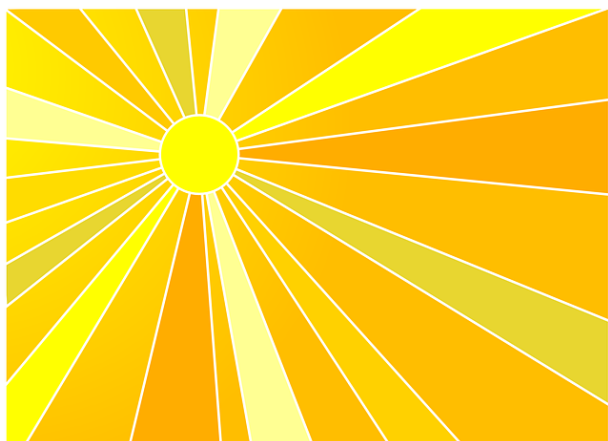


St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



SUN

April 2023

Holy Week

A livestream/recorded service will be offered on our website so you can observe this meaningful and reflective time of preparation for the Joy of Easter.

Palm Sunday
April 2 at 10am



Maundy Thurs. — April 6 at 11am & 7pm
Good Friday — April 7 at 7pm

Easter Sunday Celebration
April 9 at 10am

“All that Brass” Quartet



He Lives!

Bring Flowers for the Easter Cross

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
Jay Johnston, Beth Stiles, and Iva Tracey
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

A message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Dear sibling in Christ,

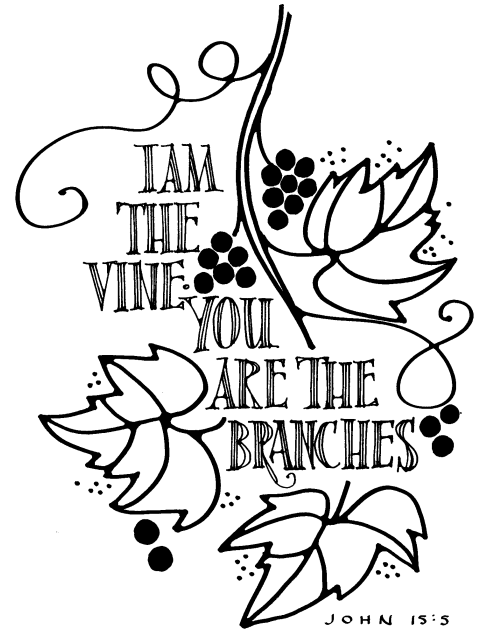
We have seen many changes throughout the years and throughout the world. Sometimes we've been left yearning for the days when things didn't feel so complicated. Other times, we have seen something new happen and have asked, "Why did this take so long?" The church has been through our own changes as well. Some of these have left us wishing for simpler times while others have us waiting for even more to come about.

But, dear church, God still is unchanging. God's love is still the foundation on which the church was built. While we have seen many changes, both in the world and at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the eternal love of God and the good news that dwells with Christ's death and resurrection continue to provide hope for everyone. This is why our mission remains steadfast, whether that is through our traditional mission work in places near and far or from new ventures and visions that encourage us to think of different ways to reach even more people.

We are all answering the call to continue to do good work with the help of your support, whether that is through your resources, your time or your talents. The writer of Hebrews reminds us: "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" (13:16). That could not be truer in the work we have been doing in each expression of the church. Your gifts continue to benefit the good work of spreading the good news throughout your communities, your synods and the whole church. We are all answering the call to continue to do good work with the help of your support, whether that is through your resources, your time or your talents.

I am grateful for your generous support of each expression of the church. God calls all of us to continue to do the good work, and you continue to answer that call. We also continue to join you in that call and will remain true to looking toward God's unchanging promise. There is still much change and learning that will come before us, but God's steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

In Christ ~



Budget Information · February 2023

	February		YTD		
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Net
Contribution Income	\$ 9,838	\$ 11,600	\$ 21,998	\$ 22,867	\$ -869
Facility Use Income *	2,138	1,633	3,450	3,267	183
Investment Income	4,386	5,000	12,110	10,000	2,110
Total Income	\$ 16,362	\$ 18,233	\$ 37,558	\$ 36,134	\$ 1,424
Expenses	\$ 18,280	\$ 20,098	\$ 39,001	\$ 40,196	\$ -1,195
Net	\$ -1,918	\$ -1,865	\$ -1,443	\$ -4,063	\$ 2,620

* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month (when paid) + Misc. Income.

