

# The Benediction

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Los Osos, California

**The Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall**

Rector

**The Rev. M.E. Pratt-Horsley**

Rector Emeritus

**The Rev. Donna Ross**

Associate Priest

**The Rev. Barry Turner**

Associate Priest

**The Rev. Sharon G. Dalrymple**

Deacon

**The Parish Council**

Maria Kelly, Sr. Warden

Pamela Bleisch Strawn, Jr. Warden

John Cribb

Elaine Goodman

Lisa Gonzalez

Anne Kanter

Michael Lucas

Celeste Pennington

Francis Rivinus

Kathie West

**Benediction Publisher:**

The Rev. Dr. Caroline J. A. Hall

**Benediction Editor:**

Kit Gould

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**Sunday Services**

The first Sunday of each month:

10:30 am One service of Holy  
Communion with music

All other Sundays:

8:00 am Holy Communion  
with inclusive language

10:30 am Holy Communion  
with music

Refreshments and fellowship follow  
each service.

Church: 2220 Snowy Egret Lane

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**Dear Friends:**

As I write this I am listening to the choir practicing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" downstairs. Emmanuel means "God with us" and I am so aware today of God's presence with us in this community of faith. We are greatly blessed by those who worshipped in this space before us, by those who have lovingly built it and who maintain it and by each one of us who prays and worships and continues to build up the spiritual energy here. And we are greatly blessed by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Every time we recognize him here it makes it a little easier for someone else to see her too.



Now Advent is coming and we are focusing on the hope of the last days, the last days of this world order when everything will be transformed and Christ's reign will be fully revealed. We don't really know what that means, but it has been the hope of Christians through the ages, that Christ will come again in a new reality where gospel values are truly lived and everyone is treated fairly. Every Sunday as we gather together we create a little foretaste of the joy of the day when everything is restored in him and pain and sorrow are no more.

So what are we to prepare for, in this season of preparation?

I already know what Jill and I will give each other for Christmas this year. Middle-aged gift giving is not like the eager anticipation of childhood but nonetheless it is sweet. We Christians already know that at Christmas God will once again give the gift of God's unconditional love, wrapped up like a baby in a manger. Just like every other year. It would be easy for this to be ho-hum, rather dull, done-it-all-before.

Yet that God-man child is the most profound though simple gift and we could spend every moment of every day of the rest of our lives pondering the depths of the meaning of the incarnation – God taking on human flesh – God becoming one of us – Emmanuel, God with us. So perhaps our task in preparation is to clean the lenses of our inner glasses, to shed the cynicism and the ho-humness of the season and instead to open ourselves up for a new understanding, a new revelation.

Every Sunday morning I pray that each one of us who comes to church will be touched by the Spirit of God and that none of us will leave exactly the same as we came in. That is also my prayer this Advent... that each of us may be opened up to the grace and presence of God in a new way, that we may see the new in the familiar and that we may be changed. Just like Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the magi and, I'm prepared to bet, the sheep and donkey were changed by the miraculous and startling events of that Christmas night so many years ago.

With love in Christ,  
Caro+

Rev. Caroline J. A. Hall

## Surprised By God! Parish Council Notes

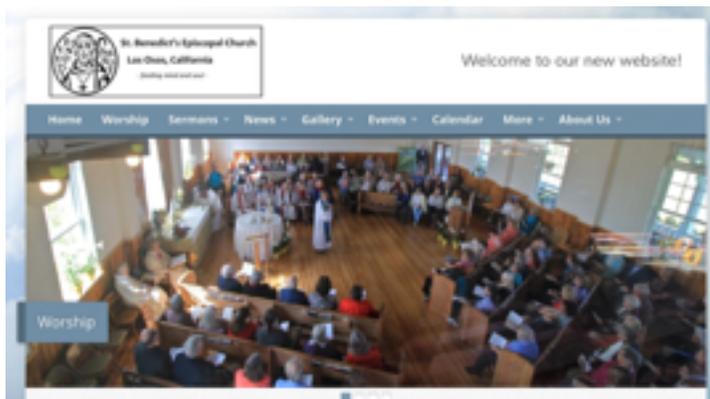
The Parish Council has been talking about next year being the time when we seriously start a campaign to pay off the debt (currently standing at \$458,000). We are thinking of calling it “**Blessing the Future**” and, until very recently, paying off the full debt within a few years seemed an audacious goal.

