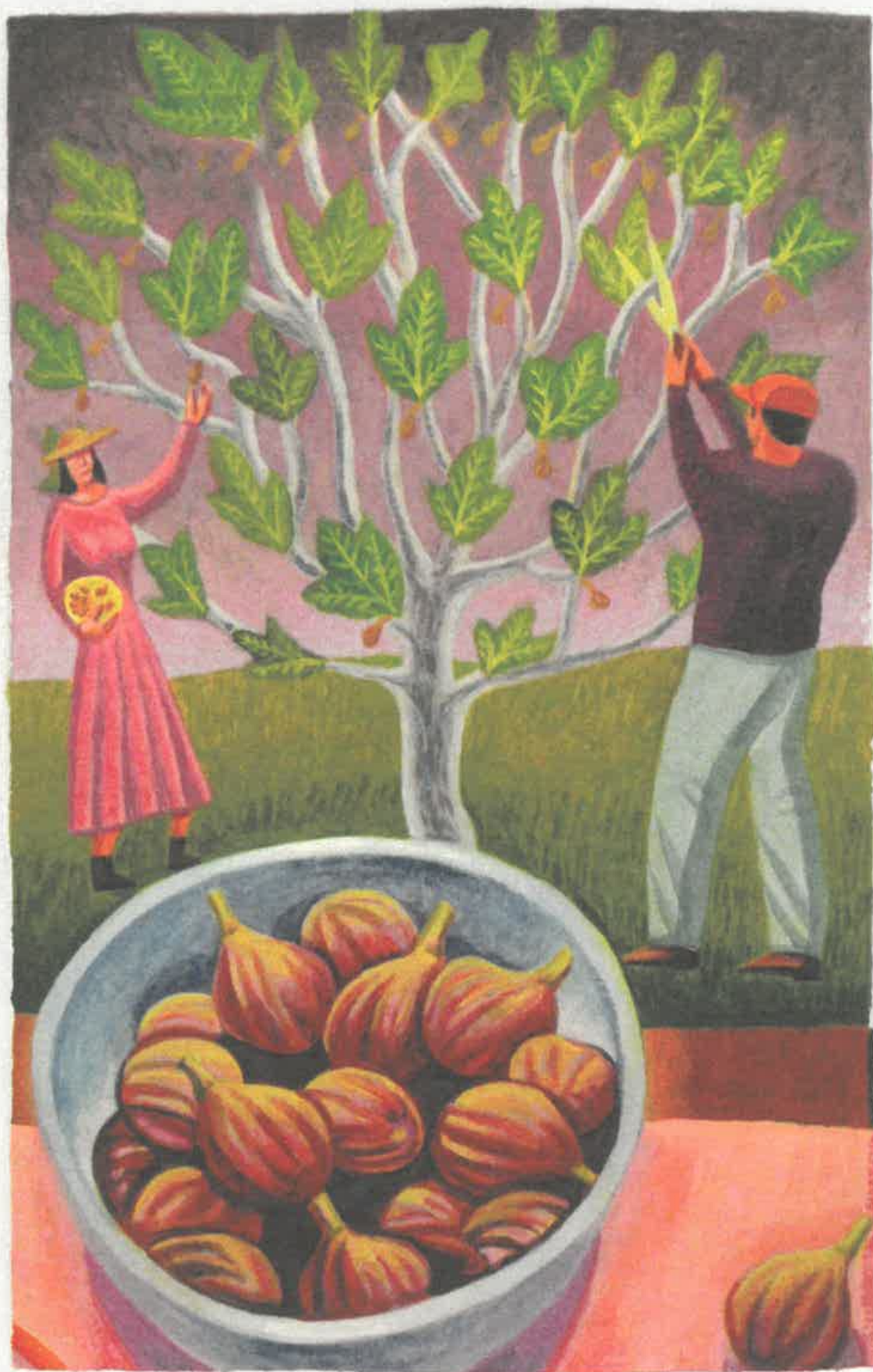


I have come looking for fruit

LUKE 13:7



THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

everything between rest & growth

Sunday March 23, 2025—10am

WELCOME AND A NOTE TO VISITORS

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians from every tradition. Welcome to all who have no church home, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. Welcome to new visitors and old friends. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation and marital status, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners and questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate and sorrow, rejoice and recover. This is a place where lives are made new. Welcome on this day.

