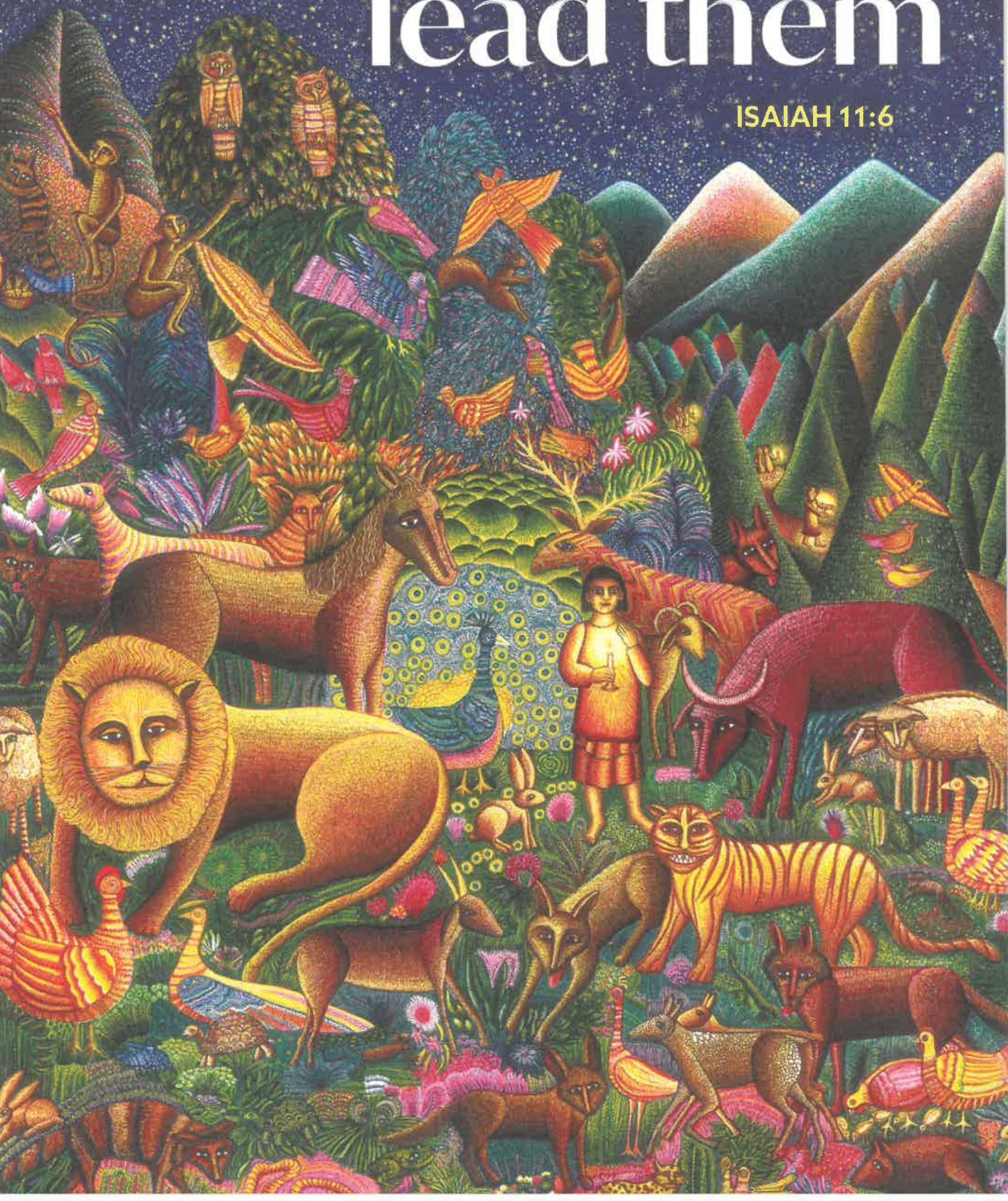


# A little child shall lead them

ISAIAH 11:6





# **Second Sunday in Advent**

**Dec. 7, 2025**

**10:30 a.m.**

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.