Then, quite unexpectedly, St. Benedict’s was given a gift of appreciated stock which, when sold, will probably bring in about \$400k. So the **Blessing the Future** campaign has a major lead gift already. Praise God!

This has the Parish Council scratching our collective head. Should the **Blessing the Future** campaign become something much more than just repaying the debt? The lead gift is just for capital – for paying off the debt or building and fund development, not for the operating fund. But might it be a springboard to encourage us all not just to get out of debt but to bless the future with... with what?

Here are some of the Parish Council's initial thoughts: a full-time Rectorship; an endowment fund; a fund for major repairs (the roof will need replacing ere long; the veranda railings need to be replaced...); widening the veranda to make hospitality easier; landscaping; a labyrinth; a columbarium; or, or, or...

Please come to a **Parish Meeting on November 15 following the 10:30 service** to share your ideas. It is an important time for us to talk about this amazing gift God has given us and to provide direction for future Parish Council decisions. The meeting will be over by 1:30. Please plan to be there... we’ll provide some lunch.



## St. Ben's OnLine: New Website

Thanks to the diligent and hard work of our now retired webmaster, Rob Ross, St. Benedict's now has a new and redesigned website. The address is still the same [www.stbenslososos.org](http://www.stbenslososos.org) but it's much easier to read and to navigate. Please check the calendar there before you pick up the phone to ask Stef or Danna when something is happening! For the time being Caro+ and Danna will be updating the copy, and Stef will update the calendar. If God is calling you to be our new webmaster, please let us know.

## Welcome back Sarah Chesebro

Another gift from God, Sarah Chesebro, who has been living in Sacramento for the past ten years, has returned to Los Osos and to St. Benedict's. We are thrilled that Sarah has graciously agreed to head up the altar guild and double up as Sacristan. So the altar guild members now have someone they can ask questions and refer to when things need a second eye and the sacristan team has someone to coordinate them and the Flower Guild has someone to check things with. Sarah has already been hard at work bringing order to the sacristy and giving the iron a much needed workout. Thank you Sarah, and welcome back to St Ben's!

## Rector's Furlough

As you know, Caro+ is employed as rector 42% of full-time. To make this work, she is furloughed two months of the year. So she will be on furlough Nov 2 through Dec 3 coming back to work on Dec 4. The church office will be open during this time as usual 9:30 to 12:30 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday except for Thanksgiving week so Danna can have time with her family.

You are welcome to contact one of the other clergy for spiritual conversation; if you have specific pastoral needs please contact Celeste Pennington first; in the event of small building issues please contact Danna first; and Maria Kelly for larger issues or general church business.

Despite it being during her furlough month, Caro+ will be attending Diocesan Convention on November 6 and 7 and will participate in the Parish Meeting on November 15.

## Deacon Dispatch

by Deacon Sharon

It has taken me a number of years to grasp the concept that marriage is indeed a contract between two people. Knowing that my spouse didn't like much of anything about the beach, i.e. sand, wind, etc., I maintained that we should move here anyway. Shelley has given it her best shot, but is missing lake and river fishing, riding horses in the forest, walking in the woods and all the kinds of things that nurture her soul just like the beach feeds me in the same way. And, it turns out, I also find myself in a position of needing to be in Nevada for personal family business issues. So, Shell and I have struck a bargain and have leased a home in Reno. We are not selling our Los Osos home and will use it as our vacation house for our time spent here. Our Bishop +Mary has been totally understanding, and has said I will still be your deacon. This nurtures my soul! We will be moving to Reno after Christmas, but will be back for Holy Week and other periods of time thereafter. We will surely miss all of you during the times we are away, because it's not St. Ben's that is at issue. So, please remember that St. Benedict's will always be our church home. You will all be in our prayers, and I ask you to keep us both in your prayers. Blessings to all.

