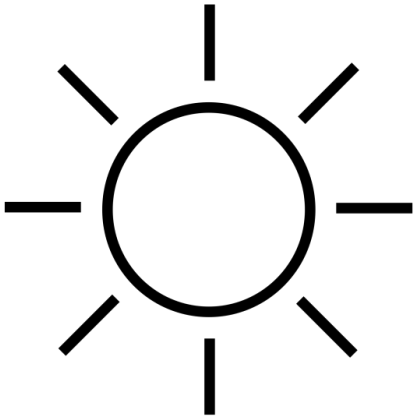


# *St. Stephen's Lutheran Church*



# *Sun*

## *November 2024*

### *Grateful for God's Persistent Abundance*

### Consecration Sunday - November 24

*Please bring your commitments to worship or send them in.*

*Let's all respond to God's love and grace for us generously with gratitude!*

Please use the materials mailed out to you recently as we honestly reflect on how we will give back to God through our church in the coming year.

Through faith and persistence, as God enables us, let's strive to:

- Pray persistently for the ministry of our church.
- Attend worship services often to keep our faith first, and seek to interest others in sharing that with us.
- Be available to follow God's leading by offering your gifts of time and ability through our church.
- Thank God for your life's blessings by returning a tithe (10%) of your income back to God, through the ministry of our church in 2025.



***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

*From Pastor Jim*

**IN MEMORIAM**

*Paul Cunningham*

December 31, 1945—October 19, 2024



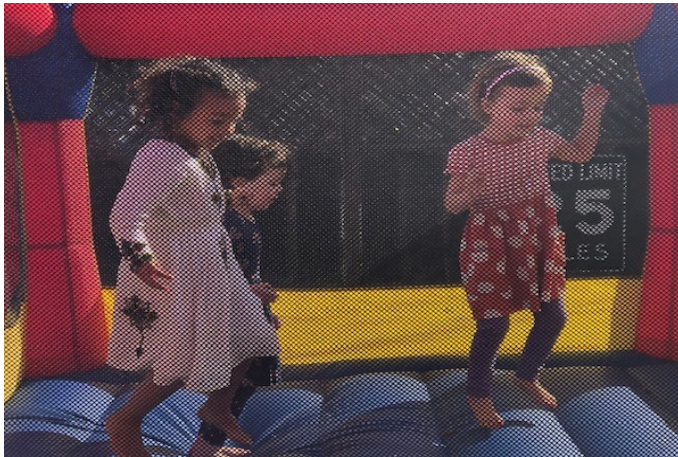
Our beloved brother died peacefully in his sleep after ending his treatments for cancer and receiving hospice care for the last couple months. A Memorial Service will be held in the Spring.

Paul inspired me and so many of us these past several years as he faced his medical condition bravely. We visited just about every month for the past couple years for Holy Communion and catching up on the church news, ...and telling a few fish stories. He rarely wanted to talk about what he was going through and instead looked forward to hearing what was new with me and the church. I will really miss those visits.

I enjoyed getting to hear stories from him and Connie about St. Stephen's over the years, since Paul had been a part of this church for about 70 years. He had seen so many changes over those many years, yet his dedication to attending worship and helping the church fulfill its mission never wavered. All those changes certainly weren't all welcome and probably caused some dissatisfaction, but no one would ever know it from Paul.

He served on our Church Council fairly recently and his long-term perspective was held in very high regard as we struggled through the pandemic times. He was our rock and reflected a comforting steadfastness in those very uncertain and difficult days. He and Connie were always there during those empty services early on, helping with whatever was needed.

Over the years Paul offered his gifts in many ways here. Many little projects bear his handiwork throughout the church property. His quiet commitment to seeing that his church was well-taken care of is what I most thank God for. That, and his shared love for fishing, which we enjoyed several times over the years out there on the Monterey Bay, including one day which ended up being the last time we ever limited on salmon. Blessed be the Memory of this Child of God. May light perpetual shine on him.