Please fill out the “Worship Slip” and place it in the offering plate.

( \* ) Asterisk means, “Please stand as you are able.”

Music “Prayers for Peace” R. Purvis

Choir Introit — “We are Waiting for Jesus”

## **The Gathering**

Welcome

Advent Wreath Lighting

We praise you, O god, for this evergreen crown  
That marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent.  
As we light the first candle on this wreath,  
Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord  
When he comes with all the saints and angels.  
Enlighten us with your grace,  
And prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord,  
Whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

\*Opening Hymn

*“Joy To The World”*

Red #267 verses 1-2

**1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart, prepare Him room  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing!**

**2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods  
Rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

\*Greeting

**P:** The steadfast love of God, the life of Jesus Christ  
and the power 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"* Red #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

**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

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray:

Celebrate, Page 1

## **The Word of God**

Christmas Pageant

Sunday School & Preschool

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing;  
The baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus;  
Look down from the sky  
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus;  
I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

\*Passing of the Peace

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

**C:** **And also with you.**

Please share a sign of God’s Peace with the words:  
**“Peace be with you.”**

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

Offertory

Julia Tracey, piano “Do You Hear What I Hear”  
Patrick Tracey, guitar “Spanish Romance”

“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**

\*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**

## **The Sending**

\*Blessing

P: May God direct your ways in peace,  
Make you abound in love for one another and for all,  
And strengthen your hearts  
as we wait for the coming of Christ  
Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,  
Bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

\*Closing Hymn

Preschool Chapel Song

*"Joy To The World"* Red #267 verses 1-2

**1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart, prepare Him room  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing!**

**2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods  
Rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**3. No more let sin and sorrow grow  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make his blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.**

**4. He rules the world with truth and grace  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love.  
And wonders, wonders of His love!**

\*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Music                    “Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding”  
                              Text: Latin Hymn, E. Caswall  
                              Music: W. H. Monk

~ Prayer Concerns ~

SHORT TERM            Margaret Schraft, Paul, Beth Stiles, Chad Fields, Laura, Ayla, Tate & Terry, Laura & twin babies, Don & Taiyo, Chris Wyneken, Gary & Connie Stevenson, Family of Bobbie Erickson, Kevin, Marc Northcott, Cheryl & David Craig, Liz, Joan Wilson Family, Sam, Florence, Tom Williams, Tim Oldfield, Kathy M., Nancy, Jennifer Linkeon, Corrine & Daniel, Connie Garcia & Family, Tina & family, Ana, Kathybelle Barlow, Family & friends of Rev. Jim Carr, Grey, Levi, James, Galahad, Debbie, Sam, Nate Barker, Robbin, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Adolfo, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Allen, Gary & Marjie Toops, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Isaac & Marissa, Mateo & Lina, Atlas, Sal, Katarina.

LONG TERM    Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit and family (Ethiopia), Miller, April, Aaron Johnson, Shelby, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Dom, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Mike, Susan Anderson, Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Karin, Will, Chris & John B., 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.

*\* Please notify when to remove \**





# *A NOT So Silent Night*

by: John Cosper



**Narrator**  
Sam Garcia

**Mary & Joseph**  
Christa & John

**Shepherds:** Liz, Charlotte, Conrad & Galahad

**Wise Ones:** Patrick, Aeden, Abigail & Savannah

**Angel:** Julia

## **The Friendly Beasts**

Ari, Briar, Casey, Emilia, Mack, Millie,  
Niki, Oliver, River, Viana & Zellie

*Moo! Oink! Cluck! Coo! Maa! Baa! Eee-Awww!*

## Advent Wreath

This year we are pleased to give the Wreath to the church in memory and honor of my mother who first shared the tradition with me.

