

# 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. Faye Hogan**

Associate Priest

**The Rev. Sharon G. Dalrymple**

Deacon

**The Parish Council**

Maria Kelly, Sr. Warden

Anne Kanter, Jr. Warden

John Cribb

Elaine Goodman

Lisa Gonzalez

Esta Kandarian

Jo Oliver

Francis Rivinus

Barbara Skippers

Kathie West

**Benediction Publisher:**

The Rev. Dr. Caroline J. A. Hall

**Benediction Editor:**

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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:**

A friend of the church recently told me, "this place is magic." She was right. St Benedict's *is* "magic". It's magic because it is a place where the veil between the seen and unseen worlds is thin – we often feel the presence of God, and the heavenly host worshipping with us. But this magic is not accidental.

It comes from the land itself – the Los Osos Valley which provided for the Chumash people for centuries, both physical and spiritual sustenance; from all those who prayed in the chapel when it was at Camp Roberts; from the genius of those who decided to situate the church with its windows facing east and west; from the vision and dedicated care of all those who imagined the possibilities, moved it and built it back in the form it is today.

Last month, Faith Watkins died. Faith was a person of great energy and willpower. It was Faith who spearheaded the moving of the church building, it was Faith who managed the entire building project. Her love of beauty and her eye for quality helped to make the church much more than just an old chapel building, but a place of simple beauty where God can be worshipped and where even unchurched people may experience a sense of "magic." Even in recent years, although she has not attended services, Faith continued to launder and iron the altar cloths and to provide food for gatherings and parties. Her death leaves a big hole in the fabric of our community life. But we also know that in some ways Faith is closer to us now, as in the mystic communion of Saints we worship God together.

This too is part of the "magic" of St. Ben's; when we worship we are joining with a much larger "cloud of witnesses" as St. Paul said; and when the people of St. Ben's worship we do so wholeheartedly with joy and intention. This is reflected in our music and in our liturgy. It is reflected in the number of people who volunteer each month to make sure that our liturgical service to God is as beautiful and carefully crafted as our building.

But the magic is not just in worship; it is also in the way we continue to work for the reign of God through helping those in need; by the way we offer the residents of Los Osos a recycling and reusing center where the abundance of God's love is made manifest; by the way we offer lunch at the Prado Day Center and provide breakfast and personal items for those who use it; it is reflected in our hospitality to the community as we welcome concerts and meetings into our space.

We do all these things because God has so loved us we cannot but help share the true "magic" – the lavish and abundant unconditional love of God for the whole of Creation.

Thank you for all you do to create and share the "magic,"

With blessings,

Caro+



Rev. Caroline J. A. Hall

## **Parish Council Report**

The Parish Council has:

- Regretfully accepted the resignation of two members; Elaine Goodman and Jo Oliver, and has appointed Rod Morse to fill Jo's unexpired term.
- Appointed Pam Bleisch to lead the Social and Service Justice team, with Judy Schloss continuing to be a member. The Parish Council thanks Judy for her years of service. The new role of the team will be to listen for the prompting of the Holy Spirit leading us in our work for social justice and in service to the community. It will proactively consider possible opportunities for St Ben's; make recommendations to the Parish Council about new programs; connect with those running our current programs (Prado gifts and lunch, Abundance Shop, UTO, Earthcare); encourage participation in events; and in general provide both coordination and leadership for this area of our work.
- Accepted a quote from ATown to install projectors on the north and south walls of the sanctuary and to make some improvements to the audio system.
- Agreed to Francis Rivinus' suggestion to move the Abundance Shop to a larger premises all on one floor.
- Resolved to enable an Endowment Fund. The resolution will now go to the Episcopal Church Foundation for review and then an Endowment Committee will develop policies.
- Begun to develop a process to hire a consultant to help the parish to agree on the next stages of building and grounds development.
- Agreed to hire our current contractors to replace the veranda railings, with some painting assistance from church members.

## **Deanery Meeting at St. Ben's**

On June 12, it's St. Benedict's turn to host the bi-monthly deanery meeting. We hope to have a speaker on Affordable Housing, and the lack of it in our county. This meeting is open to everyone, but we expect our deanery/diocesan representatives to attend.

