

HAPPY
SUMMER

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

FAMILY - FRIENDS
VACATION
FUN & RELAXATION !

August 4 @ 10 am
then
Potluck Lunch



Join us in lifting up the unique gifts of every child (and Parent & Educator) as they transition into a new school year.

May they be filled with fresh enthusiasm and a heart that is excited to learn and grow. May they have confidence and grace, and be equipped to persevere through the tough stuff. May they make good friends and be a good friend. Help them remember that God is always with them.

Let's pray for their teachers to have wisdom, understanding, and a heart to serve, as they embark on this journey together!

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. — Beth Stiles V.P.— Steven Hendrickson
Secretary - Alyssa Burkhardt
Treasurer— Mark Linder
Shelly Barker, Sofia Bartee 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

Letting Go to Reshape Our Imagination

By Steven Hendrickson

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:
see, everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"
2 Corinthians 5:17

Throughout human history, there has been a cycle of decline, death, rebirth, and resurrection in institutions such churches, civic, fraternal groups and even familial structures. In the present moment, when one surveys the activities and vigor of these organizations, a definite change is underway. What has worked well for an older generation is in decline, with a major change clearly in view. For the intent and purpose of this article, we will focus on congregations and our Synod with a brief discussion.

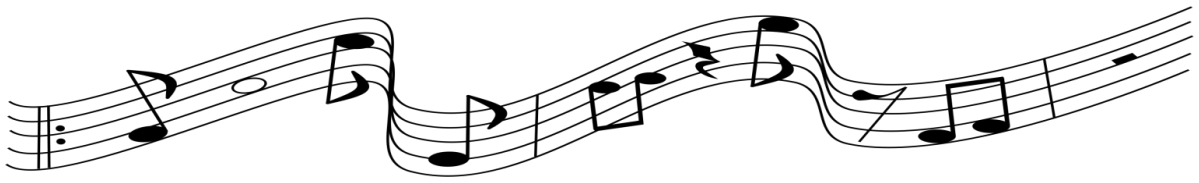
The first symptom of decline and death, is a marked lack of participation and financial resources. A feeling of fear and sadness in the congregation begins to begin attempts to rejuvenate the "good old days." Other emotions can emerge such as anger as the grieving process begins in earnest. These elements of loss and grief need to be acknowledged, experienced, and seen as a healthy response to a new outcome. This is difficult, so prayer and trust in God's leading are very important. A powerful way to shepherd one another is to engage in thoughtful dialogue to determine next steps. An openness to new forms of ministry can help to promote hope and envision a different model in "being the church." An honest assessment is the product of all the emotions that have been mentioned here. Our congregants need to be aware of the changes and have regular input and voice in decision making. Being led by the Spirit, we all are being asked to be co-creators to envision a conscious transition with hopefully a large blessing given to greater community. New ministry is born with heartfelt affinities and recognition of worship that is new, vibrant, and reflective of a changed consciousness as a result of "emptying" ourselves from what has gone before.

These thoughts are offered as a way to reshape our imaginations both as congregations and our Synod as a whole. Much prayer, gratitude, deep listening, and especially letting go, along with "Eastering One Another" will awaken us to the power of God moving us forward. Thanks be to God for leading all of us in this difficult but rewarding evolution in our faith lives.....

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



*You are the
BODY of CHRIST
and individually
members of it*



Music at St. Stephen's Hello, and Happy Summer!

The Good News Singers: Begin practice the second week of September, after church on Sept. 8. Our hope is that we will grow in Spirit and voices. The focus will be on four part harmony, balance, and music for the Fall season. Please give your talent and join the choir. We will be using (on occasion) recorded music for accompaniment. This should be lots of fun. Come, join us!

Free Piano Lessons:

Interested in learning basic piano skills? Contact me.

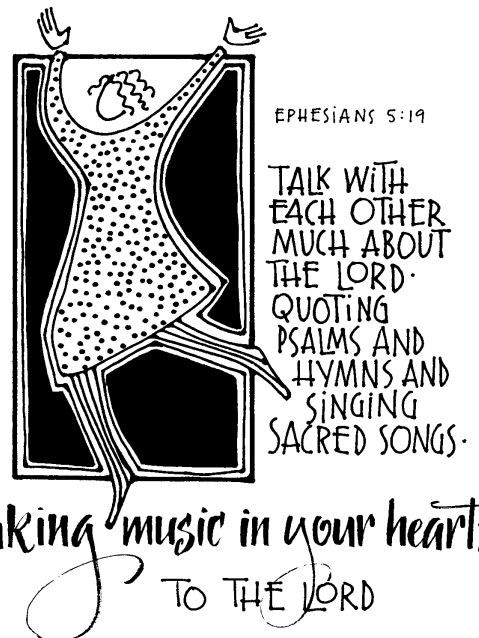
Looking for Musical performances: If you notice any bands, choirs etc. Let me know so I can put an add in our bulletin.