The wreath is made of mixed greens, juniper, cedar, and pine. These greens sheltered the Holy Family as they fled to Egypt. You will also see rose hips representing Mary. Lavender is a manager herb representing purity and virtue, rosemary is for loyalty and love, thyme is for bravery and the ivy represents the Trinity.



~ Barbara Johnston

## Other Giving Options

Our *Virtual Offering Plate* has been enhanced. We are now able to receive donations made by: credit card, debit card, PayPal, Venmo & Zelle.

There are three choices:

- 1) **Vanco**, our regular electronic giving provider;
- 2) **PayPal / Venmo / Zelle** for single one-time gifts;
- 3) **PayPal** with the possibility of recurring donations and an option to cover the fees.

All are available at  
<https://ststephenslutheran.org>



# ***Gospel of Matthew***

## ***Bible Study***

Join us as we explore the tenderness and tensions in the teachings of Jesus through *Matthew: "The Gospel of Promised Blessings"* by Dr. Matthew Skinner. The six-week Bible study continues **each Wednesday, through December 17**. [See a short promo video](#) on Youtube!

You can [order the book for \\$10 on Kindle, ~\\$12.50 for paperback](#), or \$14 through Christa if you'd like her to order one for you. Scholarships are available!

If you don't have time to read between sessions or need to skip a week, that's perfectly fine. Come for the scripture and conversation whenever you can. Friends are always welcome. Submit any inquiries to [Christa Garcia](#) at [christawyn-ekengarcia@gmail.com](mailto:christawyn-ekengarcia@gmail.com)

On ZOOM  
with our Seminarian Christa

Check email on Tues. for link

**WEDNESDAYS**

7:30 – 8:30 pm

*As we grow in our faith,  
we grow in community.*



## Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Wednesday, Dec. 24

7:00 pm

Share the joy, Bring a friend!



## AFC Shelter Dinners

January 31 (5th Saturday)

5:45–7:15 pm

St. John's - 125 Canterbury Drive Aptos

Plan ahead, Sign up in the Narthex:

*Volunteer your time and / or provide*

*Main Course, Salad, dessert, milk & breakfast items  
(one of these)*

Come offer your resources to our neighbors without housing. Along the way, we find a deeper understanding that we are all worthy of dignity & connection. You can assist those without homes to a better life.

**Special request — Can anyone host December 27 ?**

call Leslie /asap 476-4700





## **Poinsettias**

Help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve. Poinsettias may be donated in honor or in memory of loved ones and will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Cost is \$15. Please make the check payable to St. Stephen's, but keep it separate from your regular offering to make bookkeeping easier. You may take your plant home after worship December 24 to enjoy.

Thank you for supporting our church ministries.



## **Women's Holiday Café Group**

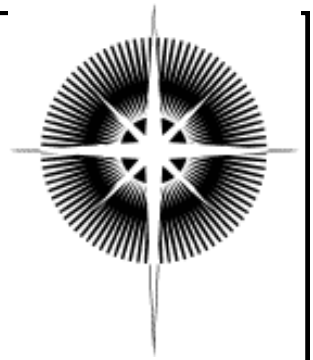
**Wed, Dec. 17 at 6:00 pm (?offsite?)**

Come, share a meal, Devotions & fellowship.

Bring a dish to share & a Gift to exchange

More info 476-4700

## **Give a Gift. Change a Life.**



What better way to celebrate the season of Jesus' birth than to give gifts of comfort and joy to those who are in need. Give meaningful gifts that inspire leadership, nourish the hungry and heal the sick.

### **Lutheran World Relief**

provides gifts that improve the lives of people living in poverty around the world. For example: A Goat not only provides a woman farmer with milk to sell, but also helps her build a herd. Coffee seedlings help a farmer grow a lucrative crop that has the potential to significantly improve income. Seeds help farmers grow more and better crops when climate conditions are challenging. Emergency Water delivers immediate, potable water after disaster strikes. **LWR.org/gifts or 1-800-597-5972**

### **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service**

stands ready to welcome the most vulnerable refugees who are seeking safety and hope in America. Our gifts are essential in rebuilding their lives. Gifts from "Basic Needs Kit" to "Ready for Work kit" can mean so much to those who have nothing but the clothes on their backs. **LIRS.org or 877-291-7061**

### **Lutheran Social Services of Nor. Cal**

promotes stability and honors the dignity of those served by providing supportive housing services that lead to self-sufficiency.

