

# The Benediction

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

**The Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall**

Rector

**The Rev. Barry Turner**

Associate Priest

**The Rev. Faye Hogan**

Associate Priest

**The Rev. Sharon G. Dalrymple**

Deacon

**The Parish Council**

Pamela Bleisch Strawn, Sr. Warden

Lisa Gonzalez

Diana Hammerlund

Esta Kandarian

Alan Kiste

Michael Lucas

Francis Rivinus

Barbara Schippers

Lorienne Schwenk

**Benediction Publisher:**

The Rev. Dr. Caroline J. A. Hall

**Benediction Editor:**

Kit Gould, kit.gould1@gmail.com

**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  
Los Osos, CA 93402

Mailing: PO Box 6877  
Los Osos, CA 93412

(805) 528-0654  
office@stbenslososos.org  
www.stbenslososos.org  
@StBens\_LosOsos

**Dear Friends:**

The Lord is Risen! Alleluia!

He is risen indeed, and as the year turns from Easter to Pentecost (May 20) there are some changes happening in our faith community.

We have said goodbye to Rob and Donna Ross after 10 years of (retirement) ministry at St Benedict's and now Francis and Gigi Rivinus are also moving north - to Eureka. Francis has been the manager of the Abundance Shop for several years and had



the vision and courage to move it from its previous location to its present one. We are deeply grateful for the ministry he has so faithfully led and the many

hours he has put in to the management of the Abundance Shop.

Yes we are saying goodbye, but new things are happening too! We have several small children who are enjoying St Ben's and soon we will be baptizing Charlotte and Jonathon, together with their Mom, Anna. This month we start a new family program - Messy Church. Messy Church will be an alternative service which will take place twice a month from 9:30 to 10:15 in the Great Room. Grown ups are as welcome as the little ones. Participants will be invited to get their hands dirty as we engage in craft and art activities and then have a story, a prayer and maybe even a

Eucharist. In April, the young parents group that we are sponsoring met for the first time, and they will be gathering in the Great Room two Thursday mornings a month.

We have welcomed several other new people this year - please look out for them and make them feel at home. Wearing your name badge is a big help!

Change at church can be hard - we want things to stay the same so that we can feel secure and sheltered. Yet the reality is that everything changes except God's love. God's love for us is rock-solid. God's love for Creation is rock-solid.

Psychologist and mystic James Finlay said, "God never protects us but always sustains us." Whatever is going on in our lives and the lives of those around us, God's love continues to be available to sustain us and comfort us. We can count on that.

We can count on the resurrection. There will always be times of crucifixion in our lives but resurrection happens. We are the resurrection people, the ones who wake up every morning ready to see God's hand at work bringing new life and new hope to our world. This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

May God's blessing be with you.

**Rev. Caroline J. A. Hall**

## Newcomer Welcome Event

**EVENT!**

Everyone and anyone who has joined St Benedict's recently and hasn't been to a Newcomers Event before is welcome to a gathering at the home of Alan Kiste and Brian Spolarich in Los Osos on Sunday June 3 at 2:30.

What can you expect? Good conversation and great snacks with members of St Benedict's leadership team (the Parish Council) and a quick introduction to the inner workings of the church. We look forward to formally welcoming you to St. Ben's.

## Finances and Building

So far this year our expenses are pretty much exactly what we expected. Our income is higher because some people paid the whole of their pledges at the beginning of the year but that will go down in the next month or two. Additional donations – from people who didn't pledge are currently lower than we hoped so we're actually running about \$1100 behind.

We budgeted less income from the Abundance Shop this year so that we could afford to hire a paid manager – it's become such a big job. We welcome Deb Garza, who is also a choir member, as the new manager.

We are STILL waiting on PG&E before we can begin the fire sprinkler project. Our contractor is confident that we can get some movement very shortly. We shall see.

## Eucharistic Minister training

Eucharistic ministers represent the people at the table on Sunday mornings and they help the celebrant as well as leading the Prayer of the People. If you would like to participate in this ministry, you have to be licensed by the Bishop. Licenses have to be renewed every three years so if you are a Eucharistic Minister but can't remember when you last went to a training, it's probably time.

This training will be in two parts: theory and practice. Part 1 will be on Wednesday May 16 5 -6:45 and Part 2 the following week May 23, also 5 – 6:45.