## Congratulations St Ben's chefs!!!

This year the annual Canterbury fundraiser - which raises money to support the Episcopal ministry to students and young adults which is housed at St. Stephens and run by Chaplain Berkeley Johnson - included a chili cook off. Nearly all the parishes in the San Luis Obispo deanery participated, with St Ben's having two entries - the Digby Special vegan chili by chef Lorraine Schwenk and the Texas Power by Shelley Watanabe and Deacon Sharon Dalrymple. Both of our entries were in the top three - the Texas power came in first place with the Digby Special in third. Yay chefs!!

## The Shire @ Canterbury

by Berkeley Johnson

Many, many thanks to all who came out to St. Stephen's on Sun., Oct. 18th, to support our annual fundraiser. We had chili entries from all over the deanery, a great bbq chicken dinner, several happy raffle winners, and many happy silent auction winners.



The participation from all of you in our first annual chili cook-off was inspiring, and our judges, Bishop Mary, Steve Lloyd-Moffett, and Colyn Andrews made it fun and exciting as well.

Next up on the hit parade for The Shire is our presentation at diocesan convention on Fri., Nov. 6th. Bishop Mary has asked me to talk about our transition to an interfaith approach to reaching our young adults, and Colyn will be joining me as well to talk about his journey with us.

As many of you already know, our new logo was finalized and unveiled this past month. It was designed by one of our young adults, Derek Schultz, and it has received a lot of positive feedback.

Lastly, I am in contact with Cal Poly to establish a forum on racial justice on campus and hope to have more news about progress on that front in the near future. Stay tuned.

Thank you for your epic and continuing support of our deanery outreach to college and campus ministry.



**New Logo.** We've been through a few drafts (ha ha), so if you've seen one already, perhaps on Facebook, this is the one we'll be keeping. One of our young adults, Derek Schultz, took on the project and worked hard (and patiently) to visualize this with us, so a big thank you to Derek! Our original SLO Canterbury Club Logo was designed by Robin Denney; so in both instances now, our logo has arisen from the creative talents of our young adults, and of that I'm very proud.

## New Administrative Assistant

Please join us in welcoming Danna Dykstra-Coy as our new Administrative Assistant. She was hired in September and works Tuesdays-Thursdays 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. performing a variety of duties as office and facilities manager. Danna is available during these times at the church number (528-0654) or by email at [office@stbenslososos.org](mailto:office@stbenslososos.org).

Danna enjoys providing administrative support for the church leadership and serving as a liaison among members of the congregation, groups using the facilities, vendors and "walk-ins" seeking assistance. She has administrative experience as the 7-year owner of a North Coast vegan peanut butter cup business, "The Joycup Co.," which she sold in May of this year.



Photo by Danna Dykstra-Coy

She was an administrative assistant at the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department five years before promoting to a deputy Probation Officer assigned to the juvenile caseload. Danna worked eleven years at the San Luis Obispo Tribune and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications.

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Danna and her husband Norman have lived in Cayucos 22 years and they worship at El Morro Nazarene Church. The Coys have four children and seven grandchildren. In Danna's spare time, she walks and keeps her camera close. She recently won five blue ribbons at the Mid-State Fair for her photo entries capturing the beauty of our area. Welcome!



## St. Benedict's Recycles and Reuses

by Pamela Bleisch-Strawn

St. Benedict's collects used batteries, wine corks, printer cartridges, and prescription eyeglasses. for recycling and/ or reuse. This is just one small part of our church's good environmental stewardship.