Contribution income for February was below the budget.

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

Benevolence Donations (Individual and Church)

2023 through February			
Community Bridges	\$230	Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$40
Association of Faith Communi- ties	\$250	SS CDC	\$0
SS Scholarships	\$0	El Salvador Sister Parish	\$0
Habitat for Humanity	\$0	Lutheran World Relief	\$0
Mt. Cross	\$0	ELCA Synod	\$0
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$175	COPA	\$0
World Hunger	\$0	Lutheran Immigration	\$0
CLU/PLTS	\$0	Grey Bears	\$0
Total	\$ 695		
2021 Benevolence Target (10%)	\$14,105		
% of Target	5%		

Special funds for the Musical Instruments (Organ & Piano), Hearing Impaired and Solar Electricity

	February	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Musical Instruments	\$ 70		\$346
Hearing Impaired Equip	\$0	\$395	
Solar Electric Payback	\$197		\$8,493

Church Council Highlights

(meets 2nd Tuesday at 6:30pm in the church or/and Zoom.)

3/14/23 submitted by Shelly Barker, President

1) Resumption of Lenten suppers after cancellation of shared meals due to COVID in the past two year was met with enthusiasm as attendance has been 15-17 people for the initial weeks.

2) Association of Faith Communities (AFC) held a retreat in early March and there is enthusiasm among Board Members, including Pastor Jim, to seek sustained funding to maintain their services for people experiencing homelessness. These services include the Faith Community Shelter and Safe Parking Program as well as a roving shower trailer. AFC will likely be seeking a full time Executive Director in the near future and the Board is hoping to approach the County Board of Supervisors to seek sustaining funding to for their programs. Their shelter programs have a remarkably high rate of success for clients finding and retaining stable housing placements. Look out for announcements about an AFC Gala fundraising dinner which will also feature a keynote speaker along with live and silent auctions.

3) We discussed our worship practices noting that offering wine in individual glasses each week for communion is labor-intensive. The group decided to resume the practice of intinction (dipping communal bread into a shared wine/grape juice chalice). Noting the varied level of comfort among members, the plan is to purchase more sealed individual wine/bread containers and resume intinction when those supplies arrive so as to have that option available for those who feel more comfortable receiving communion in that manner.

4) COPA (Communities Organized for relational Power in Action) is inviting participation in a series of planning sessions to finalize details of a 20th Anniversary Convention. Please save the date: Saturday, May 20th, 5-7pm at the Golden State Theatre (417 Alvarado St., Monterey, CA 93940)

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

We were so grateful and blessed to receive the donation from the Glenn and Barbara Johnson estate! It has helped us realize better compensation for our dedicated teachers. It has also fulfilled a BIG Wishlist item for our playground.

For 11 years we have been replacing fabric shade covers that need a new shade each year due to heat and wind. Pastor Jim suggested that now is the time for us to consider the 14X12 permanent wooden shade with a metal roof. He saw one at Costco. We look forward to installing a plaque in honor of Glenn and Barbara and their generosity to our Preschool on our new gazebo shade. The preschool was a long-term dream for both of them and I hope they are smiling down on us as we share in their kindness and continue to fulfill the dream.

SSCDC Stewards of the Month Pastor Jim & Kyle Lapp

The permanent shade structure arrived! All 750 pounds of it in 3 boxes. Pastor Jim and Kyle immediately got to work on the assembly which took 3 days. There were so many steps in the directions and they patiently and efficiently assembled this for us before the next rain storm. John Hopping helped out on the third day as they raised the roof. Not only was the structure a gift but so was the experience of having Pastor Jim and Kyle on campus together to complete this task.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!!

The new shade structure really offers so much protection from the elements. I feel like I am on vacation when I sit underneath it. Not only is it functional it looks so majestic on our playground.