## The Bishop is Coming!

Bishop Mary will be with us on June 17<sup>th</sup> for her annual visitation. This means that she will be looking forward to confirming those who have not made an adult declaration of faith in a church, or receiving into the Episcopal Church those who have done so, but in a different church. It's also a time when you can personally renew your baptismal vows if you have made a new commitment of faith.

Please let Caro+ know if you are interested in these possibilities. The class "The Heart of Christianity" will be the preparation for confirmation this year.

In the afternoon of the same day, June 17, we will be hosting a deanery service for Matthew Conrad who has been the Rector of St Luke's Atascadero for 30 years and who trained me. Please plan to come and celebrate his ministry as he retires.



## Highlights from the Parish Council

The Parish Council met in planning retreat and created goals for 2018 based on the 5 year plan:

- Complete installation of the Fire Sprinkler
- Encourage use of the chapel
- Create a leadership team for the Hollister Institute
- Encourage families with children
- Review and overhaul protocol for welcoming newcomers
- Encourage/support the Homeless Outreach Team and EarthCare in their ministries

In addition:

- Hired Deb Garza as the new part-time Abundance Shop manager
- Agreed to change signatories on the Abundance Shop checking account
- Appointed Lorieanne to head up the Jazz Concert team with Pamela and Esta
- Were delighted that children and family ministry has a new form – Messy Church
- Decided to hold a Newcomers Gathering in June
- Regretfully accepted the resignation of Lynn Wise whose father is seriously ill
- Thanked Francis for his service in the Abundance Shop and wished he and Gigi a wonderful life in Eureka

## Gratitude

Jim Arnold, Deacon Intern

As my school year at the School for Deacons draws to a close, I wanted to share my heart-felt gratitude to you all for making me feel so welcome and at home here. It has been a pleasure getting to know you all and to be able to call St. Ben's my home away from home.

While I will have the summer off from school and field education I can't imagine not visiting you all for three whole months! That being said, I plan to visit regularly through the summer months and I look forward to "hitting the ground running" again here in the fall. My love to you all! Yours in Christ, Jim

## Abundance Shop

Francis F. Rivinus

In early March there was a meeting of shop volunteers to discuss the status of shop operations and what improvements could be made. The consensus was that while there were no significant problems to handle, the shop would run more smoothly with improved communication between the volunteers and it was agreed that a shop binder would be implemented in which comments of interest of concern could be entered for the information of the other volunteers. The binder has been useful and is in use. The desirability of having at least 2 volunteers in the shop during opening hours was discussed and it was agreed to investigate coordinating the hours that sorter volunteers are available to develop better coverage.

The shop volunteers have discussed and developed a list of local charities that they feel should receive donations in the name of the Abundance Shop this year. The eight which were selected to be put forward to the St. Benedict's Parish Council for approval were:

1. Los Osos Homeless Coalition
2. ARF (County Animal Shelter: special services)
3. Central Coast Kidney Foundation
4. CASA (court appointed advocates for children)
5. San Luis Obispo Hospice (volunteer org.)
6. Transitions Mental Health
7. Noor Foundation Clinic
8. Senior Nutrition Program

(Abundance, continued)

At the end of March the Abundance Shop made a contribution of \$6,000 to St. Benedict's for the first quarter of 2018.

The annual Abundance Shop volunteer party was held on Sunday afternoon April 23 in the St. Benedict's Great Room. It was well attended by both current shop volunteers, volunteer 'emiriti' Bill and Joan Hayes and several members of the Parish Council. A good time was had by all.

Abundance Shop revenues during the first quarter of 2018 have been very strong and this has continued during April. The shop is truly blessed to have a base of generous donors and loyal customers in addition to volunteers who, without exception, are willing to do what it takes to keep the shop as special, welcoming place that our customers keep coming back to.

This will be my last newsletter contribution as Abundance Shop Manager. It has been my privilege to serve the Shop and St. Benedict's in this capacity for more than 4 years and it is time for me to say farewell. Gigi and I are moving north to Eureka, California where Gigi has been transferred to continue serving our veterans in the VA clinic there. It is with a feeling of humble gratitude that I can leave St. Benedict's with a strong, successful Abundance Shop under the capable, continuing management of Karin Cake and the addition of my replacement Deb Garza. Thank you all for the support and good wishes that you have given me during my term as shop manager.

## St. Ben's is Stepping Up With Homeless Outreach

Danna Dykstra-Coy, Parish Administrator

Recognizing a growing need in the North Coast community for homeless services, St. Ben's has partnered with the nonprofit Los Osos Cares to help feed, counsel and support no-income people to the working poor.

