

St. Stephen Lutheran Church of the East Bay & Central Valley

(A Congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession)
www.ststephenclc.org

**Worshiping Every Sunday in the East Bay at 9 a.m. at
Grace Lutheran Church
1836 B St., Hayward, CA 94541-3140**

Worshiping in the Central Valley at 2 p.m. - 1st & 3rd Sundays
of the Month

Atria Senior Living - Bayside Landing - 1st Floor Activity
Room
3318 Brookside Rd., Stockton, CA 95219

Pastor: Steven Karp

21290 Birch St. - Hayward, CA 94541-1538

Phone: (510) 581-6637; e-mail: se-karp@sbcglobal.net

Organist: Elizabeth Karp

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**The Last Sunday of the Church Year – 20 November
2016**

Liturgy — Page 5 in The Lutheran Hymnal

HYMNS: 446 Rise My Soul, To Watch And Pray (1-2 & 5-6)
72 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers
609 Wake, Awake, For Night Is Flying

Sermon Text: Matthew 25,1-13

Sermon Theme: Proper Preventative Spiritual Maintenance

1. Waiting And Wondering
2. Drowsiness And Sleep
3. Wake Up Time!

INTROIT: I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End:
which is, and which was, and which is to come, the
Almighty. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and
He will dwell with them: and they shall be His people, and
God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. Lift up
your heads, O you gates; and be you lifted up, you
everlasting doors: and the King of Glory shall come in.
Glory be to the Father ...

COLLECT: O Lord God, heavenly Father, make us ever
watchful and heedful in awaiting the coming of Your Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ, that when He shall stand at the door
and knock, He may not find us sleeping in carelessness and
sin, but awake and rejoicing in His appearing; through
Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns
with You and the Holy Spirit, ever the One true God, world
without end. **Amen.**

Old Testament

Isaiah 65,17-19

[Therefore, thus says the LORD:]

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former things shall not be remembered or
come to mind.

18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
 For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing,
 And her people for gladness.
 19 I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My
 people;
 And there will no longer be heard in her the sound of
 crying.

Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5,1-11

Now as to the times and epochs, brethren, you have no
 need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves
 know full well that the Day of the Lord will come just like



a thief in the night. ³ While
 they are saying, “Peace and
 safety!” then destruction will
 come upon them suddenly
 like birth pangs upon a
 woman with child; and they
 shall not escape. ⁴ But you,
 brethren, are not in darkness,
 that the day should overtake
 you like a thief; ⁵ for you are
 sons of light and sons of
 day. We are not of night nor
 of darkness; ⁶ so then let us

not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For
 those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who
 get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of the day,
 let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and
 love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has
 not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation
 through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ Who died for us, that

whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with
 Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another with these words,
 and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

GRADUAL

And the ransomed of the Lord will return,
And come with joyful shouting to Zion.
 When the Lord brought back the captive ones of Zion,
We were like those who dream.
 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
And our tongue with joyful shouting.
 Then they said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”
 The Lord has done great things for us;
We are glad.
 Those who sow in tears
Shall reap with joyful shouting.
 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed;
Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.
 Hallelujah! O Lord, deal with Your servant according to
 Your mercy and teach me Your statutes.
I am Your servant, give me understanding that I
may know Your testimonies. [sing: triple Hallelujah]

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 25,1-13

Response: Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

[Jesus spoke to His disciples:] “Then the Kingdom
 of Heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took
 their lamps, and went out to meet the Bridegroom. ² And
 five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. ³ For
 when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with

them. ⁴ But the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. ⁵ Now while the Bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. ⁶ But at midnight there was



a shout, ‘Behold, the Bridegroom! Come out to meet Him.’ ⁷ Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹ But the prudent answered, saying, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for

yourselves.’ ¹⁰ And while they were going away to make the purchase, the Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with Him into the wedding feast; and the door was shut. ¹¹ And later the other virgins also came up, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open up for us.’ ¹² But He answered and said, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ ¹³ Be on the alert, then, for you do not know the day or the hour.”