In California, it is illegal to dispose of single-use alkaline batteries in the trash. Instead, all used batteries should go to a household hazardous waste disposal facility, or an authorized recycling facility. Batteries are considered hazardous because they contain toxic or corrosive materials. Batteries also are recyclable, providing a valuable source of metal.

According to a report entitled, [Household Universal Waste Generation in California, August 2002](#), there were 507,259,000 batteries sold in California in the year 2001. According to survey results published in the report, only 0.55% of these batteries were recycled.



Over 50 lbs of single-use, alkaline batteries have been collected from St. Ben's. We take our used alkaline batteries to Ace Hardware, where they are sent to be reclaimed for scrap metals.

Two dozen printer cartridges have been collected from St. Ben's. Used printer cartridges are taken to Staples office supply store, where they are refilled with ink and used again, or are recycled for their plastic. St. Ben's gets store credit for every ten used printer cartridges.

Over 250 wine-corks have been collected from St. Ben's. Corks are taken to BevMo, where they are shipped off to be shredded and recycled into new composite corks.

Nine pairs of prescription eyeglasses have been collected. Prescription eyeglasses are taken to the local Lions Club International, for their eyeglass recycling program, which has permanent clinics in Mexico, Peru and Sri Lanka.

If you have more ideas for how St. Benedict's can reduce, reuse, and recycle, please share them with Pamela Bleisch Strawn, your junior warden.

## Climate Change: St. Benedict's supports CCA feasibility study

by Bob Pelfry

At the October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, item #28 dealt with a proposal for our county to partner with Santa Barbara and Ventura counties to study the feasibility of all three counties forming a regional CCA energy distribution district.

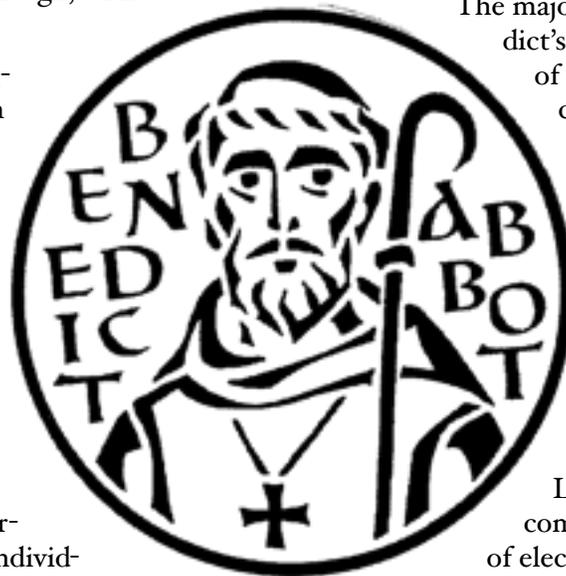
Three members of the St. Benedict's Climate Change committee spoke in favor of the study: Rev. Caro Hall, Alice Welchert, and Bob Pelfrey. What is the significance of this proposal, and why did it draw the support of three members of St. Benedict's community? Good question. Let's begin the answer, though, with another question: What is a CCA?

A CCA- or Community Choice Aggregation- is an energy distribution organization that uses the current distribution infrastructure, e.g., PG & E, as a means for giving each energy consumer in the district a choice in terms of what form of energy they want to purchase. For example, individual energy consumers in Marin and Sonoma counties—where a CCA has been in operation since 2011—may select, say, fifty percent green, ten percent solar, twenty percent coal, etc., according to their individual beliefs on the value of each energy source. The distributor, e.g. PG & E, is then responsible for accessing energy sources based on the preference/choice indicated by each customer. It should be noted that PG & E spent thirty-five million dollars to oppose the initial level of Marin County's CCA, but their ballot initiative was defeated (The ballot measure would have required a two-thirds vote from county residents). The Marin CCA has proved to be both economically and politically viable over the past four years, as indicated by the interest today in San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties.