In addition to serving and bringing Community Dinners on rotating Mondays at Trinity United Methodist Church, some in our church have volunteered at the warming center at South Bay Community Center on rainy or freezing nights, and most recently have started a ministry called "Laundry Love" to provide free laundry at Osos Clean Laundry. Volunteers bring quarters, laundry supplies and smiles the last Wednesday of every month from 5 pm-9 pm.

Laundry Love is in its third month and has been very successful, says Barbara Hirahara, who coordinates the ministry. Most recently six St. Ben's volunteers paid for laundry for 15 people.

Barbara says they are seeing repeat customers on "Laundry Love" night, promoted through flyers and word of mouth. "When they come in to the laundromat, they are treated respectfully with no questions asked. It's like a little laundry party," says Barbara. "Everyone talks to one another to try to take away the embarrassment some might feel for getting something for free. We try to make it as simple and friendly as we can."

During the April "Laundry Love" night, one volunteer brought apples, peanut butter cracker packages and new toothbrushes for the people receiving free laundry. One woman brought her grandchildren's laundry to "give back" to her family by washing their clothes.

"This is a rough old world, and it's not getting easier," says Barbara, on why her heart is with homeless outreach ministry. To volunteer or learn more about any of the services offered through Los Osos Cares, please contact Barbara at (805) 602-7777.



Photo Danna Dykstra-Coy

## Milk in the Merry Month Of May

Alice Welchert

This month our Prado focus is on *Milk*. Consider donating UHT milk (Ultra-High Temperature), a form of pasteurization that gives milk a long shelf life -- no refrigeration needed until after opening -- or other drinks such as soy or almond, for the breakfast program in May. UHT pasteurization has been around since the 1960s (per Wikipedia) and widely used since the 1970s. Ralph carries this kind of milk in the refrigerated section (other retailers probably do too). The Prado Day Center can always use hygiene items, peanut butter and jelly, juice, instant cereal and dry cereal, coffee and creamers, paper plates and bowls, utensils, backpacks in good condition, new socks, laundry detergent, and canned goods such as soup, chili, and tuna fish.

## Support for Those with ‘Non-Death’ Grief

Berkeley Johnson

As part of my discernment process at St. Ben's, Caro+ and I have been exploring ways in which I might serve the parish that would address or meet a congregational need while simultaneously enriching my discernment and particular gifts for ministry.

A couple of folks have already approached me about creating a group to address what I would call “non-death” losses. As opposed to a grief group for those who have suffered the death of a loved one, we are thinking about establishing a group to deal with other types of loss, such as relationship/divorce, vocation/job, home/residence, disability, empty nest, and so forth.

The main point being, we don't naturally think of these life transitions from the perspective of “grief,” but as a result of the bereavement training I am receiving, I have begun to “hear” differently when people discuss with me the issues and challenges they are facing in their lives, and I have begun to recognize that we do indeed experience grief in and through these other types of losses or life transitions.

So, we wanted to give you some time to contemplate whether you might be experiencing some form of grief due to any of the circumstances mentioned above (or any others that might be impacting you), and whether you feel a group like this might be helpful to you. I will be attending another four-day bereavement workshop at Dr. Alan Wolfelt's the Center for Loss in Ft. Collins, CO, in early June, and would like to start a “non-death” grief group when I return.

We are envisioning a set number of participants (6-12) who would commit to a set number of weekly meetings (8-12) over a two to three-month period, in order to have continuity, build trust, and maintain healthy sense of community. Since we don't commonly connect non-death losses with “grief,” per se, I am submitting this article now, so that you have some time in the coming weeks to think about and explore whether you are experiencing some form of grief due to circumstances you are facing, and whether you might benefit from the opportunity to explore them more deeply in a group setting along the lines of what I am describing.

Please feel free in the interim to contact me with any questions or suggestions.



About a dozen members of St. Bens joined the protests against gun violence in April.

## Me\$SY CHURch at St Benedict's

### Sunday mornings, 9:30 to 10:15 am

This brief and spirited Sunday morning worship is geared towards young children and busy families. Join us for a fun 45 minutes of crafts, inspirational stories, prayer, and sing-along.

Led by Rev. Caro and Pamela Bleisch.