Music “Let Your Steadfast Love Come, To Us, O Lord”

The Gathering

Call to worship

Worship is a place to rest.

We breathe deeply here.

We still our aching bones.

We sit in the quiet.

We surround ourselves with music.

Worship is a place to rest.

Worship is a place to grow.

We listen for God’s word.

We invite it to challenge us.

We lean in with curiosity.

We ask questions.

Worship is a place to grow.

So come into this space.

Come rest and grow here.

For where two or more are gathered,

God is always there.

Let us worship our gracious God.

Call to confession

Friends, we carve out time for confession in worship because it is not enough to hear about God's grace once. We need that reminder again, and again, and again. So join me in speaking the truth of our lives, and join me in receiving God's grace *again*.

Prayer of confession

Holy God,
There are days when we fail to rest.
We stretch ourselves too thin. We say "yes" to every invitation.
We run a million miles a minute. We ignore your command to rest.
There are also days when we fail to act.
We wait for someone else. We take the easy road.
We find excuses and justify our inaction.
God, forgive our imbalance.
Remind us that birds rest, and they also fly.
Show us how to do the same. Amen.

Words of forgiveness

Family of faith, I have good news! Our God does not keep score. Our God does not hold grudges. Our God does not assume the worst about us. No, our God offers grace, and endless second chances, and boundless love. So join me in proclaiming the good news of the gospel:
God's grace is deeper than the ocean.
God's love is wider than the sky.
We are seen. We are claimed. We are forgiven.
May this realization change and inspire us.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

*Opening Hymn “Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters”
Red #445

Wash, O God, our sons and daughters,
where your cleansing waters flow.
Number them among your people;
bless as Christ blessed long ago.
Weave them garments bright and sparkling;
compass them with love and light.
Fill, anoint them;
send your Spirit, holy dove and heart’s delight.

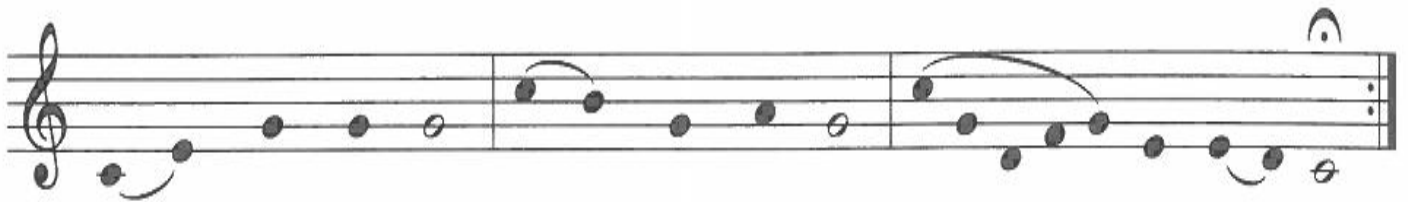
We who bring them long for nurture;
By your milk may we be fed.
Let us join your feast,
partaking cup of blessing, living bread.
God, renew us, guide our footsteps;
Free from sin and all its snares,
One with Christ in living, dying,
by your Spirit, children, heirs.

Oh, how deep your holy wisdom!
Unimagined, all your ways!
To your name be glory, honor!
With our lives we worship, praise!
We your people stand before you,
water washed and Spirit born.
By your grace, our lives we offer.
Recreated us;
God, transform!

*Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
C: And also with you.

Kyrie—We bring our burdens, cares and hopes for God’s mercy.



1. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy.
2. Christ, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy.
3. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy.

*Prayer of the Day

Celebrate insert pg. 1

P: May God be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray...