Tut, Tut, it looks like rain! Add in a time change and we are at our best trying to keep California weather children entertained. Teacher Sam made an obstacle course in Fellowship Hall by using colored masking tape. My favorite was the tables put together with dancing ribbons dangling down in a few rows. It gave the feeling of going through a car wash without the water. Brenda, Rosio, and Sam are really putting in the extra fun

while entertaining and teaching our children.

Along with acting out Jan Brett's, "The Mitten", we did a repeat read aloud of "The Bear Snores On." This means each child receives a vocabulary word with the picture drawn next to it. While they listen to the story they look and listen for the word and bring it up to the felt board during the story. Adding movement to literacy help integrate the experience for each child to active learning. The two stories parallel in having the same animal creatures in them.

Our Easter Egg Hunt was March 31. This is a fun event each year and families enjoy coming to watch the fun. We will be closed for Spring Break during Holy Week, returning on April 10th.

Santa Cruz office of Education has included private schools as a group to receive Incident Command Training. This is the same course they are doing with all public schools. These days it is hard to plan for one scenario that requires quick thinking. It is a process of mindset. An incident occurs and the Director must be able to direct others to address the situation as it presents itself. Usually there is little time to plan because response to intruders, natural disasters, or gas leaks, to name a few, warrants individual response. Even though we have a plan which includes evacuation, it may not be what we need at the time of incidence. What if someone is absent, or emotional, or injured? A couple of retired police officers are doing an excellent job to prepare our minds for flexibility, clarity, and action. This includes how to prepare before, be proactive during, and debriefing and preparing after. The group collaboration exercises show us that we can move forward in a crisis if necessary. I have been meeting with about 60 local directors via Zoom for three years beginning with COVID updates. It has been fun to meet these educators in person that we have only met on zoom. There is a great community of leaders out there taking care of our children in Santa Cruz County. It hasn't been easy, but we all have managed to keep things going through many challenging times.

Our big challenge now is keeping enrollment full as so many children have the option of transitional kindergarten. This is removing a bulk of 4-year-olds from our programs. I was approached by some to find out what we are doing. We have always offered a 3 to 4 aged combo class which serves us well during these changing times.

Have a blessed Easter. Kathy Berens



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Boundless

Stories of Christ's Abounding Love & Grace

So much inspiration! Global Mission—Rewriting Narratives in Nicaragua, Fund for Leaders—New Connections in Christ, World Hunger—Hatching a Stronger Future, Young Adults—Gathered Together. See www.elca.org/assets for complete Winter edition.

“I can proudly say I am now able to run successful projects without fear of failure. My family lacks nothing, I have all that I once dreamt of having, and I am a proud mother.” These are the words of Rumbidzai Tomu, a woman in the Mwenezi District of Southern Zimbabwe who is involved with the Integrated Rural Development Project of Lutheran Development Services in Zimbabwe. She always had ambitions of providing her family with a better life. With help from LDS she accomplished her goal.

In 2017, LDS established garden and fishery projects in Rumbidzai's community, giving her and others the opportunity to generate a consistent income. Two years later, though, their water source dried up and the projects would not continue. She was again without an income. In 2021 they submitted a proposal to LSS for a new project that wasn't as reliant on water: the poultry project.

As the poultry project excelled, sufficient rainfall came to replenish the community's water source, enabling Rumbidzai to bring back the garden project and add vegetable sales to her streams of income. She also participates in a community income-saving-and-lending group, which increases the investment capital of everyone in the group.

“The money I obtained from selling vegetables, I multiplied it through income saving and lending and then used it to build the chicken housing.” Her aspirations didn't stop with her chickens and garden. With her savings, she opened a small shop. Her husband, who can now afford travel documents, imports items from South Africa and Mozambique to sell in the store. She also bought pigs to add another source of income.

MaryMartha / Ruth Rebecca

Thursday, April 13
10:30 am in the Fireside Rm
All women are welcome!