## **Finances**

By the end of the first quarter, our expenses were running a little ahead of budget. Pledged income was also ahead of budget which means that some people have paid earlier in the year – thank you! Overall we are over \$5000 ahead

We have received several gifts for the Blessing the Future Campaign which has allowed us to pay over \$2500 additional principal. Thank you for continuing to generously support the kingdom of God through this community of faith.

## **Pastoral Care**

St Benedict's is constantly striving to improve our service to God, to each other and to the world. We have always operated an informal pastoral care program, and under the leadership of Celeste Pennington this has continued to improve. Now Esta Kanderian will be joining Celeste to coordinate the practical aspects of our discipline of mutual caring.

If you are willing to help in practical ways when someone is having a difficult time, Esta would love to hear from you. You might be able to help with bringing people to church or taking them to appointments, providing meals, running errands, helping with light housework or walking their dog. Or you can make a difference by visiting, or committing to regularly call someone who is going through a difficult time. Whatever you would like to do, please let Esta know.

Celeste would like to hear from you if you would like to pray privately and regularly for other people by participating in the prayer chain; if you would like to join the intercessory prayer circle which meets twice a month to remember those in need; or if you would like to join the healing team which offers prayers after church every Sunday – this group also meets monthly on a Thursday afternoon.

## Coming Soon - Time and Talents survey

Soon we will be inviting you to participate in a survey which helps us to know where you would like to be ministering in the church. There are of course many, many ways that you can serve God in the wider community but we also minister to one another in a myriad ways. The Time and Talents survey will enable you to identify areas where you can contribute to building up the Body of Christ at St Ben's. So please pray that God will show you where you are being called to serve, and then fill it in. It will be available both on paper and electronically.

## Rector's Furlough

Caro+ will be furloughed May 16 through June 18. As usual, our Sunday morning worship will be ably led by our clergy team; the wardens Anne Kanter and Maria Kelly will be on hand to deal with the business of the church; and Celeste Pennington and Esta Kandarian will coordinate pastoral care. Danna is also in the office Tuesday through Thursday 9:30 to 12:30 and ready to help you with questions about scheduling and administration. Don't forget that our calendar and upcoming events all appear on the website: [www.stbenslososos.org](http://www.stbenslososos.org)

## Building update

Maria Kelly

The work on our great room project was making great progress up until about April 14<sup>th</sup>. We hit a bump in the road and at this writing, not sure when the drywall that was delivered recently will be going up. Hopefully soon!

Once we finish up our current inspections and the county has approved of our corrective changes we'll continue with the dry-wall and then painting. Once that is completed, we have can look forward to flooring and fixtures! This will include some new toilets, sinks and partitions for the bathrooms.

To ease my mind during these hiccups, I just try to think about the amazing celebration we'll have when it's all completed!

## St. Ben's Is Getting Social!

Danna Dykstra-Coy



Look for all the up-to-date events and happenings at St. Benedict's Church on Facebook and Twitter. Please "friend" us on Facebook at St. Benedict's Episcopal Church and the Hollister Institute. We also invite you to follow us on Twitter at

@StBens\_LosOsos.

We're regularly adding new posts and tweets, so don't miss out!

If you're already following St. Ben's but would like Facebook to notify you with new posts, hover over the "Like" button at the top of the St. Ben's Facebook page and click on "See First" to see new posts at the top of your newsfeed. Follow the prompt to choose what you want to see from the St. Benedict's page. Click on "All Posts," and you're set!

We will post about upcoming concerts and community events at the church as well as church activities, so be sure to tell your friends. We're looking forward to your comments and likes as we expand our efforts to reach out to you and our community.



### St. Benedict's Church

@StBens\_LosOsos

Whoever you are and wherever you are on your faith journey, there's a warm welcome for you at St. Benedict's.

## Soup for Syria: A Lenten Soup Supper to Benefit Syrian Refugees

Pamela Bleisch-Strawn

During Lent, on Saturday March 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, over 30 people gathered for a free hot soup supper, which was a fundraiser for Syrian refugees.