# **THANKSGIVING POTLUCK** **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24** **RIGHT AFTER CHURCH**

**Psalms 95:1,2,6**

**O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.**

**Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.**

**O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**

# **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.**

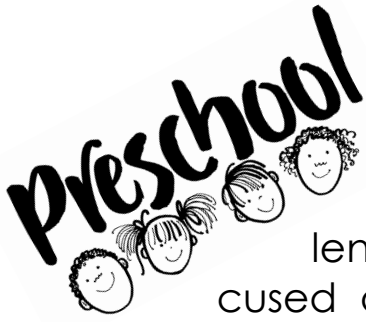
**We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.**

**Our unity is in Christ.”**

## **Church Council Highlights**

1. A proposal from the MMRR Women’s Circle for renovating the kitchen was received by the Long Range Task Force. Robert and Judi Alvarado have already donated their time and replaced the dead outlets and the garbage disposal. Thank you very much! The rest of the proposal will be reviewed and determined as to what we think we are capable of doing.
2. The Long Range Task Force is planning the next series of four House Meetings at the end of March, where we will begin to form some specific proposals about what our ministry might look like in the next 5 years or so, when Pastor Jim plans to retire. The Child Development Center Board is also being asked to think about its plans as Director Kathy Berens will also be retiring.
3. We gathered with about 350 other folks mostly from other churches in COPA on Saturday, October 26th from 3-5pm at the Spreckels Veterans Memorial Hall (in between Salinas and Monterey). It was a wonderful time to share stories with our regional neighbors on the pressures our families are experiencing and what we want to do to improve those things. We were honored to welcome a good number of migrant worker families who provide the food on our tables from the Salinas Valley. Despite their willingness to provide this essential work for our country, they continue to experience inadequate housing and wages, as well as misplaced blame for problems in society. We witnessed their dedication to the health of their families and communities and were inspired by their courage to work with us for a better life. Several public officials including State Senator Anna Caballero were on hand to hear about our work and to commit to working with us on affordable housing and new more highly skilled employment opportunities.





As November is the month we focus on being thankful, we thank you all for your contribution to the Benevolence donations towards our preschool. Last month we focused on making centerpieces for the Oktoberfeast, and we thank Tina and all who helped her pull this occasion off. It was a great opportunity to gather in another way with a very festive vibe. We enjoyed having the apple trees in our garden and being a part of the planting process. It will be fun to watch the trees grow over the years on the front of the property.

Families gathered on Halloween to parade around senior housing and trick-or-treat at the church office doors. The parents enjoy this as much as the children. October was a month of gathering our communities together.

Our school has changed and continues to change as we serve a younger group. I was a Pre-Kindergarten teacher predominantly before this and many of the things I did are not appropriate for this age group. Three is a challenging age as the development of the children vary so much. Some are ahead in cognitive learning. Some have hardly begun as they need to develop socially first. Most need social emotional guidance as they are feeling independent enough to say "NO" but need to figure out how that works among the others. So many activities involve taking things from each other and dumping materials and not wanting to clean up. Sometimes it is very challenging to get them all on the same page while transitioning from one place to another. Also, toileting has many "NO's" involved, especially when their pants are soiled and they run away from you. Then there is the gentle group who play quietly on their own or with others. They get involved in what they are doing. So, the very active can be too "power on" for the tender quiet players. So, we must watch very closely.

So, how do I screen children now and what for? I tried some name writing with a few and it is not appropriate to expect a 3-year-old to write their name or draw a specific picture. Their fine motor development is not there yet, and we do not want to create a negative attitude towards learning by pushing too soon. Our goal is to create a love for learning.

We have two children who are older, and two who are a bit advanced so they will be screened and have a report written as I used to do for the whole class. All children will still receive a portfolio binder with artwork and photos of their time here. They LOVE having that. I was told that some like reading their book at bedtime. Otherwise, process art that is experimenting with different materials is the name of the game. Some projects are teacher directed, but simplicity is the goal. This group really likes doing puzzles and building with Magna Tiles. They also like the train table and kitchen area to play house. The key is to have enough materials to explore that foster cooperation, discovery, and manipulation of the fine motor muscles.

At Circletime we still expose them to the same activities. They love to sing, and music helps the learning be fun. "Hickety, Pickety Bumble bee will you spell your name for me?" I show the name card to each child, and they spell their name. Most can do this; others are practicing but it is fun for all to be recognized individually. They attend well for the stories. We have the letter of the week, and the teacher helps them come up with a list of words that begin with that letter. Some are being exposed to this while others are taking it in. If it is playful, they enjoy it. When they arrive at TK in public school, they will have a foundational introduction to the cognitive learning areas, behavioral expectations, and should thrive.

Now that it is November, we will make thankful pumpkins, some turkeys, and pumpkin pie. The baking routine works well for all ages, even two! It is so worth it as they enjoy the process and the pride of sharing a full pie at home that they made!