Back to Music Feast in November: Potluck after church, musicians and families, just to say thanks. Nothing to bring, it's on me!

Please support & give to the musicians fund!

Thank you

Yours in Christ, and mission, Gary



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.”

Church Council / Annual Meeting Highlights

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

1. Devotions were offered by our Treasurer Mark Linder. He read the two most important verses from Ephesians and Romans for Martin Luther, about the grace of God being the only requirement for salvation from sin today and forever. We reflected on how this frees us from the images of God as an angry judge waiting to punish sinners, and helps us remember that God is so loving and gracious each and every day of our lives. Remembering this strengthens our commitment to God’s ways through what we each can give back to God in gratitude for this lifelong grace. We also thanked Steven for leading worship June 2nd when Pastor Carol became suddenly ill.
2. Pastor Jim had just returned from his 2 week Continuing Education trip with his seminary (Chicago), which visited ancient holy sites in Turkey (Asia Minor in the Bible) and Greece, including the island of Patmos in Greece and the 7 churches that John’s vision in Revelation was written to. He was very moved to be able to see the places where the early Christian church began and where many references are made in the New Testament Epistles and the Book of Acts. He will be offering his travel reflections as the Zoom Bible Study beginning on Wed. July 10 at 11am and 7:30pm. He expressed deep gratitude to Kirk and Terri Adams and Gray Meeker for making it financially possible to attend with the other 43 students and alumni.
3. Judi and Robert Alvarado attended via Zoom in order to express their needs to restore some of the video coverage of Sunday worship after the Council removed one camera in response to a visitor feeling uncomfortable being publicly recorded. Council will make a decision at the next meeting.



I am writing this while in Trout Creek Montana visiting my parents. It is so wonderful to be here again after a whole year. It is cloudy and drizzly but I love to do my stitchery project and read while looking out at the beauty. It promises to warm up this week and I will get out into nature. I have to be careful though because black bears and mountain lions have been spotted on the property. To think that a few years ago I would walk all over by myself not considering that I might be approached. My family put a stop to that! Last year I attended a 2 hour class about bear safety at The Grange. I definitely do not want to have to try out the skills I learned!

In May, we honored 7 students who graduated. It was a special ceremony where each child was lifted up in their individuality and celebrated for what they have accomplished. We had so many people attend including my dear neighbors who are friends with Addison's family. My neighbor told me that he has never attended a graduation where each child is described and celebrated as their unique self, demonstrating that they were really seen. It was the ultimate compliment because this is exactly my goal each year; Seeing and teaching to each child's uniqueness to build a foundation that represents who they really are. They love receiving a children's bible, library bag, certificate, and a portfolio scrapbook with pictures and artwork. A memento I have been told that some like to enjoy at bedtime. You can read about each child on our display on the entrance board. The following are the expressions of one child's grandmother who enrolled her grandson. Other than his sister, he had few social engagements and had not attended preschool. They were worried because he was unhappy and lonely. He bloomed like a beautiful flower under our care. He is now cheerful, humorous, confident, energetic, and friendly with everyone! He will go to kindergarten with the tools he needs for learning and making friendships.

"Dear Kathy Brenda Sam and Rosio!

*Our family is so thankful to your loving care, creativity, kindness and professionalism showered on our ***** this year. You truly have made a difference in his life that will indeed bring him into this world going forward with more confidence, happiness and success. I am saddened that he (we) are leaving you, but it is with knowing that he is ready to take on his next adventure. Love heals and God bless."*

Additionally she wrote upon receiving his portfolio: *"Hi Kathy, *** (His father) and I so appreciate the binder with *****'s progress. *** (His father) told me how impressed he was with it and me too! We agreed it is a keep-sake for ***** and look forward to sharing it with him when he is older."*

This is why we do what we do. My teaching team, Brenda, Sam, and Rosio each have unique gifts to share with our students providing a well rounded experience. My favorites which remind me of my childhood and current interests that I share are: Pinecone turkeys, a full pumpkin pie, handprint wreaths on burlap for Christmas, silhouettes, gardening, Maypole, and teaching them how to sew by hand and machine! One child clamored for a year to get to sew. His father finally asked "when will he sew" because he couldn't stop talking about it. I replied, "Today, and he is first!"