Syria is now in its sixth year of civil conflict. Devastation and upheaval continues to plague Syria at an unimaginable scale - making it the world's largest catastrophe. Drawn to respond to this crisis, the best-selling author and food writer Barbara Abdeni Massaad collaborated with 80 acclaimed chefs to produce a wonderful cookbook: [Soup for Syria](#). All proceeds from the sale of this cookbook go to the United Nations' Refugee Agency UNHCR to provide urgently needed food relief for Syrian refugees.

At our Soup for Syria event, co-sponsored by St. Benedict's Episcopal Church and Volumes of Pleasure Bookshoppe in Los Osos, we had samples of the soups to try, and copies of the cookbook to buy. Carol, the owner of Volumes of Pleasure, sold 15 copies of the [Soup for Syria](#) cookbook at our event, raising \$450.00 for food relief for Syrian refugees. We also filled an empty soup pot with \$253.00 in donations to UNHCR Syrian Refugee Relief. Our event netted \$703.00 for the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR, earmarked for Syrian refugees.



stevennoble.com

Attendees had fun tasting eight different savory soup recipes, and enjoyed rolls and bread with butter, hummus, and other spreads, with dessert, as well. And attendees were moved by the videos screened at our event, portraits of Syrian refugees in Lebanon from Al Jazeera's award-winning documentary series titled: "Life on Hold."

Thanks to Volumes of Pleasure Bookshoppe, our super soup chefs, and everyone who made the St. Benedict's Soup for Syria Fundraiser such a great success!

We pray that Syrian refugees may find safety, and may be warmly welcomed into new communities.

We pray for a peaceful resolution to the civil war in Syria, so that refugees may return and rebuild their homeland.

To purchase a copy of the [Soup for Syria](#) cookbook, contact the Volumes of Pleasure Bookshoppe: 805-528-5565 or the publisher at: <http://www.soupforsyria.com/>

To learn more about the Syrian Refugee Crisis, or to donate to the UN Refugee Agency: <http://www.unrefugees.org/where-we-work/syria/>

To view Al Jazeera's award-winning documentary series on Syrian refugees in Lebanon, "Life on Hold": <http://lifeonhold.aljazeera.com/#/en/portraits/omar>

## Shire at Canterbury

Berkeley Johnson

**EVENT!**

The Shire will begin hosting a Feminist Liberation Theology Series on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm for anyone who is interested and would like to attend. Our first session will be Wed., May 11th at 6:30pm at The Shire.

This is an attempt to do something new and it will be for folks of all ages and not just young adults. The inspiration grows out of reflections on the well-known but often misinterpreted and misunderstood story of the Woman at the Well in John (John 4:5-42), so we're hoping to use this story as a starting point and then go from there.

Self study and preparation ahead of time will be key to the success of this Series, so if you have time, please do some research on the passage online (The Text This Week is a great resource, for instance) and also feel free to email me any articles or blogs you come across which re-tell or interpret this story from a feminist perspective.

Here's the link: <http://www.textweek.com/>

(Shire, Continued)

I'd also love to hear your ideas for future months, and we'll plan a month out each time we meet so you have a full month to prepare. If you'd like to be on the email list, please call or send me your email address. I look forward to hearing from you!

## A Busy Month for EarthCare

Bob Pelfry

The major activity of St. Benedict's "EarthCare" group in March and April was involved planning and implementing various activities in support of Earth Day, April 22d. The committee decided to use the program template suggested by Interfaith Power and Light—a climate change and environmental lobbying group composed of religious congregations nationwide—to make the entire week of April 18<sup>th</sup> through April 24<sup>th</sup> as meaningful as possible in terms of climate change goals and principles.

The first activity was a presentation titled "Sustainable Seafood on the Central Coast" by Cuesta College instructor Steve Hendricks on Monday evening, April 18<sup>th</sup>. Steve described the relative merits of various forms of fishing methods as well as the general impact of commercial fishing on individual fish species in our local waters and habitats...and restaurants. Steve illustrated his points with photos of local fishing processes and provided detailed information on which processes support the goal of sustainability and which ones are, in fact, counter-productive (e.g., shrimp are not sustainable; "fish farming" is very problematic. Go online for: the Central Coast Groundfish Project). Steve also spoke on the overall impact on the oceans resulting from the ongoing and increasing effects that climate change is producing.

