St. Stephen's Lutheran Church



May 2023

20th Anniversary COPA Convention

Saturday, May 20th 5-7 pm

Golden State Theatre (417 Alvarado St. Monterey)

1,000 people will gather from across the region to celebrate COPA's 20th Anniversary, lay out organizing strategies on key issues (such as

housing, Pajaro flooding, and workforce development) affecting local families, and engage with elected officials around these concerns.

The convention is an opportunity for our diverse communities to come together in pursuit of justice. Through sharing our stories and traditions, building power together and celebrating our victories we demonstrate how working together brings benefits to all.



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: Pre-School Director: Custodian:	Leslie Lapp Kathy Berens 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

From Tastor Jim



"...to live among God's faithful people, To hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ Through word and deed, To serve all people, following the example of Jesus, And to strive for justice and peace in all the earth."

Thus ends the description of what all Christians everywhere are to dedicate their lives to in response to God's loving grace in Holy Baptism.

We recently heard these words again at our glorious Easter Sunday worship service when little Aedan Csik-Hughes was baptized. And we will hear them again when our dear friend from St. Stephen's Senior Housing, James San Miguel, affirms his baptism and makes St. Stephen's Lutheran Church his local faith community.

And I am calling on all of us to take these words very seriously by attending the COPA 20th Anniversary Convention on May 20th.

It is not often that I would think of requiring something for our church, but this is one of those times. It is because all of those wonderful words above will come to life as we gather with so many other churches from so many other denominations and local communities.

That doesn't happen very often, but it certainly will that day!

That last part especially will accomplished as we engage in some public ministry that will be striving to create a better for us to live together on the Central Coast. Housing for those who have lower incomes, protections for renters, Pajaro valley flood relief for the poorest among us, and better paying jobs that will lift people out of poverty are some of the ways we will seek justice as we work with our elected officials. Please plan on joining over 800 others for this special day!

	March		YTD		
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Net
Contribution Inc.	\$ 11,798	\$ 11,600	\$ 33,796	\$34,467	\$ -671
Facility Use Inc. *	3,724	1,633	7,174	4,900	2,274
Investment Income	4,385	5,000	16,495	15,000	1,495
Total Income	\$ 19,907	\$ 18,233	\$ 57,465	\$54,367	\$3,098
Expenses	\$ 21,739	\$ 20,847	\$60,739	\$ 61,044	\$ -305
Net	\$ -1,8328	\$-12,615	\$-3,274	\$ -6,677	\$3,403

Budget Information · March 2023

* Includes Child Development Center facility use @ \$300/month (when paid) + Misc. Income. Contribution income for March was just above 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 March			
Community Bridges	\$230	Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$67
Assoc. of Faith Communities	\$1,280	SS CDC	\$1,050
SS Scholarships	\$145	El Salvador Sister Parish	\$0
Habitat for Humanity	\$0	Lutheran World Relief	\$0
Mt. Cross	\$0	ELCA Synod	\$250
Am. Fdn. Suicide Prevention	\$175	СОРА	\$500
World Hunger	\$0	Lutheran Immigration	\$0
CLU/PLTS	\$0	Grey Bears	\$0
	Total	\$ 3,697	
2021 Benevolence Target (10%)		\$14,105	
% of Target		26%	

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

	March	Reserve	Needed to Payoff
Musical Instruments	\$ 62		\$284
Hearing Impaired Equip	\$0	\$395	
Solar Electric Payback	\$274		\$8,219

Assoc. Faith Communities — A Major Upgrade

Meet Sandy, a longtime Santa Cruz resident who is 62 years old, and who became unhoused when her mom was moved into senior housing. Sandy has been living in her car on and off for over 10 years. She adopted a female rescue dog named "Missing" as an emotional support animal and companion. The two of them have been enrolled in SafeSpaces for over three years. During the "Rapid Rehousing Wave" and pandemic, Sandy did not qualify for an emergency housing voucher. She has been on the Section 8 voucher waitlist for 10 years. Her ageing motor vehicle developed problems that were too costly to repair, and the AFC SafeSpaces host site embraced her as their own.

Earlier this month something unexpected and wonderful happened. At another AFC member church, during a Sunday service homily, the preacher mentioned all the different ways we can help those who are unhoused. One of the examples they gave was of someone donating their RV to an unhoused person. A woman from the congregation named Rose was listening in on Zoom. She said "Suddenly it was like a light bulb went off over my head!" She reached out to the preacher and said she had an RV she would like to donate. The preacher emailed me (Fr. Joseph) from SafeSpaces, inquiring if we could make use of such a gift. I said "You bet!" I immediately thought of Sandy.

