

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*

Michael Lucas, *Jr. Warden*

Lisa Gonzalez, *Treasurer*

Diana Hammerlund

Esta Kandarian

Alan Kiste

Barbara Schippers

Lorienne Schwenk

Lynn Wise

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Parish Administrator

Danna Dykstra-Coy

Office Tues-Thurs, 9:30-12:30

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 service.

Church: 2220 Snowy Egret Lane

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Dear Friends:

This is a difficult time for many of us, as we see events unfolding on the national stage which are far from having the trademark of the gospel of peace, humility and love.

It is a continual challenge to find ways to resist the onslaught of anger and fear mongering without ourselves getting caught up in name-calling and demonizing. Yet resist we must. This country is built on the talents and hard work of immigrants as well as the gifts of the indigenous people. As an immigrant myself, I feel strongly the slights being hurled indiscriminately at immigrants, and the suggestion that we are a threat to the country. Resist we must, but we must resist in a way which does not turn us into the image of those whom we are resisting.



That is the essence of non-violent resistance. We resist violence in creative ways, always refusing to be drawn into the violence itself. The gospel reading for the last Sunday in November, the last Sunday of the church's year – The Reign of Christ – is the confrontation between Pilate and Jesus. Pilate who has the brutal force of the Roman Empire behind him and Jesus who has – what? Apparently nothing, but actually the power of the reign of God behind him. The power which is not of this world.

And that is the power that we have. We can look violence in the face and see it for what it is, cruel, brutal and ultimately powerless.

But that is not a reason to turn away and ignore racism, sexism, anti-Semitism and whatever the word is for hating and targeting transgender people. Violence may be ultimately powerless but it is nonetheless real, especially to those who are being targeted.

I encourage you as you read or listen to the news to pray not only for those who are being persecuted but also for those who are perpetrating and perpetuating violence, that God may transform their hearts into hearts of generosity and peace. It isn't easy to pray for our enemies or for the enemies of our friends, but it is not only what Jesus showed us but what he specifically taught us. And let us have the courage to speak up whenever we see oppression. Even when it is in ourselves.

Most of us are the beneficiaries of white privilege. We take many things for granted. Let us think deeply and creatively about those who do not share our privilege and find ways that we can be in relationship with them. The Abundance Shop and Laundry Love both give us many opportunities to show greater honor to those who are oppressed by our society.

Let us have the courage to build the reign of God here in Los Osos,

Yours in Christ,

Caroline J. A. Hall

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline J. A. Hall'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Highlights of the Parish Council Meeting

- Sprinkler System needs an additional part to bring it up to code which adds another \$4k to the bill
- We will investigate getting LED lights in the parking lot
- As we continue to grow numerically, we need to consciously change our structure and culture so less depends on the Rector
- Agreed that \$10k should be kept in the Abundance Shop account to cover unexpected eventualities and the rest be transferred to the church on a quarterly basis
- Ingathering Sunday will be November 11
- **Next meeting: November 25**

We are grateful to...

- The Parish Council for providing another wonderful Gratitude Dinner!
- The Earthcare group for their great video; Stewardship of Creation – One Congregation’s Response. If you missed it you can see it on our Facebook page and it’s on the home page of the church website www.stbenslososos.org (look at the sliders across the top).
- Suzan Vaughn - recipient of the first Abby award – for producing the video.
- Danna Kystra-Coy, award-winning photographer, for letting us use her beautiful images.
- John Cribb, for organizing a jazz evening prayer at Diocesan Convention; to Anne Kanter for her wonderful channeling of Ella Fitzgerald that evening; and to the back-up singers, Karen Evans, Sharon Porter, Jane Wu and Caroline Hall+.
- The Central Coast Readers Theater for a fun and amusing afternoon.
- The Laundry Lovers who not only help provide free laundry but also friendship and community for folk who don’t get a lot of that.
- Kit and Ed who edit and produce this newsletter every time.
- Jim Arnold for being the captain of the St Ben’s team in the Los Osos Hunger Walk – we raised \$980 to help with food for hungry people here in Los Osos.
- All the ushers and greeters who make our guests feel at home.
- The prayer chain, Prayer Circle and Healing Prayer group who keep us all in the mind of God and of each other.
- Pamela Bleisch for welcoming children and parents in Messy Church and Children’s Chapel.
- God for miracles and hope.



Emily Young turned 89 on Sunday October 21 and her family hosted coffee hour to celebrate. She worshiped, got to hear her old organ, sang and prayed with the congregation, and enjoyed the food and celebration afterwards.