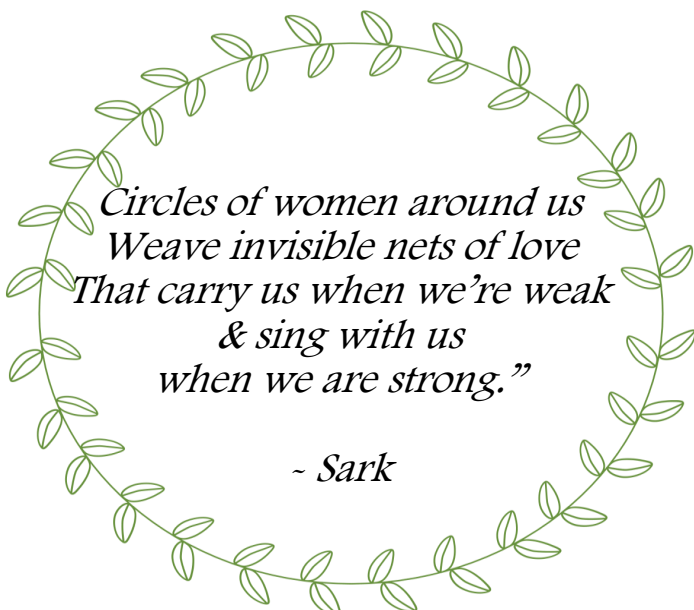
What we will be doing:

Discussing a new name for our "new" group
Discussing what to do with our money
Beginning work on the Pillowcase Project

Our Purpose: To meet for social time, to provide support for our Church, to extend outreach to our community.

“ Magic Pillowcases” for the Habitat Children. We will be assembling colorful and decorative pillowcases to give to the children in the Habitat for Humanity homes in Santa Cruz. We have received approval for a Thrivent Action Team project to cover the expenses for fabric and supplies. Join us and we will show you how easy it is!

Not a sewer? Not a problem! You can match up fabrics, cut, pin or iron. Got a question? See Tina Gates or give her a call at 760-992-4804.



Women's Café Group

Wednesday, April 19 @ 6:00 pm
Devotions , Potluck Dinner
& Fellowship

More info 476-4700

Sunday School

Psalm 12:1-8 **The Lord Watches Over You**

The Lord has promised to always be with us, and we know that we can trust Him for anything AND everything we need in our lives. Though we don't see God with our eyes, we know that He is there. The children shared scary challenges that developed into cool outcomes, Thank You God!

We look forward to releasing the "Alleluia" from it's burial in the treasure chest. These kids were so diligent with their art work, that their hands actually hurt. Praise the Lord!



Easter is transforming! We creep out of Lents darkness and shed our dull cocoon. Then our lives can be fulfilled. With God's help we become beautiful creatures. We turn away from bad choices and focus on those good gifts that God has given us: LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, and GENTLENESS.

May we cherish our child butterflies as they embody this hope and share their newly blinged wings! Now with some goofy Easter spirit, I'll remind you:

"It's not about the Bunny, it's about the Lamb"

&

"No Bunny loves you like Jesus"!

Special thanks to Miss Kim for her artistic help & supply donations and to Kent for handling our sweet Fly by music.

Faithfully, Miss Leslie

Provide Lunches for Volunteers Tuesday, April 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 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.



Oblate Ceremony Reminisces

By Steven Hendrickson

On February 18, I became an Oblate at New Camaldoli Hermitage in Big Sur. What follows is a mini glossary to help in understanding:

Oblate- one who is an associate of monks in a monastery. The monastic practice of community, meditation, and Lectio Divina are followed. Silence and stillness are emphasized in a life lived in the world.

Camaldolese- the Order that the monks and oblates are part of. In addition, they are part of a larger group, the Order of St. Benedict.

Lectio Divina- a prayerful, slow, meditative reading of the Scriptures, usually the Gospel. The reading is repeated three times. The first time, one listens. The second time, a word or phrase is selected, the third time, each person reflects upon what the Spirit is saying to them. Silence is kept in between each reading and sharing is optional.

Threefold Good- the central tenets of the Camaldolese Charism (an extraordinary power given by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church). These tenets are community, silence, and solitude, and sharing one's gifts.

Personal Rule of Daily Life Practice- a way of being using monastic practices in living a clearly articulated lifestyle. It states what the practical life looks like as one lives in the world. Personal context and responsibilities are woven into a spiritual whole.