There could be cost variables within this system. A customer selecting one hundred percent green, for instance, might have to pay a slightly higher rate than customers choosing carbon-based sources, but any

added cost would be clear to the customer before the choice is made. As a matter of fact, total energy costs in Marin county have gone down since the introduction of the CCA format. The continuing decline in cost for renewable energy promises to bring savings down to the individual level in the near future.

The CCA format therefore not only addresses the overriding issue of climate change, but also transforms the purchase of energy into a more democratic and capitalistic process: a rare win-win for both political liberals and conservatives.



The major reason for members of St. Benedict's to speak publicly before the Board of Supervisors should now be clear. It continues St. Benedict's commitment to regarding climate change as a religious and moral issue, as seen in the August-September public discussion session on Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change, "Laudato Si". It also affirms St. Benedict's commitment to climate change in — by a recent vestry vote- becoming a member of "Interfaith Power and Light", an organization of religious communities supporting the lobbying of elected public officials on climate change issues.

The three people who spoke in support of the CCA multi-county feasibility were thus continuing a policy already set into motion at St. Benedict's: giving the prophetic voice its proper place in this issue that threatens not only the human population but all of the voiceless creatures who depend on us to speak for them...which is the Christian tradition remembers and honors in the life of St. Francis, as Pope Francis has memorably reminded us.

Finally, yes, the supervisors voted to approve the feasibility study. The margin was 3- 2. You will be hearing more about this study as its research and recommendations reach the point of public discussion. Meanwhile, St. Benedict's will continue to find ways to speak in a prophetic voice on climate change.

## News from Prado Day Center

by Alice Welchert

Every month I deliver donations from St. Benedict's to Prado Day Center -- where they are gratefully received. Most items we give are for the breakfast program which is a special need since no particular organization(s) sponsors it. At the same time, Prado has a number of other needs as listed below (from their website). Although I didn't see it listed, meteorologists anticipate significant rainfall this year. I'm sure hooded ponchos will also be welcomed.

### GENERAL NEEDS

Peanut butter & jelly  
 Butter in tubs  
 Coffee, creamer & sugar  
 Nutritious kids' snacks  
 Juice box drinks  
 Canned food/soups/tuna  
 Large serving bowls, utensils, platters  
 Can openers  
 Ziploc bags (gallon size), plastic wrap/aluminum foil, paper towels  
 Large & small trash bags

### WARMING STATION

Coffee/sugar/cream  
 Cup o' noodles  
 Canned ready to eat food  
 Blankets/sleeping bags

### BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Juice  
 Milk, soy drink  
 Bread/bagels

Cream cheese  
 Cereal bars  
 Paper plates & napkins  
 Plastic flatware & bowls  
 Hot & cold cereal  
 Instant hot chocolate mix

### CHILDREN'S PLAYROOM

Coloring books  
 Outdoor toys

### ADULTS

Backpacks  
 Hair brushes & combs Pens & pencils

### TOILETRIES

Men's/women's deodorant  
 Sunscreen  
 Fingernail clippers  
 Chapstick (lip balm)  
 Hair styling gel  
 Hair spray  
 Body wash

Q-Tips (cotton swabs)  
 Toothbrushes  
 Hand sanitizer (5oz or larger)  
 Disposable razors  
 Towels

### GIFT CERTIFICATES

Fast food  
 Gas stations  
 Phone cards  
 Discount clothing & shoes  
 CVS or Rite-Aid

### OTHER

Laundry detergent  
 Sewing kits  
 Hotel shampoos  
 Hotel bar soap  
 Large wooden brooms  
 Computer & copier paper  
 Postage stamps  
 Envelopes  
 Shower curtains

## Quilting Bee

by Pamela Bleisch Strawn

At St. Benedict's Fall Quilting Bee on Saturday September 26th, this richly colored quilt top was pieced by Charlene Morse. We enjoyed a day of creative fun and good fellowship. Rev. Caro led us in a moving litany for refugees, and Anne Kanter provided us a delicious luncheon.