(Photos Lorienne Schwenk)

Opportunities for Prayer

There are several opportunities for you to engage in prayer, alone or with others, outside of scheduled services:

The chapel is available for private prayer at any time but especially when the office is open; Tues- Thurs 9:45 to 12:45.

Prayer chain members receive requests for prayer at any time through the email address prayers@stbenslosos.org. Members commit to pray for each person for two weeks and to keep information received through the prayer chain confidential. If you would like to pray for others in this way, please ask Danna to add you to the list of pray-ers.

Every Sunday (except the 5th) a member of the Healing Team is available after the 10:30 service to pray with individuals who have particular concerns.

The Prayer Circle meets at 10am on the 2nd and 4th Weds mornings. New people are always welcome. For more information, contact Anne Edwards or Celeste Pennington.

You can always pray on your own at any time or place - we recommend you also develop a regular practice that works for you.

Homeless Outreach

As the weather gets colder, those who are living outside need more help. We have the privilege of serving dinner at the Los Osos Cares Community Dinner on Monday November 5 and lunch at the new Prado 40 center in San Luis Obispo on December 1st.

Steve Hirahara is coordinating the Los Osos Cares/People Helping People/SBCC Warming Shelter this year. The shelter is housed either in the South Bay Community Center or the Schoolhouse behind it and is open when the forecast is for temperatures below 34degrees or a 50% chance of precipitation.

We will need people to (1) set up in the evening (2) bring dinner (3) serve dinner and hang out with the guests (4) to stay for a night shift either 9pm-1:30am or 1:30am - 6am (5) people to provide breakfast and (6) to put stuff away and make sure everything is clean by 6:45am. Many hands make light work and you can volunteer for more than one shift on the same day. Please let Steve know how you can help.



Once the shower unit arrives there will also be a need for volunteers to welcome guests, provide clean towels etc. and to clean the showers in between uses.

The Safe Parking group is still looking for a parking lot to use as a pilot project for authorized parking. If you know anyone who owns a parking lot in town please let Caro+ know.

The memorial service for Sandy Ybarra who many of us knew through Laundry Love and other community events will be on Dec 8 at 11am at the Community Presbyterian Church in Nipomo.

Thanksgiving Dinner

You are invited to enjoy Thanksgiving Dinner at St. Ben's. We will eat at about 1pm. Look for the sign-up sheets to let us know how many guests you will be bringing and what you will contribute to the feast. We'll supply turkey and vegan turkey for everyone. Come as you are, and let's give thanks together. And there is a special blessing for those who stay to clean up - this is a do-it-ourselves event.

Newcomers Event

If you have joined St. Benedict's recently, or are thinking about joining St Ben's, you are welcome to a gathering on **Saturday Dec 1 from 2-4** at the home of Brian Spolarich and Alan Kiste. This is an opportunity to meet some new people, meet some of the Parish Council and learn a little bit more about the church. There will be food and beverages.



If you plan to come, and we hope you will, please let Danna know: office@stbenslosos.org 805-528-0654.

St. Benedict's is Growing

You may have noticed that there are quite a few new faces around the place, and more of us in the Eucharistic circle some Sundays. This is wonderful, and it means that we have to make a few changes so that we can fully welcome and incorporate our newer friends.

Many churches find it difficult to make the transition from being a smaller parish to a middle sized one and actually start to decline when they get to the stage that St. Ben's is now. We don't plan to let that happen here. We want to include everyone whom God calls to serve and worship God with us, whether that's for a short time or a lifetime.

So over the next year we will be thinking seriously about our structure and what blocks there may be to greater growth and greater engagement and opportunities for everyone. For example, if everything goes through Caro+ then there's going to be a big traffic jam, and if she's the one we all expect to know what's happening in our lives then it won't be long before we feel left out because she can't remember everything all the time.

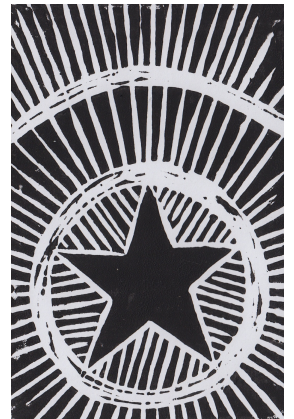
So as we go about our life together, let's try to notice the things that might be preventing us from growing further, or things we could do that would make it much easier for new people. When you notice something, please tell someone on the Parish Council. (And please do wear your name badge – it takes a while to learn 100 names!)

Star Party – Mark Your Calendar!

The Star Party will be held on Saturday January 5 starting at 6pm.