On Friday, April 22d, Caro Hall led a brief and innovative prayer service in the St. Francis garden. This noon service aligned St. Benedict's with religious groups around the world who met and prayed for the Creation at the noon hour in their respective time zones. Before the liturgy service, Barry Turner, John Horsely, Ken Kenyon, among others, prepared bags of enzyme-treated soil to hand out at the Sunday Earth Day Eucharist service.

On Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, Caro preached a sermon focused on the spiritual demands facing us as believers who see Nature as also "Creation"—and who therefore take the fate of the planet as placing specifically religious and moral issues on us, both individually and as a community. Please go to St. Benedict's website to read Caro's entire sermon if you were unable to attend the April 22d service.

After the Sunday liturgy, members of the EarthCare group passed out postcards to send to California senators (Boxer and Feinstein) in support of President Obama's request for 750 million dollars to fund United States efforts to comply with the Paris Agreements (signed in Paris by over 150 nations on Saturday, April 23d). The group also handed out information sheets on how to evaluate one's personal "energy footprint" along with information on goals that individuals have been urged to meet as part of the overall initiative to take meaningful action following the Paris talks.

At our next **EarthCare meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>**, the group will discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of this year's "Earth Week" activities. The intent of the group is that the public information event, the new liturgical experience in the St. Francis garden, the special sermon, etc., have provided the initial format for what will be an evolving program each year for St. Benedict's—as a community—to honor our responsibility to address the crisis to Creation that climate change brings.



"I'd like to thank the Choir for their inspiring performance of "He Will Raise Them Up." Hopefully we will have the kinks worked out of Doris's harness before next Sunday."

**EVENT!**



(EarthCare, continued)

If you have any comments or suggestions based on this year's events, please contact any member of the EarthCare group. You can also use the "Suggestion Box" that Ann Kanter has been drawing our attention to on recent Sundays. The group is excited about this year's accomplishments, but we want to have as much input and feedback from the congregation as possible. In this regard, also note that the **EarthCare group has a regular meeting time of the second Wednesday of the month at 2:30 pm** (at St. Benedict's). Please be aware that anyone interested in the many issues involved in climate change is invited to drop by for any of the meetings...there is no requirement to officially join the committee in order to take part in a particular session. However, since the committee will be organizing ad hoc events and projects that individuals might want to support on an individual basis, feel free to bring yourself-- and bring a friend! Come join our Care for the Earth at St. Benedict's.

## Alter Setting Shining Brightly

Danna Dykstra-Coy

You may have noticed St. Ben's pewter altar setting for holy Eucharist is looking particularly lovely, thanks to a recent professional polishing by local silversmith Randy Stromsoe. Randy actually made one of the parish's two chalices and the lavabo bowl several years ago. Altar Guild Director Sarah Chesebro tracked him down after finding his name engraved in the handmade pieces.

Keeping things beautiful and orderly for the celebration of the Eucharist or other sacraments and offices of the church is a key part of the Altar Guild ministry. "This is a behind-the-scenes ministry, to make it happen for the rest of us," said Sarah. The director of the Altar Guild coordinates with the Rector, Altar Guild members, Sacristan and Flower Guild to plan for services. In addition to setting the table for Eucharist and other church services, members clean and care for the small linens, altar vessels, candle holders and candles. They also fill the vessels with wine, water and bread, mark the lessons for the day in the Lectionary and Gospel books and place them in the sanctuary.

Sarah was a member of the Altar Guild until she moved out of the area in 2005. She returned to St. Ben's in 2015 and now leads the Altar Guild service ministry. While Sarah was away, Lisa Gonzalez and Stefanie Shuman oversaw the ministry duties. "We always welcome the addition of new members to serve this special ministry," said Sarah. "It's a contemplative ministry, a lovely way to meditate while preparing for services."

For more information, please email Sarah at [sarahchesebro@gmail.com](mailto:sarahchesebro@gmail.com).