I am resting all I can this summer. For all the joy there have been many challenges that required us to reinvent many things we do because of Covid, learning loss, and Universal preschool for 4 year olds. We have reduced to 16 students for summer which will allow me time to arrange Room 5 as a teacher resource room. I will organize my office and reduce to just the necessary paperwork. Curriculum will be tailored to a younger group, however, saving pre-kindergarten curriculum for those who stay until kindergarten. We worked very hard last year with 23 students requiring me to be in the classroom (You should see my office, yikes). The Schrafts have been so generous with their donations! My goal is to strive for balance and relevance towards a new beginning. It will be my twelfth year as your director. Thanks be to God!

Enjoy summer! Kathy Berens

Please consider donating to the preschool this summer as we tighten our financial belt for summer, and stock up for fall. Thank you for supporting our preschool!

Inflation Donation: Cheerios, Kraft Macaroni and cheese. Keebler, Ritz and graham crackers. Veggie sticks, pretzels, and rice cakes. Nutra grain bars, soft chocolate chip granola bars. Clorox wipes, medium nitrile gloves, dawn dish soap. Small cups, paper plates, and bowls.

For the fridge/freezer: String cheese, Gogurt, and frozen dinosaur chicken or generic tater tots. *These can all be found at Costco in bulk or the grocery store.*

Kards for kids: Costco, Safeway, Home Depot, and Amazon
Envelopes are on the narthex table.

Everything helps and is very much appreciated!!



Sunday School

John 15:9-17 "Love each other, as I have loved you". Jesus doesn't want anyone to be left out. In the Bible, He reminded His friends that He loves ALL the children, no matter what they look like or what their interests and talents are. And He wants us to love other like that, too. What does love look like in your life?

Pentecost & Holy Trinity

Jesus promised to send us this special care-taker to nurture us. The disciples were all waiting together, and there was a big rushing wind and tongues of fire rested on their heads. They were able to do amazing things through the power of the Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit to live, just like we need air to breathe. The Holy Spirit gives us comfort and peace during times of trouble, like that gentle summer breeze. He helps us to pray too. Sometimes we aren't sure what to say or how when we are talking to God, but the Holy Spirit can fill in the gaps and pray for us when we are uncertain. The Holy Spirit also helps us to have faith. He gives us the strength to believe in God. So we might not see Him with our eyes, but we feel Him and know we need Him. May we all be energized by the Holy Spirit.

Making Chocolate milk we learned that until you stir up the chocolate syrup all you have is milk with a brown glob at the bottom. The Spirit flavors our life and stirs up possibilities and actions!

Playing with balloons, trying to hit particular targets proved both entertaining and unpredictable. God's Spirit is NOT controlled by us...but it is ALWAYS with us, leading us.

~ Faithfully, Miss Leslie
No Class July 28



MaryMartha / Ruth Rebecca Circle

Recent God Story

At our May meeting of Mary, Martha, Ruth, Rebecca Circle we decided to give the balance of the pillow cases we made this year to CASA. The following email was received the day the pillow cases were delivered to CASA House in Watsonville.



Hello! I wanted to let you know that as you were leaving, the Advocate that was coming in, was coming in from court to pick up clothes for the 10 year old girl she works with.

I showed her the pillow cases and she asked if she could take one to the child she works with as they were so beautiful and she was sure the girl would love it.

So, they are already getting in the hands of the foster kids today! Thank you so very much!

With gratitude, Magi (Director)

Circle is not meeting over the summer, however, several women of St. Stephen's are crafting lap robes for people served through I-You Venture. Sharing of your time and talents is so appreciated!! Tina Gates 760-992-4804 gateschristina84@gmail.com

* * * * *

WOMEN'S CAFÉ meets MONDAYS 6:00 pm
July 8 & 22 and August 5 & 19

Monthly Special Benevolence Offering

JULY = World Hunger

"It takes more than meals to feed the world". ELCA World Hunger is a comprehensive and sustainable program that uses multiple strategies—**relief**, **development**, **education**, and **advocacy**—to address the root causes of hunger and poverty. We respond to neighbors around the corner and around the world. We respond to hunger and poverty in the U.S. and around the world by addressing root causes. People are connected to the resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty. **Between 70-75 % of funds are spent internationally, and 20-25 % are spent domestically.**

Together, in Christ's name, we experience the transforming power of connection. As individuals, congregations, and synods, our humble offerings and actions are gathered, blessed, and multiplied. Together, we are ELCA World Hunger.