With God's grace and help, I am now a Camaldolese Oblate. The ceremony went well, and much love and beauty were ever present. Fr. Cyprian and Fr. Steve Coffey were very gracious and I remembered my response to the promise questions. Seven others were witnesses: family, friends, and my Pastor Jim Lapp and spouse, Leslie. The monks were very supportive and positive. Afterwords, we enjoyed an amazing picnic lunch overlooking the ocean. A visit to the Bookstore framed an ending to our time at the Hermitage.

On an inner level, the vow marks an auspicious moment in my spiritual journey. Living in the Threefold Good and a Personal Rule of Daily Life Practice will keep me in union with the monks and all of you. It's all sinking in, slowly and beautifully. Thanks for your love and support!

May God's grace and peace be with you . . .



Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

April—Habitat for Humanity

Our Mission

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

Our Vision

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

How It Works

Habitat for Humanity is not a giveaway program. Families purchase our homes with a down payment, sweat equity, and an affordable mortgage.

Homeowner families are chosen according to their need, their ability to repay the no-profit, zero-interest mortgage, and their willingness to work in partnership with Habitat. Each Habitat homeowner contributes 500 hours in sweat equity towards the construction of a Habitat home.

Who It Benefits

Habitat for Humanity is a community-based organization, and we strive to make a positive impact on as many people as possible.

There is more to our program than just providing affordable home ownership for low and very low income families. Partner families attend workshops on budgeting, conflict resolution, home maintenance, repair, and landscaping. Our partner families acquire skills and knowledge that will enable them to establish a foundation upon which they can gain economic stability and build a brighter future for their children.

Our volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds with a massive variety of skills. Anyone can come and put decades of knowledge to work building affordable housing, or come in with no experience and learn how to construct a home from the ground up.

March—St. Stephen's Scholarship Fund
\$60 (as of March 28)



Sister Parish News

2023 Prayer Children - After several months of me saying "stay tuned", *we have received the 2023 list of scholarship recipients!* The scholarship committee in Guillermo Ungo has been hard at work preparing the list for this school year.

You should have been contacted either by me or by email. Please fill out and send in your Commitment Card with the donation of your choice. Once again we are asking for an additional \$50 to fund a gift basket, in lieu of you, the sponsor, providing a gift bag to be transported to El Salvador. There are still students without sponsors, so if you are not sponsoring a student, please contact me.

2022 Delegation - A favorite activity on delegations is the "craft project" with the children, held in each of our communities. Here is a photo of part of the activity in El Pilar last November.



On behalf of the Board of Directors for Santa Cruz al Salvador, thank you, members of St. Stephen's, for your contributions and sponsoring students. We cannot do our work without our donors.

Your gifts make a difference!

-Kent Madsen

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 4-1 Joel Hurttgam
4-5 Evey Colclough
4-8 Robbin Heppe
4-11 Anne Johnston
4-13 Tempest Abler
4-13 Gary Roberts
4-16 Manny Travers
4-26 Maya Gipson
4-29 Nelleke Meerman
- 4-6 Alex & Kirstin Csik Hughes
4-8 Stephen & Kim Cappelloni
4-13 Nick & Becky Judd
4-24 John & Rebecca Wickham
4-29 Hilding & Dorothy



SHORT TERM: Sandi Csik, Family of Gwyn Larson, Joel Hurttgam, Jacob & Family, Barbara Hansen, Judith Alvarado, Family of Kirsten Skiles, Carla Brown, Keith, Sandy, Tom Harris, Levi & Alexandria, Norman's Father, friends in Bakersfield, Gary Toops, Donna Kemper, Lisa & Beau, Craig Dahl, Family of Kurt Bell, Genell Csik, Barbara Bartee, Mike Homa, Mateo, Family of Mark Cronquist, Barbara

Stiles, Family of Connor Kowalski, Shiela P., Mary Smith, Paul Cunningham, Barbara Allen, Anita & Howard, Sydnei Wilbywold, Paul Paustian, Deborah Henry, Carla, Ellie, Adrian Cameron, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, 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: April McCalmont, Marty Nehring, Miller Mouw, Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, 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, People of Ukraine, 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.

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
March 29, 2023**

**POST OFFICE:
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

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

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