take-away. We learned about honesty. #1. Say your mom gave you two cookies to take to the neighbor. It is your favorite kind of cookie, and it smells so good. Your mom said after you come back you can have lunch and eat four cookies. But you are hungry now. Is it the right choice to eat one cookie on the way to the neighbors? No one will ever know. Or is it the right choice to take both cookies to the neighbor? #2. Your Grandma gave you \$10 to buy her a pie at the bake sale. After you do, you have enough money left over to buy a cool toy you saw. Do you bring the change back to grandma, or do you use the money to buy the toy? Honesty is shown by both what we say AND what we do. We always have a choice. When we are honest with the small easy things, then Jesus says we can be trusted with bigger and harder choices.

Like the Bumble Bee, make good choices:
Bee truthful; Bee honest; Bee faithful; Bee like Jesus!

NO CLASS OCT. 2

See you soon!
Faithfully, Miss Leslie



Christians are Like Pumpkins

God picks YOU from the patch,
Brings YOU in, and washes all the dirt off you.
He opens YOU up and scoops out all the yucky stuff
Including the seeds of doubt, hate and greed.
Then he carves YOU a new smiling face
And puts His light inside YOU to shine for all the world to see.

In this spirit, we can celebrate Halloween. As you begin to carve your pumpkin, read the poem below and Matthew 5:16 ("Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.") as a reminder to live our lives for God and his glory. Written by Brandy Riddle.

Dear Jesus,

As I carve my pumpkin, help me pray this prayer: Open my mind so that I can learn about You; (cut the top off the pumpkin) Take all my sin and forgive the wrong that I do. (clean out the inside) Open my eyes so Your love I will see; (cut eyes shaped like hearts) I'm sorry for times I've turned up my nose at what You've given to me. (cut a nose in the shape of a cross) Open my ears so Your word I will hear; (cut ears shaped like a Bible) Open my mouth to tell others You're near. (cut the mouth in the shape of a fish) Let Your light shine in all I say and do! (place candle inside and light it).

their idea. At the end, the oak tree becomes heavy as we inch our way to the ground, singing, "There are too many things on me."

The surprise box sharing activity teaches children to work with their parent to make 3 clues so they can be an activity leader in class. After saying each clue, they learn to call on each other when raising a hand. They think through and give ideas. Most of all they learn turn taking. All this combined with sharing. Again, learning through play. I share this so you know what curriculum is hiding in the play. The children are enjoying the activity and practicing how to be involved and engaged.

October is benevolence month for our Preschool. We continue to be unable to host the Aebleskiver Breakfast since it is a large gathering. Last year all were so generous and we really appreciated it!! This year in addition to benevolence we are going to create a new fundraiser called **Inflation Donation**. Due to the higher cost of food and cleaning supplies, we are asking for donations to the SSCDC green crate basket in the Narthex. If you are shopping, please consider putting an item in your basket for our Preschool. We thank you for participating!

INFLATION DONATION

Kleenex
Clorox Wipes
Lysol Spray
Medium Nitrile Gloves
1 Gallon Zip Bags
Honey Graham Crackers
Ritz Crackers
Welches Fruit Snacks
Goldfish
Ketchup
Kraft Macaroni & Cheese
Pirate Booty

FOR THE FREEZER

Chicken Dinos
Tater Tots
Butter

Thank you for your support!!!

September Special Benevolence Offering

St. Stephen's Child Development Center

We welcome families of all faiths and cultural backgrounds. We provide developmentally appropriate individualized curriculum, teaching to each child's learning style. We offer teacher-directed and emergent child-centered activities through play and discovery. As trained observers, we teach to each child's individual needs and interests. Our small class sizes, 1:6 teacher-child ratio, provide for a nurturing environment while building a solid academic foundation that is well-rounded and fosters love for learning. Social-emotional skills are developed through redirection and teaching problem-solving skills with an emphasis on kindness to self, others.

Each Thursday Children's Chapel service is hosted by Pastor Jim who helps the children light the altar candles, leads songs accompanied by his guitar, followed by a story from "The Beginners Bible."

September - Lutheran Campus Ministry = \$147 (as of Sept. 23)

Communities Organized for relational Power in Action

1. Thanks to the 11 delegates who attended on Sept. 20th!
2. Supervisor Candidates Assembly—October 24 on Zoom

We will invite our potential elected leaders to commit to working with us to accomplish our agenda to improve the lives of our communities

3. Leadership Training Events—November and December TBA

We will continue raising up new leaders to help us work toward more just and equitable communities that serve those in need.

4. 20th Anniversary Convention—April/May/June 2023

Provide Lunches for Volunteers Tuesday, October 25

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. [.habitatmontereybay.com/donate-a-car](https://www.habitatmontereybay.com/donate-a-car) or (877)277-4344



**Zoom
with Pastor Jim**

**check email on
Weds. for link**

**THURSDAYS 11a -12noon
& 7:30 – 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.