The next day, in the rain, I was driving Sandy to meet Rose at her RV. I helped the two of them sign over the title from Rose to Sandy. This was such a lovely, grace filled moment. Sandy was speechless with tears of joy. "Now I can have my granddaughter over and we can color and do projects on this table, in my home! And Missing can lay on the bed! And I have a stove, and refrigerator, and a heater!" Grace upon grace, indeed. Later Sandy said "My life could not be any better right now, I am so grateful to you and Rose. I have a major upgrade in my life because of AFC and my family is super happy also."

As you're reading this, maybe you know of someone (possibly yourself!) who has a motor vehicle in good condition that they're not using. You might consider giving someone in our programs a "major upgrade" in their life. Rose was relieved not to have to worry about the low-mileage RV she was no longer using, paying to store it. She said "I feel like a huge weight has been lifted." And she made two new friends: Sandy and Missing. Thank you, Rose! (More AFC, see page 8)

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.

Child Development Center

Teacher Appreciation week is celebrated May 8 -12. This gives me the opportunity to lift up our three excellent teachers. We are so blessed to have experienced, kind, and creative teachers to be with us each day. Brenda Hansen makes two-year old children feel at home and fosters their development through age 3 in her classroom. She supports them in social and emotional comfort and growth that sets their foundation for learning. Social emotional development continues in our preschool class along with plenty of learning through playful experiences. Sam DeCoster provides kinesthetic activities that help those who wiggle learn while they wiggle. She provides fun Circletime learning activities that capture the interests of the children. Rosio Adame has infused our program with so many new art projects that are so darling. This is just the beginning of what they provide each day as they teach, potty train, provide routine, and love to our students. I am proud of the caring community we have built here between parents, children, grandparents, teachers, and all our St. Stephen's friends like John, Leslie, the school board, and you! The highlight of the week continues to be Pastor Jim's Chapel. It is so joyful, and we appreciate his teaching this most important, weekly experience.

In May, there are a few mark the calendar events. We will be wishing Tanner farewell as he will graduate early May 4th and his last day is May 5th. We will really miss our friend Tanner, but he is ready for the next step and we are so proud of him!

SSCDC Graduation Chapel will be May 25, at 10:15. Save the date if you have a graduate or want to experience one of our sweetest Chapel services of the year. Waylon, Elsie, Everett, Selene, Jack B., and Beau are our graduates. June Summer Break will follow May 29 – June 2. Children will return to summer scheduling through August.

We are looking forward to our new class photo for 2022/2023 school year. We had 100% participation, and it will be displayed in the hallway this month.

This month we had our first Family Culture Share. This is what I shared with families through weekly email along with pictures: We welcomed Maia (Ethan's mother who is from Germany) to our classroom to treat us to Ethan's culture share. She cooked sausages that were the best I have ever enjoyed. Her German potato salad was sooo delicious. Plus, Haribo gummy bears. She explained that the German gummies taste a little different as they have more fruit juice in them. While the children ate their food, she shared the books that are much like our "I Spy" books but in German, filled with German custom. For example, "DieMaus" is a popular mouse character on television. He appears after commercials and before the shows. The children enjoyed looking through the books. Thank you so much Maia and Ethan for sharing this with us. It was fun and delicious!!

This is the time of year that enrollment begins to shift around. Same families have a different summer schedule and some leave to enjoy summer together before Kindergarten or Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK). UPK has taken a chunk of our students enrolling all four-year-old children into the program. Fortunately, we have some staying with us for next year, although enough are leaving to feel the impact. We have had a waitlist with many names on it. Some changed their minds, already recently enrolled or want their child home longer. Others are not age ready until Nov - January 2024. If you know anyone looking for a Preschool, please recommend us as we have openings for September.

...What you didn't just see as I was writing this. I heard crying out on the bench. I went out and recognized that one of my friends needed some quiet hugs. Miss Sam brought him to me. I find that for some children who are upset, talking is the last thing they want to do. So, we just sat and hugged quietly as I let the child know to ask me for what they need. In this situation, 20 minutes of quiet hugs ands a bit of arm tickling brought my friend back to his center. I enjoy hugs too, which is what makes my job so special!

Last but not least, on Monday, May 1st, we will be wrapping our Maypole as we do annually. This represents the celebration of spring thaw. We are so grateful for all the water being replenished in California, and we are ready for spring activities. The garden is blooming with fragrant Sweet Pea flowers and fruiting strawberries. We sent onions home last week with the children. We have a volunteer pumpkin plant and planted two cherry tomato plants. It is fun to choose some veggies to take home, and others to just pick off the vine and eat. We will add more plants soon. The children LOVE their garden. Looks like we may also be successful in growing Mammoth sunflowers from seed as we watch them sprout.