Housing Matters is the largest nonprofit in S.C. County working exclusively on the issue of homelessness. We connect unhoused community members with housing. While we offer things like public showers and a mailroom, our ultimate goal is to end homelessness for everyone in Santa Cruz County living without a home. And we do that, one person or family at a time.

We run nine different programs carefully designed to connect people with housing. **We end or prevent homelessness for over 300 people each year.** And again, we're just one organization working on the issue in our county.

People are getting out of homelessness and into housing every. single. day. It takes a tremendous amount of work and support. And yet they're doing it. WE — as a community — are doing it. It's beautiful and inspiring and transformational.



June: Society for the Prevention of Suicide
\$35 (as of 6/20)

August

California Lutheran University

The ELCA social statement on education calls us to remember our roots: "From the time of the Reformation, the Lutheran church has been a teaching and learning church...With his teaching on vocation, Luther understood the Christian life to be one of service to God and neighbor in one's every day places of responsibility; education equipped Christians for this vocation. He taught that education served the common good of Church and society: In a move unusual for his day, he taught that schools for all –both those who were wealthy and those who were poor, both boys and girls..."

For 50 years the congregations of the ELCA in the West, and its predecessor bodies have been committed to this idea of educating young people for lives of leadership and service in the world, and the establishment of CLU is the lasting mark of that commitment. By sending your people to CLU and supporting it with offerings and prayers, our congregations have continued in the rich tradition of a Lutheran understanding of education. As CLU President Dr. Chris Kimball writes, "CLU has emerged as a remarkable place where students, faculty, alumni and friends come together in a dynamic environment of academic excellence in the arts and sciences with a focus of service as well as vocational and spiritual exploration."

And

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

We provide theological education for the training of clergy and lay leaders through ordination, non-ordination, and research level degrees and certificates.

PLTS is one of eight seminaries of the ELCA, a founding member of the [Graduate Theological Union](#), and a graduate school of CLU.

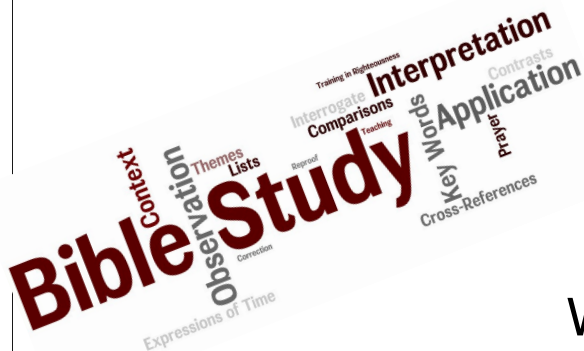
Theological education is done in the context of people who are rich and poor, liberal and conservative, and a wide array of human race, religion, sexuality, education, experience, and background. If our theology did not take all people into account, it would be deficient. PLTS develops leaders for the church by: deepening faith in Christ; challenging the mind; expanding the heart; and energizing for mission.



Saturday
July 13th
9am — 11:30am

For those of you who remember, we used to have a committee who faithfully & proudly took care of our property. Now, we have you. Yes, YOU. Please sign up for an hour or two.

Standard: Weeding, Windows and Cleaning. Sometimes: Mopping the church floor, Tree-trimming, Painting and Re-organizing.



ZOOM with Pr. Jim
Resumes July 10

Check email on Tues. for link

WEDNESDAYS 11a -12noon
& 7:30 – 8:30 pm

For the next several weeks we will be looking more in-depth at the coming scripture readings for Sunday worship.



Sister Parish News

Prayer Children for 2024 - Here's another look at the program from Steve Barrett of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Salinas:

Since 2003, we have been connecting sponsors, from our 7 participating churches, and 120 children from the K-12th school in the rural community of Guillermo Ungo in El Salvador, a community that was built from land provided to refugees and ex-combatants at the end of the civil war in 1992. The prayer child program uses the Sponsor's \$125 suggested donation to provide needed school supplies to the students and the school, plus a food basket for their families as well as a special gift (all purchased locally) for the students. In addition, sponsors and students exchange letters and photos and pray for each other. Strong relationships are often built as the students are encouraged in their lives and studies by their "padrinos" and "madrinas" and sponsors are inspired by the ability of their modest donations, prayers and efforts at communication to really make a difference in the lives of their students. Each year, on our delegations to El Salvador we have meals in the homes of the prayer children of all our delegates and witness the sincere appreciation expressed by the families and students in the gratitude, hospitality and kindness they share. It is really a delight to see the close friendships that have begun through the exchange of letters and quickly develop during our short trips.