Everyone is welcome to join us as we up-cycle fabric remnants, used blankets and second-hand sheets into cozy quilts to be distributed to refugees worldwide.

To get in on the fun, talk to Pamela Bleisch Strawn, 805.602.1240, and she will put you on the St. Ben's Quilting Bee contact list.



**St Bens welcomed new members** who have joined us in the past year. JW, Julie Bailey, Joan Gilotti, Jo Oliver, Deacon Sharon Dalrymple, Barry Turner+, Ruth Turner, Kelsey Morse, Charlene Morse and

## Thanksgiving Dinner

Please consider joining St. Ben's for our Thanksgiving Dinner on **Thursday November 26<sup>th</sup> at 1pm**. This is always a fun occasion with friends and family. Please look for a sign-up sheet to let us know what you will bring. If you have questions please ask Deacon Sharon.

## Christmas at St Benedict's

**EVENT!**

Enjoy a service of **Advent readings and carols** presented by St. Peter's choir with members of the St Benedict's Singers on the Second Sunday of Advent, December 6 at St Peter's Morro Bay.

The **Blue Christmas service** will be on Sunday December 13 at 6pm. This is a special service we offer to our neighbors and ourselves for those years when the holiday season is not so merry and bright.

Our own **St Benedict's Carol Concert** will be at 3pm on the afternoon of Sunday December 20. You don't want to miss this - please remember to bring your friends and family!

**Christmas Eve** we'll have services at 4:30 and 8pm, with carol singing at 7:45 and **Christmas Day** a quiet service at 10:00 followed by brunch.

Check the calendar on the new and improved website [www.stbenslososos.org](http://www.stbenslososos.org) for times of all these services and also the concerts and services of outside groups who will be enjoying the St Benedict's space.

## Upcoming Events...

### Holiday Hobnob and Historic Walk of SLO Sunday, December 13th

Do join us for a drop-in holiday party (with some possible Christmas singing), 4-5 pm, on Sunday, December 13th, followed by an easy, guided historic walk past 15 lovely, holiday-lit Victorian homes in "Old Town" San Luis Obispo. On the stroll, Joe Morris will recount what Christmas past was like--its events and customs--in 1890s SLO. Duration about 1 1/2 hrs. No need to RSVP or bring anything. You can come just for the party or the walk, which meets in front of St. Stephen's at 5 p.m. Joe's address is 533 Pismo St., #4 (one block from St. Stephen's) 805.549.0355

### Allan Hancock College Singers Christmas Concert December 3rd and 5th

The festivity of the Christmas season, both sacred and secular, is the musical theme of "What Cheer?" two concerts by the Allan Hancock College Singers scheduled for early December. The choir, directed by Hancock music faculty member Dr. Ann Lucas, will be at the First United Methodist Church in Santa Maria on Thursday December 3, at 7:30 p.m. The second concert will be in our own St. Benedict's Episcopal Church in Los Osos, on Saturday December 5 at 3 p.m.

Selections include an even-handed sampling of everything musically Christmas: plainchant, Renaissance-madrigal style, the English choral tradition, African-American gospel, and even a spoof on "The Twelve Days of Christmas" when love goes bad and gifts are not appreciated! Director Lucas has also tried her hand at arranging two carols for the choir that will bookend the concert, "Silent Night" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

The centerpiece of the concerts is a Christmas motet by the French Baroque composer Marc Antoine Charpentier, which will feature three solo voices, one of whom is Brian Spolarich, and a small string ensemble with keyboard. Several vocalists from the St Benedict Singers will join the Hancock group as guests, including Caroline Hall+, John Cribb, Brian Spolarich, Alan Kiste, Francis Rivinus, and Lorraine Schwenk. Tickets are available in advance or at the door, and all seats, which are not reserved, are \$8. Seating is limited.



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