## Abundance Shop Update

Francis F. Rivinus

In late February we had a volunteer meeting to review shop procedures, collect ideas and suggestions for improving the way the shop functions and to allow volunteers to express any concerns. We looked at the shop both from the view of what we are doing well and what we can improve. A direct outcome of that meeting was a decision to alter the shop layout to improve our displays. It was decided to create a 'Book Nook' where all the books, audio CDs and video DVDs could share a dedicated space with good lighting, away from the shop traffic, so that customers could browse undisturbed. As a part of this, a doorway which served no purpose was closed off, which increased available wall space and ladies' shoes were moved out into the ladies' clothing part of the shop. The overall effect has been to give the



(Abundance, continued)

shop a more open feel and we have received many compliments from customers and volunteers.

Then in March we had a wonderful party at Kevin and Judith's house! The party provided a venue to publicly acknowledge and say thank you to five volunteers who have made special contributions over the past year(s). At the party the eight local charities to receive donations from the Abundance Shop during 2016 were chosen by majority vote of those present. They are: Feline Network, Food Bank Coalition, Hope's Village of SLO, Noor Foundation Clinic, Peoples' Self-Help Housing, Prado Day Center, Senior Nutrition Program and Transitions Mental Health.

Abundance Shop revenues for the first quarter have been good and the shop was able to contribute \$ 5,000 to St. Benedict's on April 3.

The Abundance Shop is dependent on a group of dedicated volunteers for its success. The shop could not operate without them and welcomes interest from all. The shop is truly a case where 'many hands make light work' and all contributions make a difference. If any reader feels moved to contribute to this important outreach effort of St. Benedict's please contact me and let me know.

## EVENTS

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### **Discovery Day: My Call--Lay, Priest or Deacon? Workshop June 11**

Once each year, the Commission on Ministry sponsors a workshop on discernment which offers the opportunity for those already engaged in active ministry to renew their call to a particular ministry or to explore new ways to respond to God's call. Although *Discovery Day—Lay, Priest or Deacon?* is a required first step for anyone discerning a call to ordained ministry, it is in no way limited to such individuals. We explore and celebrate the ministry of all the baptized, and look at ministry development in each of the four orders: laity, deacons, priests, and bishops. We will include information about the opportunity for licensed lay ministries, a way to help people focus on and train for a particular area of ministry in the parish. Following the workshop, participants may choose to participate in a 12-week exploration called Inquirers Group to enhance their appreciation of how the four orders of ministry complement each other in fulfilling the mission of the Church, and to discern where they fit into that mission.

The workshop will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1071 Pajaro St, Salinas from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (9:30 coffee and gathering). To register, email Dottie Fuller by June 7: [dotfuller@aol.com](mailto:dotfuller@aol.com). Please put Discovery Day in the subject line and mention your parish in the email. A donation of \$10 for lunch and materials is requested at the door.

### **Speaker Joan Blades Uses Dialogue to Overcome Society's Divisions, May 21**

We see divisions within our society all around us, in our nation, in our states and in our communities and even in the Anglican Communion and our churches. The need for reconciliation that builds on mutual respect and an appreciation of differences has never been greater. The diocese's Spring Conference, "[Living Room Conversations: Respecting, Reconciling, and Appreciating Differences](#)" addresses this need.

Joan Blades, our featured speaker for this conference, experienced partisan fighting for over 15 years in her work with [MoveOn.org](#) and came to realize this battling was destroying valuable relationships. She founded [Living Room Conversations](#) to explore alternative approaches to big, potentially divisive issues through dialogue. She will share insights she has gained and tools she has developed doing this work. We will also get an opportunity to experience this form of dialogue while we learn about it. Please join us! Online registration can be found at

<http://www.realepiscopal.org/event/spring-conference-2016/>

The May 21 conference will run from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, taking place at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Salinas. Cost is \$25.00 and lunch is included. For questions, contact Mary Beth Powell at [marybeth@realepiscopal.org](mailto:marybeth@realepiscopal.org). Whether paying online or at the door, be sure to sign up via the diocesan online registration <http://www.realepiscopal.org/event/spring-conference-2016/>

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