A very dedicated local scholarship committee, consisting of teachers and parents, led by the excellent principal of the school, Maria Paz Asencio, works hard to select the students, monitor their eligibility, purchase the supplies and gifts and meets several times a year with the students and their parents (They also oversee our University Scholarship Program). We recently received the updated list of 120 students for 2024 from the committee and are looking for new sponsors for about 20 new children during the month of May. We would love to have sponsors for each student! So please consider sponsoring a child this year if you are not already doing so. You can choose the approximate age and the gender of the student you want to start a relationship with and your card/letter, donation and prayers will be of great support and encouragement to your "prayer child" and their education. Please contact either Jeanne or Kent if you want to have a prayer child of your own.

On behalf of the Board of Directors (SCaS), we thank everyone at St. Stephen's who have contributed toward our programs. ***Your gifts make a difference!***

Peace in Christ,
Kent Madsen & Jeanne Boudreau,



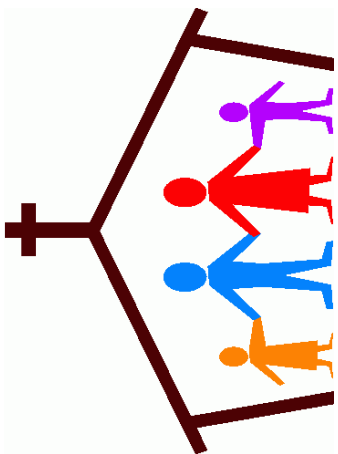
SHORT TERM: Beth Mills, Mary D., Candace Anderson & family, Family of Gary Meeker, Galahad, Susan O., Family of Mike Homer, Debbie, Sam, Michael Lee, Nate Barker, Grandpa Dennis, Bob & Shirley Salter, Monica & Family, Lurline Moore, Barry Hansen, Beth Butler, Family & friends of Sgt. William Nelson, Jen, Robbin, Maria Mendoza, Ila & Reina, Family of Richard Barker, Francisco, Margot Wilson, Michael, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, Tim Oldfield, Sierra, Beth's mom, Julie R., Anne Rice, Rosie, The Webber Family, Janet, Sue, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, James, Keith, Taiyo, Marissa, Isaac, Alvarado family, Dustin, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Father Jack Davis, Atlas, Sandi Csik, Janica Paustian, James, John, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Allen, Joel Hurttgam, Sandy, Levi & Alexandra, Gary Toops, Donna Kemper, Paul Cunningham, Paul Paustian, Dawit & Family (Ethiopia), Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Nancy, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Anthony, Steve, Rose, Will, Aaron Johnson, Sal, Katarina, Stephanie Jager, Parents, Healthcare workers & teachers.

LONG TERM: Carla Brown, Biergiel—Colclough family, April McCalmont, Marty Nehring, Miller Mouw, Kyle Lapp, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Bobbie Erickson, Joyce, Mike, 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 & women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Belated wishes:

		7-2	Vi Olly	8-3	Robert Gipson
6-1	Shelly Barker	7-5	Judith Alvarado	8-7	Pastor Herb
6-1	Jim Hanson	7-6	Scott Poetzinger		Schmidt
6-4	Anne Davis	7-6	Beckett Ruble	8-9	Lydia Abler
6-5	Lauren Pond	7-9	Sandi Crouser	8-14	Renee Rice
6-6	Joseph Ronning	7-10	Kyle Lapp	8-15	Susan Oldfield
6-12	Madeline Mouw	7-12	Arija Buswell	8-17	Brad Cramer
6-14	Stephanie Laufer	7-21	Cheryl Bartee	8-18	Derek Poetzinger
6-16	Tara McMilin	7-22	Kevin Meek	8-20	Imagin Abler
6-19	Kim Brouse	7-23	Martha Balogh	8-23	Kasey Garden
6-20	Abigail Robe	7-24	Sherilyn Jager	8-25	Lea Powers
6-26	Mary Kelly	7-24	Julia Poetzinger	8-27	Leslie Lapp
6-29	Michael Nunes	7-25	Eve Roberson	8-28	Rachel Lapp
6-30	Susan Gross	7-27	Mark Linder	8-30	Emma Gipson
		7-29	Kylie Ronning		
7-1	Robert & Dusty Gipson			8-3	Steve & Theresa Loback - Campbell
7-18	Manny & Patricia Travers			8-6	Mark Linder & Mary Dean
7-28	Charles & Sandra Eldridge			8-15	Ross & Barbara Johnston



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
June 21, 2024

POST OFFICE:
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

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

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Santa Cruz, CA 95060-9998