

Worship livestream online at www.ststephenslutheran.org
Recorded for you to view anytime.
Please participate by having your worship bulletin
and Celebrate ready from the email sent.

**Zoom Bible Studies with Pastor Jim
on Thursdays at 11am & 7:30pm.
Check your email on Wednesday for the ZOOM link.**

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

"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
Web Address: www.ststephenslutheran.org
Office Hours: Mon.—Thurs. 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

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 25, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

WELCOME AND A NOTE TO VISITORS

Welcome Visitor! We pray the service will be a blessing for you and that you will join us again soon. Thank you for worshiping with us — your presence is a joy to this faith community. Please fill out the “Worship Slip” and place it in the offering plate. We welcome children (wiggles & all), however there is a family room adjacent to the sanctuary if you prefer.

(*) Asterisk means, “Please Stand”

The Gathering

Prelude “Christmas Fantasy for Organ & Brass”

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the Holy One of Israel,
The Word made flesh,
The Power of the Most High.
† one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Gathered in the name of Jesus,
Let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Gracious God,
**In Christ Jesus you come among us
As light shining in darkness.
We confess our failure to welcome this light.
Forgive us and renew our hope,
So that we may live in the light of your grace,
And welcome the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.**

I bring you good news of great joy for all the people:
To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord.
Your sins are forgiven in † Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

Upcoming Events:

December Benevolence Offering
- Lutheran World Relief

Dec. 26 — Jan. 6 Preschool Closed

Dec. 27 Boy Scouts 7:00 pm

Dec. 28 Newsletter Collating 2:00 pm

Dec. 29 Bible Study 11:00 am

Dec. 29 Men’s Beginner A.A. 7:00 pm

Dec. 29— Jan. 2 Church Office Closed

Dec. 30 A.A. 7:00 pm

Jan. 4 & 18 Women’s Café Group

Jan. 12 MMRR Circle 10:30 am

Jan. 16 Church Council 7:00 pm

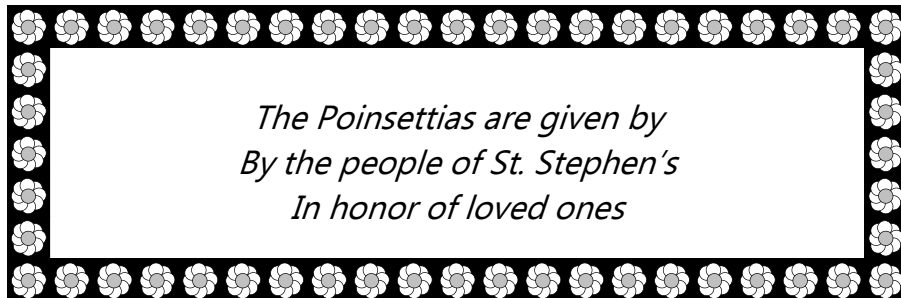
Jan. 23 CDC Board 11:30 am

Jan. 29 Annual Meeting
after 10:00 am Worship

Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM: Family of Sandie Sanders, Craig Dahl, Family of Kurt Bell, Genell Csik, Mike Homa, Mateo, Family of Mark Cronquist, Erica Curry, Rosio, Barbara Stiles, Alessandra, John W., Family of Connor Kowalski, Shiela P., Mary Smith, Tina G., Paul Cunningham, Family of Tom Dunham, Barbara Allen, Beth Stiles, Anita & Howard, The People of Ukraine, Sydnei Wilbywold, Paul Paustian, Kurt Bell, Will, Deborah Henry, Carla, Ellie, Adrian Cameron, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Kirsten Skiles, Nancy, Marisa & Isaac, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Anthony, Steve, Margot Wilson, Rose, Will, Sam, Aaron Johnson, Sal, Katarina, Taiyo, Mateo, Stephanie Jager, Parents, Healthcare workers & teachers.

LONG TERM: Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, 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.



Serving Today

"All That Brass", a Quartet

Trumpet - Nathan Lapp & Rolando Mayoral

Trombone— Anthony Plaza & Marceleno Plaza

Reader: Janet Slay

Altar Guild: Connie Cunningham

*Opening Hymn "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" Red #288

1. **Good Christian friends, rejoice**
With heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say; Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before him bow, And he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!
2. **Good Christian friends, rejoice**
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door, And we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
3. **Good Christian friends, rejoice**
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all To gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

*Greeting

*P: Grace and peace from God our Creator and God who became one of us, Jesus Christ, and may the promised gifts 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 (next pg.)
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

Celebrate pg 1.

P: Let us Pray...

C: Amen

The Word of God

First Reading Isaiah 52:7-10 Celebrate pg. 1

Second Reading Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12) Celebrate pg. 2

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**

*Blessing

P: May Christ, who by his incarnation
Has filled us with grace and truth,
Give you peace this Christmas and always.
Almighty God, Father † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

C: Amen

Closing Hymn

"Angels We Have Heard on High" #289

**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***

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be?
Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo
*Gloria in excelsis Deo***

**Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the new-born King
Gloria in excelsis Deo
*Gloria in excelsis Deo***

*Dismissal

P: Glory to God in the highest!
C: Peace to God's people on earth!
P: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.
C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

"Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" Comstock
"Let it Snow" Styne / Cahn 1945

Holy Communion

Visitors: You are welcome to come forward to receive Communion as part of this church family! Children are welcome to come and receive a special blessing if they have never communed. Wine (red) or grape juice (white) are both available.

Communion Hymn “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 Blessing

P: May this Holy Communion from our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace now and forever,

C: **Amen.**

*Communion Prayer

P: God our Redeemer,
 You have fed us at this table
 With gifts of grace, truth, and life.
 As you have gathered us in joy,
 Send us forth as messengers of your peace.
 Make us shine with the good news of your glory,
 Born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

The Sending

G l o — r i a . . . in excelsis Deo

G l o — r i a . . . in excelsis Deo

P: The Holy Gospel acc. To St. John. **C: Glory to you, O God.**

*Gospel Reading John 1:1-14 Celebrate pg. 3

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

Sermon

Pastor James P. Lapp

*Hymn of the Day “Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming” #272

**Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As seers of old have sung,
It came, a flow'r so bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.**

**Isaiah had foretold it,
The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
She bore to us a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.**

**This flow'r, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death he saves us
And lightens ev'ry load.**

**O Savior, child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, king of glory,
Who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length, we pray,
To the bright courts of heaven
And into endless day.**

*Passing of the Peace

P: May the peace of God be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The Communion Meal

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

Special Music “Ding, Dong! Merrily on High” (French Carol)

Offering Song “O Come, All Ye Faithful” Red #283 vs. 1

**O come, all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold him
Born the King of angels**

REFRAIN

**O come, let us adore him
O come, let us adore him
O come, let us adore him
Christ the Lord**

*Offering Prayer

P: God with us,

**C: You came as a baby to a manger.
You slept on straw and greeted shepherds.
You come again in bread and wine.
Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things.
And then, through these gifts,
Help us to bless the lives of others
In the strength of your holy name. 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 our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

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**

Invitation to Communion

P: Joy to the world! The Lord is come.
Let every heart receive Our Savior.