My biggest hope is we can eventually find another teaching assistant for our school. Right now, I am the teaching assistant, which is challenging as I age, along with serving children younger than I have taught in the past. I juggle this with the gratitude I have for my job here and the wonderful ladies I teach with.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving. Thank you for all your support!

Kathy Berens

## Sunday School



Mark 9:38-50

“We are called to be salt in the world”

We all know that salt makes everything we eat taste better. But, did you know it's used to make over 14,000 different products. Salt is used in setting the dye in fabrics, so the bright colors don't wash out. Salt is also used in making leather products like your belt & shoes and plastic products like most of your toys. Jesus knew of the power of salt in our lives. By us “being” salt, we flavor the world with the love of Jesus, and help make the world a better place!

Mark 10:2-16 “Let the children come”

What bigger responsibility could we have? It is our job to embrace children with the love of God and to raise them to worship and know God.

Mark 10:17-31 “The God of the impossible”

Following the commandments is one thing we all proudly strive to do. But could you do what Jesus asked the rich man and sell all you have, give the money to the poor? I'd venture a guess that most of us could not. We never considered ourselves “greedy” until we read this story. Money and things imply security. But we are called to love and trust God more. If we are open and allow God to mold us, all things are possible. Imagine what a world it would be if we found ourselves having enough and shared the rest with others.

All month we will make special cards  
for our senior neighbors

Turkey Trot delivery  
November 27

Give Thanks  
TO THE Lord for  
**He is Good.**  
His Love Endures  
Forever. **psalm 136:1**



## MaryMartha / Ruth Rebecca Circle

### ANGEL TREE

Our Angel Tree will appear in the narthex Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup> with the MMRR Elves assistance. 30 Angels will be ready for the taking and gifting to children ages 3 to 12 years old. Pick up your Angels, sign the gift sheet and buy a gift for \$20.00 or less.

**Return the gift December 8<sup>th</sup> with the Angel tag securely attached.**

Our Angel gifts are provided to deserving children through the "Adopt a Family" outreach program of the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz. These local families are dealing with hardships such as: unemployment, homelessness, disabilities, health challenges or are victims of violent crime.

### Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> BAKE SALE!!

We have a great way to expand your variety of holiday goodies for family and friends. Bring your batches of homemade specialties. Buy the delights that intrigue you! Bake Sale proceeds will continue the Circle ministry projects.

### Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. 10:30 – Circle Cookie & Gift Exchange.

Bring a dozen cookies and a \$10.00 gift. We will take a break from holiday preparations to visit over cookies, coffee & tea.

### NEW YEAR, NEW ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS!

**January 9, 2025** - Valentine decorating and greeting for the "I You Venture".

For further information, contact Tina [gateschristina84@gmail.com](mailto:gateschristina84@gmail.com)  
or Cheryl Curry [cherylcjf@cs.com](mailto:cherylcjf@cs.com)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Women's CAFÉ group**

**Monday, November 25 at 6:00 pm**

Dinner, Devotions & Fellowship 476-4700

## Stewards of the Month

**Judi & Robert Alvarado, Jeanette Dawson  
Tina Gates, and James Russell**

These stewards gifts range from “Bat Granola”, Brats & Beer, to Action Teams, Apple trees & Jump House fun.

Thanks to YOU others who labored to help make it a wonder-full Oktober Feast.

God’s Spirit is at work.

Oh,  
The Lord is good to me,  
And so I thank the Lord,  
For giving me,  
The things I need,  
Like the sun, and the rain and the apple seed,  
The Lord is good to me,  
Johnny Appleseed,  
AMEN!



---

## Monthly Special Benevolence Offering **“Santa Cruz al Salvador”**

October - St. Stephen’s Child Development Center  
= \$36 (as of Sept. 27)

## Welcome New Members

### **Sam Garcia & Christa Wyneken**

At our 76th Anniversary Reformation OktoberFeast Celebration worship service Christa and Sam helped us all Affirm our Baptism, and made St. Stephen's their church home. They come from Hope Lutheran, Fresno and both work at Mt. Cross. Christa has also just begin her studies at PLT Seminary! They both have served as Youth Ministers (Sam in Fort Worth, TX—Christa in Fresno) in the past and are looking forward to helping with our Children's Christmas Program. Fun Fact: Our sometimes substitute pastor Gary Stevenson performed their wedding !

