

A photograph of a church interior. In the foreground, several people are seated in wooden pews, holding open books and looking towards the front of the church. The pews have decorative carvings on the backrests. In the background, there is a large, ornate Gothic-style window with a pointed arch and intricate tracery. The church has high ceilings with vaulted arches and a chandelier hanging from the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is solemn and focused.

May they be
one,
as we are
one

JOHN 17:11



Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2026

the news is...

Matthew 28:1-10

alive in the world

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians and faiths 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 & questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate & sorrow, rejoice & recover. This is a place where lives are made new.

Welcome on this GLORIOUS day!

Please fill out the "Worship Slip"
and place it in the offering plate during the offering,
as a sign of thanksgiving for all of God's blessings.

Prelude "Christ has Arisen" Richard Purvis

Gathering

Call to Worship

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

Prayer of Confession

We begin our worship of God with a prayer that humbles ourselves in God's presence and seeks the forgiveness and grace of God in our lives and of our world.

Let us pray:

Redeeming God,
We want to be your Resurrection people.
You bring life out of dead ends,
And hope in the midst of despair.
Forgive us for doubting that you are still at work,
Even in the most discouraging and painful moments.
Forgive us for our hesitant actions, our cautious compassion,
And out too-frequent reluctance.
Redeeming God, teach us a stillness
That leads to acts of kindness and beauty.
Shape in us a trust that leads to faithfulness to you
And bold compassion for others.
Form us in your love,
Which loosens our worry and eases our anger.
Make us your followers—filled with love,
Acting with justice, and living out hope. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

Family of faith,
God has come to us in Jesus Christ
And defeated sin and death on Easter
So that nothing can separate us from God's love.
By God's Spirit working in us and among us,
God offers to all who seek it, a new and abundant life.
Amen.

*Opening Hymn

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today" Red #365

Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Our triumphant holy day, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Who did once upon the cross, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!

(Hymn continued)

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Unto Christ, our heav'nly king, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Sinners to redeem and save. Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!

But the pains which he endured, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Our salvation have procured; Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Now above the sky he's king, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Where the angels ever sing. Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!

Sing we to our God above, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Praise eternal as his love; Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Praise him all you heav'nly host, Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Al ~ le ~ lu ~ ia!

Greeting

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: The grace of our risen Savior, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

*Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray...

C: Amen.

God's Word

God Stories

Blessing of Children's Bibles

First Reading

Acts 1:6-14

Celebrate pg. 1

Psalm

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

Choir & Cong.

Cel. pg. 1

Second Reading Peter 4:12-14;5:6-11 Celebrate pg. 2

*Gospel Acclamation "Halle Halle"

Halle, Halle, Halle—lu –u –jah! (repeat twice)
Halle-lujah! Hal-le—lu-jah!

*Gospel Reading John 17:1-11 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. John, the 17th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O God

(The Gospel is read)

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Message

Pastor James P. Lapp

*Hymn of the Day "Thine the Amen" Red #826

Thine the amen thine the praise alleluias angels raise
Thine the everlasting head
thine the breaking of the bread
Thine the glory thine the story
thine the harvest then the cup
thine the vineyard then the cup is lifted up lifted up.

Thine the life eternally thine the promise let there be
Thine the vision thine the tree
all the earth on bended knee
Gone the nailing gone the railing
gone the pleading gone the cry
gone the sighing gone the dying
what was loss lifted high.

(hymn continued)

Thine the truly thine the yes thine the table we the guest
Thine the mercy all from thee thine the glory yet to be
Then the ringing and the singing then the end of all the war
Thine the living thine the loving evermore evermore

Thine the kingdom thine the prize
thine the wonder full surprise
Thine the banquet then the praise
then the justice of thy ways
Thine the glory thine the story then the welcome to the least
Then the wonder all increasing at thy feast at thy feast.

Thine the glory in the night no more dying only light
Thine the river thine the tree then the Lamb eternally
Then the holy holy holy celebration jubilee
Thine the splendor thine the brightness only thee only thee.

Affirmation of Baptism

Red. pg. 234

***Rosie Cluster, Zelma Fennell,
Linda Huffman & Charles Yaryan***

*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.**

Offering — We honor and worship God by returning some
of the gifts with which we have been blessed.
Please leave worship slip & offering in plates near you.

Music Choir “Christian Friends Rejoice & Sing”

*Offertory Prayer

P: Abundant and Life-Giving God,

C: Accept the fruits of our labor,

Gathered to give you glory.

You have set a table before us,

A glimpse of that great day

When we will hunger and thirst no more.

Nourish us now as we receive Holy Communion,

That goodness and mercy may follow us

And bless the world you love.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

Risen Christ, good-news God, and ever-present Spirit,

Today is a day we've been waiting for, and now that we're here,
all we can say is thank you.

Thank you for showing the world what could be.

Thank you for loving us with abandon.

Thank you for facing death and returning with mercy.

And thank you for meeting us here, as you always do.

Today we celebrate the good news that you are alive in the world.

The grave couldn't hold you. Death couldn't keep you.

The empire couldn't confine you.

Instead, you are here and everywhere.

You are risen. You are on the move in the world.

Your love meets us at this table and calls us out into the world.

And that is *good, good news*.

May God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P: God, remember us in Your Love and teach us to pray:

**C: Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is 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: Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

Holy Communion

ALL, Yes — EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

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

Hymn

“Christ Our Peace”

Blue #1037

**Christ, our peace,
you break down the walls that divide us;
Christ, our peace, come, make us one body in you.**

*Communion Blessing

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

*Prayer After Communion

Holy One,
Through this meal you have made your home among us,
And are making all things new.
Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts,
To love our enemies,
And to bring your healing to the nations.
In Christ's name we pray,
Amen.