Happy Mother's Day and enjoy this beautiful weather!

Warmly, Kathy Berens

Concert to End Homelessness May 6 at 7 pm United Methodist Church

Listen to great music for a great cause! Jazz the Dog, Madrigal & strange, Joe Chaplain, Colin Hannon, Nick Royal and Linc Russin. Tickets \$25 / \$35 door All proceeds go directly to AFC programs.



A.F.C.'S Annual Gala 6 pm on May 13 Holy Cross

Join us for dinner, drinks and fun as We celebrate AFC's work to end homelessness.

Let's celebrate and support another year of our collective work supporting our unhoused neighbors! Tickets are \$50 each or \$1000 to sponsor a table of 10. Register on line www.afcsantacruz.org

MaryMartha / Ruth Rebecca

POTLUCK SALAD LUNCHEON

Thursday, May 11 11:00 am in the Fireside Rm (note later start time) Bring a salad with enough to share

All women are welcome!

Women's Café Group

Wednesdays, May 3 & 17 @ 6:00 pm

Devotions , Potluck Dinner & Fellowship

More info 476~4700

Circles of women around us Weave invisible nets of love That carry us when we're weak & sing with us when we are strong."

Sunday School



Holy Communion Is . . . (From "God's Table of Grace" 1977) REMEMBERING: Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." We remember Jesus' life, death, and resurrection—all Holy Communion is the body and blood of Jesus

he has done for us. Holy Communion is the body and blood of Jesus.

GIVING THANKS: When we remember what Jesus has done for us, we can hardly help but thank him. We have nothing to give him in return but our thanks. One of the names for Communion is *Eucharist*, which means "thanksgiving".

CONFESSING: We confess or admit that we are sinful and that our sins made it necessary for Jesus to die.

RECEIVING FORGIVENESS: Jesus said, "Drink of it, all of you. This cup is my blood which is shed for you for the remission (forgiveness) of sins." By inviting us to eat the sacrament Jesus assures us that his suffering and death were for us personally and for our forgiveness.

GROWING: We eat food to grow. As we eat at the communion table Jesus comes to us to help us grow stronger, wiser, and more loving.

JOYFUL CELEBRATING: In Communion we celebrate the joy Jesus has brought and will continue to bring to our lives.

BEING TOGETHER: That's really what "communion" means. We're together with Jesus in a mysterious but very real way. And we're together with the other followers of Jesus who receive the same gifts from him—like one big family.

TELLING: By taking part, we are telling each other and the world—and God too—that we believe in Jesus, and are willing to serve him forever.

BEING STRENGTHENED TO SERVE GOD: God doesn't give us gifts simply for our own personal enjoyment. God wants us to use them in helping others. When we go to Communion, God strengthens us so that we may better serve other people for him.

A TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE: Jesus often spoke of heaven as a great feast. As we enjoy this meal with him now, we look forward to the time we will be enjoying his presence forever in heaven.

Provide Lunches for Volunteers Tuesday, May 23

4th Tuesday of each month @ 10:30

Sign up in the narthex or call the church office if you can provide a lunch item: sandwiches, fruit, chips, or cookies.



Join us for a tour of our Live Oak development. A future home owner will walk you through her soon-to-be-finished home and share what homeown-ership means for her family. Www.habitatmontereybay.org



Zoom with Pastor Jim

> check email on Weds. for link

THURSDAYS 11a -12noon & 7:30 - 8:30 pm

For the next several months, we will be using the biblical resource:

"Manna and Mercy"

A brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe by Rev. Daniel Erlander (the same author as "The Tales of the Pointlesss People", which we used in Lent).

Anyone can join in at atny point. Each chapter stands alone, buti s also connectedas part of the whole story of the Bible. Copies are abvailable at church for \$10 each. Or it can be mailed to you.





"A New Birth Into A Living Hope"

1 Peter 1:3-9

By Steven Hendrickson

The Second Sunday of Easter Reading is a wonderful statement about the presence of Christ in our lives, and frames the Easter message as a whole teaching. It is highly recommended to reference often as we navigate challenging times. The promised presence of Christ and our own "outcome of faith" is the very best news one can receive. If others around us sense and know that we are a "new creation" in Christ, they will want what we have.

So, what does it mean to be reborn in Christ? We are utterly changed in our spirit, soul, and body. We move beyond "belief" into a knowing, sensate awareness of Presence. Great love, calmness, and peace are experiential and not just an idea. We are guided, led, and filled with the Holy Spirit. And the most wonderful aspect of all: the reality and genuineness are very observable, and continues in our lives, no matter what happens. Our response is one of thankful praise and a desire to do God's Will beyond all else. We live a life of devotion until we merge with the Eternal Now, our bodily transition to be with God forever!