[Scripture passages are from the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation, used by permission]

Response: Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

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Lessons for 27 November — The First Sunday of Advent

Old Testament: Zechariah 9,9-10
Epistle: Romans 13,8-14
The Holy Gospel: Matthew 21,1-9

Weekly Scripture Verse: Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps alight. (Luke 12,35)

Today’s **Gradual** consists of selected verses from Isaiah 35 and Psalm 126.

Next Service in Stockton: Today, at 2 p.m.

Bible Study. Hayward –Tuesday, 22 November, at 1:30 p.m.

Stockton, Tuesday, 29 November, at 2 p.m.

ILL. In your prayers, please remember Nancy and Roy Cameron; Jean Niblett; Marlene Clappier; Sue (the Karps’ neighbor who is undergoing chemotherapy), Don Drews; Richard and Beth Hocker; Ruth Scheuermann; Pr. Doug Priestap (Florida); Pr. Steven Karp; Mary Ryan (of Eau Claire, WI); Deena; Peter.



Call News. St. Stephen Lutheran, Mountain View, and St. Stephen Lutheran, Hayward, CA, have called the Rev. Luke Bernthal, pastor of Grace Lutheran, Valentine, NE, Peace Lutheran, Mission, and St. Paul’s Lutheran, White River, SD. Zion Lutheran, Lawrenceville, GA, has called the Rev. Michael Wilke, pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran, Saginaw, MI. Pastor Emeritus Dan Fleischer has returned the Call from St. Stephen Lutheran of Mountain View, CA, and St. Stephen Lutheran of the East Bay & Central Valley to be their interim pastor. Rock of Ages Lutheran, Grand Rapids, MI, has called the Rev. Timothy Wheaton, pastor of Living Word Lutheran, Blue Springs (Kansas City area), MO.

Handout – *Higher Things: Reflections – Advent-Christmas* Nov.

27, 2016 – Jan. 7, 2017. On the cover, the Greek ὁ λόγος means “the Word,” and refers to the beginning of John’s Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Advent begins next Sunday and consists of the four Sundays preceding Christmas, when the Word of God became flesh and was pleased to dwell among us to begin His work of redemption. During this penitential season of Advent, we look forward to Jesus’ coming in Grace.

CLC Missionary Call - In a September call meeting of the Board of Missions chaired by our CLC President, Michael Eichstadt, a call was issued to Pastor Todd Ohlmann to become our CLC Visiting Missionary. After six weeks of prayerful deliberation, Pastor Ohlmann accepted that call. For this we give praise and thanks to the Lord of the harvest.

Pastor Ohlmann will begin his service as CLC Missionary on January 1, 2017. We invite members of CLC congregations to attend a Commissioning service for Missionary Ohlmann at Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on Monday, January 2, 2017 at 7:00pm.

As presented to our CLC Convention this summer, this call is unlike previous CLC Missionary calls. Missionary Ohlmann will be stationed here in the United States (the Ohlmann's plan to remain in the St. Louis area), but will spend approximately 6 months each year making regular visitations to our sister church bodies and developing contacts in foreign fields. In the months that he is stateside his duties will include visits to domestic subsidized congregations, correspondence with foreign affiliates and new contacts, continuing development of the Online Theological Studies website, assisting with the CLC Mission

Helper Program, attending Board of Missions meetings in an advisory capacity, guest preaching, attending area delegate conferences, and any other opportunities the Board of Missions deems appropriate and necessary.

The Board of Missions will be holding a special meeting on January 2-3, and working through Pastor Ohlmann's transition as chairman of the Board of Missions to serving the Board in an advisory capacity.

We rejoice in the opportunities that are before us as a church body, and give thanks to the Lord for providing this new worker in the harvest of souls. We ask for your prayers on behalf of Missionary Ohlmann and his family as they continue their service to their Lord and ours in this new way. May the Lord's name be hallowed, His Kingdom come, and His will done!

Clement of Rome, Bishop (ca. 35 - 23 November 96). Clement was a “bishop” in Rome and is generally considered to have been the second or third after the apostle Peter. Little



is known of his life, but he did write one letter to the Corinthians that is considered authentic and may have written another.