### **S.P.I.N. Socks for People in Need (box in narthex)**

NEW socks are a blessing for many reasons, especially health, but also because they provide comfort and a sense of dignity. Basic white crew socks are appreciated by everyone. But you may also choose socks for women and <sup>14</sup>children.

# Upcoming Events:

December Benevolence = Lutheran World Relief

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Dec. 9  | - Knitter's Guild 6:15 pm<br>- Church Council 6:30 pm<br>- Scouts 6:00 pm                         |
| Dec. 10 | - Preschool chapel 10:15 am<br>- Bible Study "Gospel of Promised Blessings" 7:30 p                |
| Dec. 11 | - MMRR Circle 10:30 am<br>- Mens beginner A.A. 7:00 pm  |
| Dec. 12 | A. A. Group 7:00 pm   |
| Dec. 13 | Boutique Set up 10:00—12:00   |
| Dec. 14 | - Boutique & Bakesale<br>- Special exhibit Donna Harris art work                                  |
| Dec. 15 | Embroiders Guild 7:00 pm  |
| Dec. 17 | Women's Café Group 6:30 pm (?offsite?)  |
| Dec. 19 | Newsletter Deadline   |
| Dec. 29 | Newsletter Collating ? TBA ?  |
| Dec. 21 | - Brass plays during 10 am worship<br>- Christmas Potluck (Gary provides the ham) 11 am           |
| Dec. 24 | Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 pm   |
| Dec. 27 | ?AFC shelter dinner? They have asked for our help.<br>Call office ASAP if you can provide a meal. |
| Jan. 6  | Trinity Tuesday 6:30 pm Discretion Brew   |

**Pastor's Office Hours Weds. & Thurs. 10:00 to 1:00**

Worship online at [www.ststephenslutheran.org](http://www.ststephenslutheran.org)

Recorded for you to view anytime.

Please participate by having your worship bulletin and Celebrate ready

Zoom Bible Studies with Pastor Jim on Wednesdays 7:30pm.

Check your email on Wednesday for the link to the Zoom meeting.

### 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](mailto:office@ststephenslutheran.org)

Web Address: [www.ststephenslutheran.org](http://www.ststephenslutheran.org)

Office Hours: Mon.—Friday. 12:00 —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: Jay Johnston, Kent Madsen & Barb Rice

Music used by permission Onelicense #A-706539



*Mary, Martha, Ruth, Rebecca circle*



bake sale  
&  
holiday boutique

Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>  
11:00am - fireside room

On Saturday, December 13th from 10:00 to 12:00, please bring in your baked goods, candies, jams, jellies & handcrafted boutique items. Thank you for your donations! Let your creativity go wild! Our team will setup and price.

Shop for gifts and entertaining!!  
Proceeds benefit our kitchen renovation fund.

*Rumor has it . . .  
Donna Harris will be displaying her artwork!*

Next meeting is Thursday, Dec. 11 at 10:30  
All Women are Welcome

# Music at St. Stephen's



P E A C E

The beautiful prayer of St. Francis, attributed to him, is a widely known Christian Prayer asking to make us, an instrument of Peace, Pardon, Faith, Hope, Light, and Joy.

Our weekly prayers of the church we read aloud, and guide us in the ways of humanity, and to live our lives fuller, with the Grace of God.

Peace is the answer to a more complete life, and a better place. The Good News Singers offer a simple melody to express this, through our voices and spiritual renewal.

Welcome to all, to a house of Advent - Christmas Adventure!

Yours in Christ & Mission, Gary