Many of us have glimpses of what is written in this Epistle. The invitation of Jesus is to experience this Presence as the most important activity in our lives. Above money, consumerism, power, and every other conceivable "good" that we desire and chase after. Lastly, a person who is a "new creation" in Christ will act and look different than most we encounter in society. The love, cultural values, and lived experience are noticeably deeper in those who know Christ intimately. Great souls such as Martin Luther King Jr., Oscar Romero, and Cesar Chavez, are examples. Of course, they weren't beyond sin, but their love of Christ has changed the world. Let's celebrate new life in Jesus Christ and be changed, now and forever.

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

Monthly Special <u>Benevolence Offering</u>

Mt. Cross Lutheran Outdoor Ministries

"Providing profound experiences in God's creation"

Summer Camp Men's Retreat Women's Retreat: September Elementary Retreat: October Middle School Retreat: November UFO (UnFinished Objects) Retreat: November Advent Retreat: December

(**April** – Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay = 35 as of 4/22)

Mt Cross has brought so much joy to our young campers for over 65 years. Many of our children at St Stephen's have grown in their faith enjoying this outdoor ministry right in our backyard. Many of those children are grown adults who are leading our church right now, including Renee Rice, Jay Johnston and Nathan Lapp! Mt. Cross thanks you for your continued prayers and support, especially as they emerge from the consequences of the pandemic. We are currently Hiring. Visit "mtcross.org" for info / registration, and job descriptions / apply.

Memorial Day Work Weekend May 26-28

All are invited to volunteer for a weekend of service, fellowship, & fun!

- Craft Cabin organizing
- Madrone Bathroom Repairs
- Sand Volleyball Court Maintenance
- Dining Hall Bathroom Repairs
- Cabin Deck Repairs
- Trail Maintenance
- Cabin Deep Cleaning

Enjoy a campfire, s'mores, and worship, while giving back to the place we love. Together, we can keep Mt. Cross beautiful! RSVP on website.



Sister Parish News

Prayer Child Sponsorships - Thank you to those who have committed to support your prayer children for another year and have made the associated donations. As of this writing, donations are still coming in; if you haven't sent yours, there's still time. We would also like you to write a short letter to your prayer child and include a photo.

Please send them to:

Marian Langdon 220 Horizon Way Aptos, CA 95003

Or, you may give them to me on Sundays.

As of this writing, there are 6 children that still need a sponsor. If you want to sponsor a child, please let me know. Thank you!

2023 Delegation?

Planning has begun for a delegation this year. It will probably be in November, but the dates have not yet been decided. Please let me know if you are interested in going to El Salvador. Last year's flight cost \$590 roundtrip, so you have some idea. The in-country cost is generally less than \$500. Visiting El Salvador is a life-changing experience!



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 such as the latrines in El Pilar, scholarships in Guillermo Ungo, or University Scholarships. *Your gifts make a difference!*

Peace in Christ,

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

5-3 Margaret Schraft 5-25 **Trent Hopping Elke Spires** 5-29 5-5 Kathleen Allen 5-25 Nancy Loya 5-31 Scott Ruble Andrew Davis 5-5 Kent Madsen 5-26 5-6 Cheryl Curry **Epimenio Valencia** 5-26 5-24 Paul & Leah 5-6 **Renee Robe** 5-27 Mark Brouse Powers 5-7 **Ross Johnston** 5-27 Tyleigha **Epimenio & Emily** 5-26 5-10 Julie Mouw **Brouse- Jones** Valencia 5 - 135-27 Conrad Laufer **Barbara Rice** 5-15 Jesse McMilin 5-27 Mary Robe Belated wishes to 5 - 20Aria Bartee 5-28 Mitch Ronning Robert Alvarado 4-24 5-24 **Travis Awe** 5-29 lla Mendoza



SHORT TERM: Sandi Csik, Jacob & Family, Family of Marj Young, Barbara Hansen, Tom Harris, Barbara Allen, Marshall Bautz, Carla Brown, Kathy, Family of Gwyn Larson, Joel Hurttgam, Jacob & Family, Judith Alvarado, Family of Kirsten Skiles, Carla Brown, Keith,

Sandy, Levi & Alexandrea, 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., Paul Cunningham, Anita & Howard, Sydnei Wilbywold, Paul Paustian, Deborah Henry, 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, 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.

Ready In-p	U	(Prin ar
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ST. STEPHEN'S WORSHIP SERVICE

y for your participation each Sunday at 10am. person, Live Streamed on our website, or as a recording.

Go to www.stephenslutheran.org

it 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 April 27, 2023

PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

DATED MATERIAL

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