C: (following the prayer) Amen.

The Word of God

God Stories

First Reading

Isaiah 55:1-9

Celebrate pg. 1

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 63:1-8

Celebrate pg. 2

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Celebrate pg. 3

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

C: Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation—Leader sings first, then all together.

After the Gospel, all sing together twice.

GOSPEL

Cantor, then All

Glo-ry to you, Word of God, Lord Je - sus Christ.

Glo-ry to you, Word of God, Lord Je - sus Christ.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 13th Chapter

C: Glory to you, O God.

*Gospel Reading

Luke 13:1-9

Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ. (Sing “Glory to you...” twice)

Sermon

Rev. James P. Lapp

*Hymn of the Day *“Before the Waters Nourished Earth”*
ACS #1049 Blue

Before the waters nourished earth
or night imagined morning,
a Love conceived the universe and reveled in its forming.

This Love remained as time revealed
the loss of Eden’s glory
and, grieving, holds in memory each tragic human story.

Despair, so deep it bears no name, or sorrows paralyzing

cannot revoke Love's faithful claim
to dwell within our dying.

The Love that called creation good
all goodness still is bringing.
This Love turns death again to life
and silence in to singing.

Affirmation of faith

We believe in a God who loves and tends to us like a gardener.
We believe that like the trees,
some seasons are for growth,
and some seasons are for rest.
Some days require pruning,
and some require planting.
Fortunately, we believe that our green-thumbed God
sees us and cultivates the sweetest fruit.

*The Prayers of the Church

Celebrate, Page 4

*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.

Music “Christ is the Life”
Music, Kenneth Naylor 1931~1991
Good News Singers

*Offering Prayer

**C: Gracious Provider,
You have set your immense treasures among us,
Opening your heart to the world.
As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,
Deepen our commitment
to sharing those treasures with others.
Through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

A Prayer of Invocation

God meets us in the night—
**before the sun rises,
before the wound heals,
before there are answers,
before there is closure.**

God meets us in the light—
**where joy is effervescent,
where laughter is contagious,
where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
where people gather around tables.**

God meets us in between—
**at the edge of the water,
at the beginning of the wilderness,
at the start of something new,
on the edge of faith.**

And if God meets us in all those places,
**then surely God meets us everywhere—
at the water's edge, at the start of something new,
after the baptism, and in the bread and cup.**

We are not alone. God is all around.
Let us worship the God of everything.

*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: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

Holy Communion — ALL, Yes — EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Communion is by intinction, we dip the bread into either the wine (red) or grape juice (white).

AGNUS DEI



Communion Hymn

*“Sometimes Our Only Song is Weeping”
Blue #1050*

Sometimes our only song is weeping;
Our only sound is gasping breath.
Sometimes it seems that God is sleeping
While our brief lives are bound in death.
Who hears the song our sorrows swallow
And offers hope to calm our fears?
When all our words seem frail and hollow,
God heeds the prayers within our tears.

Sometimes we catch the faintest humming,
A far-off tune our hearts know well.
Sometimes we sense the Spirit coming.
Our song returns; our voices swell.
The Spirit sings though we are shaken,
And Christ shared our heartfelt cries.
Restored, our weary souls awaken
To join God's song that never dies.

*Communion Blessing

P: May this Holy Communion of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us in God's grace now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Prayer After Communion

P: Generous Host, You have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

The Sending

Blessing

P: As you leave this place,
may you find God in every messy middle.
May you know that the world is bigger than two sides.
May you trust that you are made in the image of God,
and therefore, you contain multitudes.
So may you move through this world with an open heart,
with a curious mind,
and with the confidence that you do not go alone.
God is with you in the mountains, in the valleys,
and everywhere in between.
Believe that good news, and go in peace.
C: Amen.