Sunday May 13 (Mother's Day)

Sunday May 27 (Yes! Memorial Day weekend)

Sunday June 10

Sunday June 24

For more information, contact Ms. Pamela at 805.602.1240, or [Pr.bleisch@gmail.com](mailto:Pr.bleisch@gmail.com)

### Nurturing Your Baby Support Group Comes to St. Ben's

Danna Dykstra-Coy

St. Benedict's Church is now sponsoring a "Nurturing Your Baby" support group, the coast's newest support group for parents, caregivers and their babies.

The group, facilitated by Lisa Boyd, a trained Postpartum and Labor Doula and International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, meets every other Thursday at 9:30 a.m. and is open to all on the Central Coast. Discussions range from all feeding methods and aspects of child development. Each group gathering features a relevant topic for discussion related to feeding and development, with time for questions and answers. A baby scale will also be available for weighing little ones.

"As a mother of three myself, I know from experience the value of having a supportive, listening ear and an extra pair of hands walking beside you through these early days of infancy," says Lisa. "All parents want the best for their baby and all parents deserve to be nurtured and supported in this monumental life shift."

Please share with your family, neighbors and friends about this new group gathering to learn, support and guide new parents through this new and exciting phase of life. The next group gatherings are May 3 and May 19. Please contact Lisa at [lisamboyd@gmail.com](mailto:lisamboyd@gmail.com).



Lisa Boyd facilitates the Nurturing-Your-Baby Support group. Photo Danna Dykstra-Coy

# Hollister Institute



## **The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith**

**Hollister Institute:** Five Thursdays at 7pm, starting May 17

This study, based on the book by Marcus Borg, is an opportunity to re-think the basic tenets of our Christian faith together. Borg brings a fresh look to traditional ideas. Borg emphasizes the transformational aspect of Christianity by examining the "emerging paradigm" that is gradually replacing the belief-centered paradigm of the last several hundred years. The new paradigm, Borg writes, is about loving God and loving what God loves, rather than rigidly adhering to a specific set of beliefs.

That's not new to most of us here at St. Ben's but this is an opportunity to think together about our faith and how we understand and articulate it in new ways. I hope that you will consider joining me as we "tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love" together in a new way. This class also serves as preparation for confirmation, reception or renewal of vows.

## **Creation and the Cross**

**Hollister Institute:** Six TUESDAYS starting June 12 at 10:00

This will be a study of feminist theologian Elizabeth Johnson's latest book, *Creation and the Cross*. Written as a dialogue between Johnson and a student this tackles some of the same things that we have discussed recently about the difficulty of continuing to believe substitutionary atonement. Starting from a text in Isaiah, Johnson argues that the plan of God is not so much about the individual sin or salvation of each person but about the redemption of the whole planet.

This will be an exciting conversation picking up where other discussions have left off. Please join us as we explore the frontiers of redemption together, daring to go where no others have ever gone.

## **New Feature:**



### **People at St. Ben's: Janelle LaFond**

Janelle LaFond

I am excited to start doing a short piece in each newsletter about a church member, so we can know each other better. This will help new members and established ones, too. So, for my first submission, I'm telling you about me, so you can see what kinds of questions I may ask when I contact you in the future.

I have been a member of St. Benedict's for about eight years, and have lived in Los Osos for about ten. After receiving remission from a cancer scare, I decided to leave L.A. The next time I packed for a visit here, I included interview clothes. I got a job the day after I arrived on vacation, at Sierra Vista. God must have wanted me here, because I found a place to live in Baywood very soon after.

I have a sweet but shy kitty, named Sachi (who hissed at Caro when they first met), and I like to do jigsaw puzzles first thing most mornings. I volunteer at the Morro Bay library.

I have worked in the medical field, in law (paralegal degree from UCLA), and in education (M.S. from CSU, Northridge, Ed.D. from Seattle U.) I worked my way through school. I'm finishing my A.S. degree in library science.

In L.A., I worked at USC and the Claremont Colleges, (and in the 90's at the U. of Washington, Seattle), doing career counseling and administrative management with both MBAs and liberal-arts students. The further I got up the ladder in administration, the farther I got away from students, so I came here with the idea of working at Cuesta College. A year and a half after I moved here, I got my wish, due to a happenstance meeting (the Lord works in mysterious ways) and joined the counseling faculty at Cuesta.

A couple of years ago, I retired and have taken on more volunteer work at St. Ben's, where I currently serve as lector, on the staff/parish liaison committee, the SLO area deanery and the diocese Nominations Committee and the Commission on Ministry.

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