## **Financial Report—Mark Linder**

### **1st— 3rd Quarter Actual**

#### Current Assets

Bank Accounts \$46,815.66  
Other Current Assets  
Fidelity Investments 308,035.94  
Investments - Long-Term 1,372,868.47  
Current Assets \$1,419,684.13  
Fixed Assets \$160,069.80  
TOTAL ASSETS \$1,579,753.93

#### Revenue

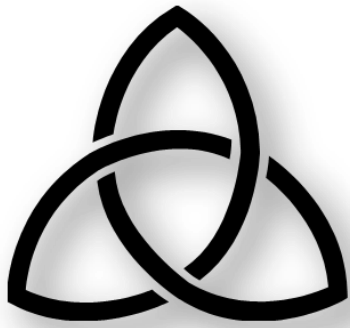
Contribution Income 88,779.78  
Facility Use and Miscellaneous Income 12,870.86  
Provided by Investments 80,459.92  
Total Revenue \$182,110.56

#### Expenditures

Office Supplies 1,642.02  
Telephone 2,965.37  
Administrative Expense 18,975.53  
Payroll Expense 99,533.03  
Program Expense 2,668.77  
Utilities 2,306.63  
Total Church Property Expense 32,383.65

Total Benevolence Expense 2,250.00  
Total Expenditures \$198,737.21

NET OPERATING REVENUE  
\$ -16,626.65



## NEW! – Trinity Tuesday

(Pub Theology / Discussion)

**November 5**

(First Tuesday of the month)

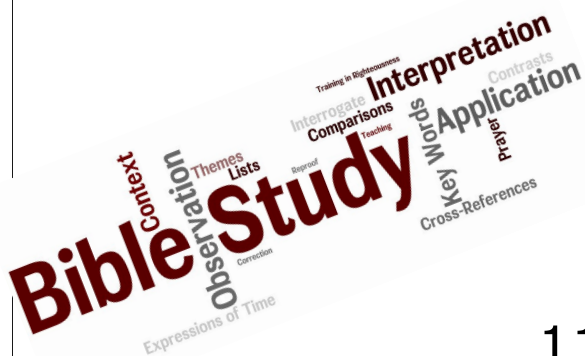
Place: Discretion Brewing 41st Ave.

**6:30pm – 7:30pm**

We will gather together for 1 hour to discuss 1 question about faith, and enjoy 1 drink (3-in-1). When you arrive you will be invited to write your faith question on a slip of paper and place it in a bucket.

Everyone is invited to join us this fellowship gathering. Bring a theological question you would like to discuss or share a “faith” concern in a relaxed space with people who are interested.

Until this group is established, we might Pub shop. For now, please contact Kathy Allen 430-6359 for the details. This is modeled after other Lutheran churches (St. Marks Sacramento & Immanuel Los Altos).



## On ZOOM with Pr. Jim

Check email on Tues. for link

**WEDNESDAYS**

**11a -12noon (no 4th Wed.)**

**& 7:30 – 8:30 pm**



## **Sister Parish News**

**Thirty Years and Counting!** Santa Cruz al Salvador celebrated thirty years of accompaniment with communities in rural El Salvador with a special event at the **Watsonville Public House** on Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup>. Thank you to everyone from St. Stephen's that attended or supported this event! Proceeds will go toward the funding for another group of composting latrines in the El Pilar communities.

Anticipation is growing for the **November 18-26 El Salvador delegation**. As usual, there will be time to interact with people in our communities through craft projects, meetings, and shared meals. There will be time to hear from community leaders speaking about the current social and political conditions in El Salvador. There will also be time for fun! St. Stephen's will be represented by Jeanne Boudreau traveling with this year's delegation.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Pastora Abelina Gomez, wife of Bishop Medardo Gomez. Over the years, we have visited with her and Bp. Gomez and enjoyed their hospitality. We visited Pastora Gomez's parish, Fe y Esperanza (Faith and Hope) on the outskirts of San Salvador. On one memorable occasion, we were treated to an evening of dinner and music at their home, including a birthday cake for Kathy Barrett.

Santa Cruz al Salvador is the benevolence of the month for November at St. Stephen's. Please contribute, as you are able, to our mission.