*Closing Hymn *"Guide Me Ever Great Redeemer"*
Red #618

Guide me ever, great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but you are mighty; (hymn continued)

Hold me with your pow’rful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
Feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
Where the healing waters flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliv’rer, strong deliv’rer,
shield me with your mighty arm,
Shield me with your might arm.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell’s destruction,
land me safe on Canaan’s side.
Songs and praises, songs and praises
I will raise for~ever~more,
I will raise for~ ever~more.

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Let Your Steadfast Love Come To Us, O Lord”
Variation 11—Good News Singers

Serving Today

Reader: Steven Hendrickson

Coffee Host: **please sign up**

Altar Guild: Tina Gates



SHORT TERM: family of George Webber, Isabelle Hackman, Eric, Ellie, Paula & family, Julia, Jim Aller's family, Margaret, Bill Giles family, Dr. Bruce Dunn's family, Grey, Ruth Stiles, Susan Birkelo Family, James, Riley, Mary Saccullo, Chad Fields, Ana Cardenas, Rose, Levi, Lisa J., John B., Linda,

Glosier family, Unemployed, Isaac & Marissa, Chris Powers, Gloria, Marta's parents, Gary & Louse Matz, Nick, James, Mary D., Tom, Galahad, Debbie, Sam, Nate Barker, Robbin, Francisco, Michael, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, Sierra, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, Taiyo, Marissa, Isaac, Alvarado family, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Sandi Csik, Sam, Adolfo, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Nancy, Jane, Barbara Allen, Gary & Marjie Toops, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Nancy, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Sal, Katarina, Stephanie Jager.

LONG TERM: Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Carla Brown, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit and family (Ethiopia), April McCalmont, Marty Nehring, Miller Mouw, Kyle Lapp, Will, Aaron Johnson, Shelby Volpi, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Bailey Ingalls, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Bobbie Erickson, 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, People of Palestine/Israel, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, S.S. Senior Housing, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family, men & women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.

Music at St. Stephen's



'Tis always the season. Come and Sing: For a week, for a season . . . Or stay year round.

Palm Sunday — graced by the music of Julia & Patrick
Easter — "All That Brass" is back in full swing!



Long Range Task Force Small Group Meetings

Sundays, March 23 & 30 at 11:30 a
and
Thurs. March 27 & April 3 at 7:00 p

Plan to gather for these important conversations as we
begin to plan for our ministry in the next 5 years.

Trinity Tuesday

April 1 at 6:30pm



Place: Discretion Brewing 41st Ave.

1 HOUR 1 QUESTION 1 DRINK (3-in-1)

Bring your deepest questions about:

- God, Faith, and the Biblical narrative
- The big questions that keep you up at night

Come with:

- An open mind
- A willingness to engage in respectful dialogue

*Join the conversation. Challenge your assumptions.
Deepen your understanding.*

All viewpoints welcome. Come as you are.

Questions: Call Kathy Allen at 831-430-6359
or email allen.kj@comcast.net

Upcoming Events:

March Benevolence Offering — Scholarship Fund

Easter Lilies for sale today through April 10

TODAY & 30th Long Range Meetings 11:30 am

March 25 Boy Scouts 6:00 pm

March 26 Preschool Chapel 10:15

March 26 Lent Souper 6:00 pm
Hosts Doug Hahn & Shelly Barker
Worship 7:00 pm

March 27 Habitat lunches — **still need 6 sandwiches**

March 27 Mens beginner A.A. Thurs. 7:00 pm Fireside

March 27 & April 3 Long Range Meeting 7:00 pm

March 28 A.A. Fridays 7:00 pm Fellowship Hall

April 1 Trinity Tuesday 6:30 pm Discretion Brew

April 13 Palm Sunday Dramatic Worship—readers pls

April 17 Maundy Thursday 11:00 am & 7:00 pm
(LUNCH hosted by MMRR)

April 18 Good Friday 11:00 am 7:00 pm

April 19 Easter set up 10 am

April 20 Easter Breakfast & celebration— help needed

Pastor's Office Hours: Weds. & Thur. 10:00—1:00 pm

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.—Fri. Noon—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
Videographers: Kent Madsen & Barb Rice

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prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org