The Sending

Installation of Sabbatical Pastor – Rev. Larry Vilardo

*Blessing

May God bless you and keep you.
May God's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
May God look upon you with favor,
And give you peace. **Amen.**

*Closing Hymn

"Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds" Red #367

Now all the vault of heav'n resounds
In praise of love that still abounds:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!
Repeat their song of glory here:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

(hymn continued)

Eternal is the gift he brings,
Therefore our heart with rapture sings:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Now still he comes to give us life
and by his presence stills all strife.
Christ has triumphed! He is living!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Oh, fill us, Lord, with dauntless love;
Set heart and will on things above
That we conquer through your triumph;
Grant grace sufficient for life's day
That by our lives we truly say:
Christ has triumphed! He is living!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Adoring praises now we bring
And with the heav'nly blessed sing:
"Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!"
Be to the Father, and our Lord,
To Spirit blest, most holy God,
All the glory, never ending!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*Dismissal

P: Alleluia! Christ Is Risen!

C: Christ Is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

P: Go in Peace. Share the Good News.

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude "Easter Alleluia" Richard Purvis"



Sign up for Altar flowers

Serving Today

Altar Guild —Tina Gates

Reader— Mark Linder


Coffee Host — Shelly, Kim & Tina

Office support—Candace A., Sheila B. & Sherilyn J.

Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM *Johnny, Peggy Tleed, James Price, Julie Francis family, Zelma's Family, Bob Zigler, Alfrad family, Ratliff family, Kathybelle, Taiyo, Sam, Nancy's Family, Kat, Family of Pr. Herb Schmidt, Kathybelle & family, Colin, Family of Marc Northcott, Camryn, Corbin, Family of Marilyn, Dorothy Ronning, Bob Holzwarth, Mary Robe & Family, Renee, Sina & Bella, Chad Fields, Beth Stiles, James, Don, Gary & Corinne Stevenson, Kevin, Liz, Tom Williams, Levi, James, Galahad, Debbie, Nate Barker, Robbin, 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, Katarina.*

LONG TERM *Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Beth UG, Brian Utto, Kathy Brooks, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit & family (Ethiopia), Miller, April, Aaron Johnson, Shelby, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Mike, Susan Anderson, 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.*



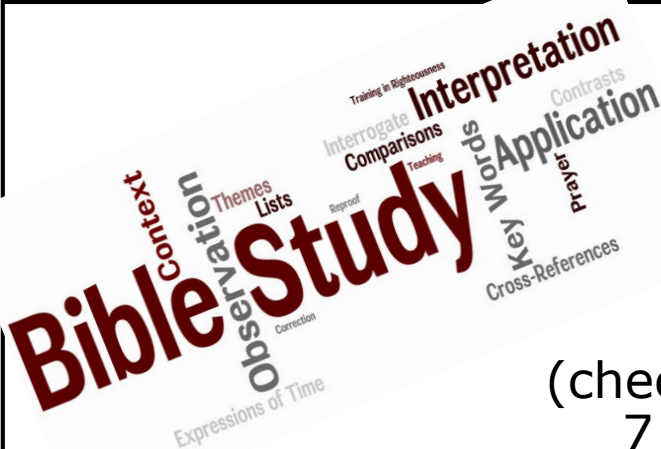
Mt. Cross Memorial Day Volunteer Event

Saturday, May 23

Come for the entire day or just the evening celebration. Meaningful work projects (for all skill levels), shared meals, worship, and community celebration including Bingo!

FREE event. But, they need a head count.
register now www.mtcross.org *Events*

Check out the action photo :)



Wednesdays

In person
or
Zoom with Pastor Jim
(check email on Tues. for link)
7:30 pm—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 together in spirit and community.



Truett Bobo is turning 90!

We are invited to celebrate this former member. They moved to southern California to be near family. Daughter wants to surprise her dad with your greeting cards. Send before June 1.

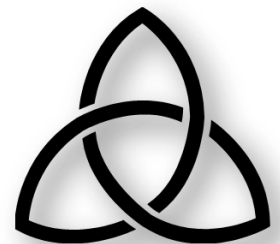
Dr. Truett Bobo c/o Mishon Wallace
10049 Rothgard Road
Spring Valley, CA 91977

Trinity Tuesday

(Pub Theology / Discussion)

June 2 at 6:30pm

(First Tuesday of the month)



Place: Discretion Brewing 2703 41st Ave.

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

Join us for an evening of honest conversation and genuine community. Bring your questions about faith, life, and everything in between. No question is off limits, and no judgment—just real talk in a relaxed atmosphere.

Whether you're a longtime member or exploring faith for the first time, pull up a chair and let's talk. All are welcome.
Kathy Allen 430-6359 for more info.



TAIZE FOR PEACE

Wednesday, May 20 at 7:00 pm

A time to pause and be with God
&

Pray for Peace in a tumultuous time

A Taizé service includes beautiful melodies that allow us to enter into a spirit of prayer. The simplicity of the chants invites everyone to participate. Scripture readings and moments of silence providing space for personal reflection and listening to God's voice. The candle lighting, symbolizes our prayers and intentions for ourselves and others.

A midweek opportunity to step away from the busyness, stress, chaos and uncertainties of today's world and immerse ourselves in God's presence in a peaceful environment.

Other Giving Options

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>



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 Statement

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. 12-5:00 pm

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp
Music Directors: Gary Roberts
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens
Custodian: John Hopping

Music used by permission Onelicense #A-706539
Prayer by Rev. Srah A. Speed / A Sanctified Art LLC