In his first letter, Clement upheld apostolic authority in the face of problems in the Corinthian congregations (what’s new?), in which certain leaders (“presbyters”) had been disposed. He said that since the apostles had appointed these presbyters, they should be respected and retained in office. Outside of the New Testament, it is one of the oldest Christian documents in existence. In his letter, however, he seemingly makes no distinction between higher

church leaders, described as “presbyters” (usually considered to be “elders”) and “bishops” (*episkopoi*). He does, however, say that Holy Communion should only be celebrated by the “higher clergy” (that is, those above the rank of deacon).

Thus, even though Clement was a bishop in Rome, it is uncertain as to what exactly the office of bishop consisted of. It is doubtful that it would be like the monarchical bishopric that later evolved in the Church. So, even if the Roman Church considers him to be a bishop of Rome and therefore a pope, it is doubtful that he was a pope in the present day sense of the word.

Later literature has him deported to the Crimea where he was martyred by being fastened to an anchor and thrown into the sea. Thus, in Church he is represented by an anchor, which is described as “St. Clement’s Cross.”



From a historical point of view, it is difficult to say that Clement was a pope in the sense in which the papacy later developed; indeed, it is difficult to say that a bishop might not merely have been the head pastor of a house church.

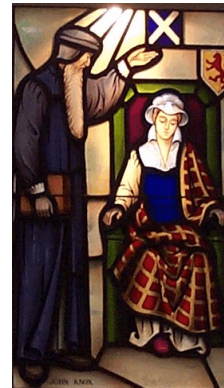
John Knox, Scottish Reformer (ca. 1505 - 24 November 1572). Known as the “Thundering Scot,” Knox was a leader



of the Scottish Reformation. His parents were probably farmers and he went to university in Scotland and became a priest and a lawyer. By 1545 he was tutoring the sons of two Protestant nobles who were the protectors of George Wishart, a Protestant preacher.

In Scotland the Reformation was closely identified with anti-French nationalism (as the French

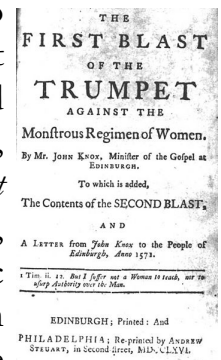
were the powers behind the Scottish throne), and this resistance had been growing since the 1520s. In 1546 Wishart was burned at the stake and Knox joined a group of rebel



**Knox Chastising
Mary Queen of
Scots**

nobles who had murdered Cardinal Beaton, the Archbishop of St. Andrews. For three months he and the others were besieged in St. Andrew’s castle, and while there he proved to be a powerful preacher. A later observer noted that he could inspire like the sound of 500 trumpets and a 1,000 drums. In 1547, the French broke the siege and Knox spent the next eighteen months as a galley slave. Through the influence of King Edward IV of England he was released, went to England, assisted Archbishop Cranmer with the

“Forty-Two Articles” and the second edition of *The Book of Common Prayer*, and in general denounced Roman Catholicism. When Mary I ascended to the throne he fled to the continent, and in Geneva ministered to other English refugees. Like Beza, he went far beyond Calvin in advocating armed resistance against “ungodly rulers.” In 1547, he published *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, which was directed against female Catholic rule in England, Scotland, and France. In 1558 Mary I died and Elizabeth I became



queen; she barred Knox from England, for she rightly perceived that even though “The First Blast” was directed against Catholic rulers, the arguments could just as easily apply to her as well; however, Elizabeth did allow Knox to pass unhindered through England on his way back to

Scotland.

Once in Scotland (1559-72), his sermons inspired the Lords of the Congregation, that is, the rebel Protestant nobility, and with English assistance they forced French troops from Scotland and established the Reformation. Knox became the minister of St. Giles, Edinburgh, and was closely involved in the *Scots Confession* and *The First Book of Discipline*, which was the body of beliefs and the Presbyterian organization adopted by the Kirk from 1560 on. Further civil war dragged on through the reign of Mary, Queen of Scots (1561-67), before she fled to England, where she met what was for her an unexpected end (beheaded in 1587). On at least four separate occasion, Knox personally berated her.

Thanksgiving Day Service

We will have a Thanksgiving Day Service at Grace Lutheran Church, 1836 B St., Hayward, at 9 a.m. on Thursday, 24 November.



O, give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good;
For His mercy endures forever. (Psalm 106,1)