On behalf of the Board of Directors for Santa Cruz al Salvador (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,  
St. Stephen's representatives on the SCaS Board of Directors



## **Advent, Christmas, Epiphany: Continue the Process of Emptying Yourself**

**By Steven Hendrickson**

As we approach three major seasons of waiting for God, the birth of Jesus Christ, and the bright light of Christ, how are your inner preparations going? How are your daily devotions of engaging with scripture and quiet time unfolding? As faithful disciples of Christ, we need to be aware of pitfalls of the season that can quench the bright light within us. These are busyness, preoccupation with materialism, and eating copious amounts of food that we know are not good for our physical bodies. Choosing not to indulge in these pitfalls creates a heartfelt quiet place for our devotion to God.

Busyness, what more can be said except that our social commitments and to-do lists grow exponentially at this time of year. We are busy doing and not be-ing.

What are your choices of priorities for your time? The material aspects of Christmas can be the most seductive temptation of all. We may say that moderation is the best policy, but are we really practicing simplicity for the sake of the earth and reducing debt in our financial life? You know for yourself the answer to these questions.

All of the holiday parties and especially family dinners are highlights of the season for many of us. We commonly expect that weight gain is a natural outcome. How does this affect our life of faith? First of all, we are not treating our bodies as temples of the living God. Beside weight gain, we are less sensitive physically and possibly encouraging illness and disease. Good health practices shows a dimension of caring for ourselves, others, and for all of Creation. One can be conscious of these pitfalls and grow in love.

In celebrating these holy days, let's create spaces of quiet, self reflection, gratitude, and actions of devotion to complement our Worship together!

A blessed Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany to all.....



# Birthdays & Anniversaries

11-5 Sandra Eldridge	11-17 Ariela Turzo	11-24 Kathy Johnson
11-7 Dorothy Ronning	11-19 Isaiah Brouse	11-25 Brian Brouse
11-10 Amanda Cuninghm	11-19 Briana Juhl	11-26 Galahad Hughes
11-11 Charlotte (Smawley) Judd	11-19 Jessica Juhl	11-26 Linda Ronning
	11-20 Hilding Ronning	11- 27 David & Martha Balogh
11-11 Zellie Lapp	11-22 James Jones	
11-14 Barbara Johnston	11-22 John Hopping	
11-16 Stephen Cappelloni	11-23 Xavier Brown	
11-17 James Abler	11-24 Kirstin Csik-Hughes	

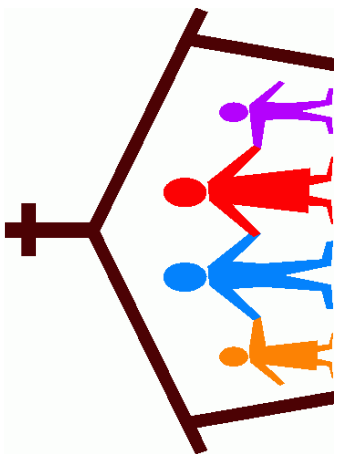
*10/20 Belated wishes  
to George Webber*



**SHORT TERM:** For Connie and Family of Paul Cunningham, For Julie Mouw and Family of Marty Lundin, George Webber, Michelle & Family, Family of Travis, Boci, Isaac & Marissa, Chris Powers, Gloria, Jack & Kim Sanford, Lucia, Dennis Lewis, For Beth & Family of Barbara Stiles, Marta's parents, Adrienne, George & Louside Matz, Friends in Tel Aviv, family of Barbara Klappper, family of Lauren Patrick, Patrick & Family, The Moore family, the

Brown Family, Family of Sandra Barker, Nick, James, Beth Mills, Mary D., Candace Anderson & family, Tom, Galahad, Susan O., Debbie, Sam, James, Michael Lee, Nate Barker, Grandpa Dennis, Bob & Shirley Salter, Monica & Family, Lurline Moore, Beth Butler, Jen, Robbin, Maria Mendoza, Ila & Reina, Francisco, Margot Wilson, Michael, Keith, Noelle, Ensley, Tim Oldfield, Sierra, Julie R., Rosie, Janet, Sue, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, James, Taiyo, Marissa, Isaac, Alvarado family, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Sandi Csik, Janica Paustian, James, John, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Barbara Allen, Sandy, Levi & Alexandria, Gary Toops, Paul Paustian, Gaye Cornell, Dorothy, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Nancy, Mateo & Lina, Don, Atlas, Will, Aaron Johnson, Sal, Katarina, Stephanie Jager.

**LONG TERM:** Biergiel—Colclough family, Carla Brown, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit and family (Ethiopia), 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, 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.



## 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  
October 30, 2024**

**POST OFFICE:  
DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

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

Non-Profit Org.  
Postage Paid  
Permit #7079  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060-9998