We will enjoy a potluck meal with crowning of the Kings or Queens of Epiphany who will then bring the wise men and their camels to the crèche accompanied by hymn singing. After dinner we will strip the church of its Christmas decorations, take down the lights, bless the church lintels and enjoy a small fire as we burn twigs from our Christmas decorations. Then from the walls we take a "Star to Go" – each one with a surprise word to give a focus for the New Year.

It's a mish-mash of 12th Night/Epiphany traditions and if you have one to add, do let us know. Please plan to come on January 5 to enjoy a fun evening. (Image: Keepandshare.wordpress)



Meeting in the Middle

Nipomo Community Presbyterian Church invites anyone interested in the subject of immigration to attend. Come learn the history of this complex issue, and find out what you can do to make a difference!

Alexia Salvatierra, Faith leader and social activist,

"Meeting in the Middle: Understanding the Complexity of Immigration"

Saturday, November 10, 2018, 9:30 am-3:30 pm, Nipomo Community Presbyterian Church, 1235 N. Thompson Rd, Arroyo Grande



This non-partisan educational event will help participants understand the critical immigration issues of our day. Participants will learn of the roots of our current crisis, the difference between refugees, asylum seekers and workforce immigration and who the immigrants are in our community. Through presentations, panels and workshops, each participant will gain an understanding of what leads people to leave their home countries, the issues immigrants in our community face, the responses of faith groups on the border and the rich cultural diversity of our area. We will also be talking about how faith groups can respond.

Rev. Alexia Salvatierra is the author with Dr. Peter Heltzel of "Faith-Rooted Organizing: Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World" (Intervarsity Press) and the founder of the Faith-Rooted Organizing UnNetwork. She is a Lutheran Pastor with over 35 years of experience in community ministry, including church-based service and community development programs, congregational and community organizing, and legislative advocacy. Rev. Alexia Salvatierra is also an affiliate professor at Fuller Theological Seminary at Centro Latino and the School of Intercultural Studies.

St. Benedict's Profile: Barbara Hirahara

By Danna Dykstra-Coy

Beginning in this issue, we are profiling a member of St. Benedict's Church as a way to build relationships and learn more about the wonderful things we are doing to share God's love.

Barbara Hirahara's heart is for those she describes as the "disenfranchised from the community." They are people who live in their cars, in bushes, are alcoholics, drug addicts, or living in poverty. "The majority are from Los Osos, they really are our neighbors," she says.

Barbara is involved in three primary programs to help meet the needs of such neighbors: Laundry Love, Community Dinners and the Warming Shelter, which is a project of Los Osos Cares. The non-profit Los Osos Cares started in June 2016 to provide community-based services in collaboration with faith-based and government agencies. Barbara remains involved in Los Osos Cares and also volunteered in the organization's Resource Center, which offers services, referrals and access to information to the Los Osos community.

"In my experience, we are seeing people who want to live here in Los Osos," says Barbara. "They have children and grandchildren here. I've met people who grew up here - some even know one another from high school."

Barbara sees herself in the people she serves. She struggled with drugs and alcohol as a young mother in Fresno and was facing eviction from her apartment when she decided to seek help, first through support of an Alcoholics Anonymous group, and then as part of a small Narcotics Anonymous group that worked to expand the program.

"When I decided to get clean in 1982, there was only one NA group from Kern County to Modesto that met once a week for 90 minutes," says Barbara. "So the 12 of us that met in that group had to get clean, work the program and build our group to reach more people, by leading and starting more NA groups." She says there are now more than 500 NA meetings in the Fresno region.

"I got to be a part of that root group, it was amazing that God picked me for such a ministry," says Barbara. "I have a real feel for people who are hopeless. I thought I was hopeless. We've got to work harder to love one another. Once others feel that love, and they discover they can trust somebody - that's when the change comes. That's when it all starts to happen."

Barbara and her husband Steve, who also volunteers in local homeless and poverty services, have attended St. Benedict's Church since they moved to Los Osos in 2010. For more information about getting involved in the Los Osos Cares Resource Center, please call (805) 592-2701.



Barbara Hirahara serving up hotdogs with Lauren at the South Bay Community Center.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Christmas is coming...

On **Saturday Dec 22nd at 3pm** we will again host the community for our annual **Christmas Carol Concert**. John and the choir have been practicing since May and will be at their very best, so please invite your friends and neighbors. There is no charge, this is our gift to Los Osos. (oh, and there will be cookies).

On **Sunday December 23rd** there will be a normal contemplative communion service at 8am but the 10:30 will be a service of **Lessons and Carols** with no communion and no sermon.

Then on **Christmas Eve, Monday December 24th** there will be two services – **Carols around the Creche** at 4:30 will include eucharist and is geared for all ages; and then our **Festival Eucharist** is at 8pm preceded by carol singing from 7:45pm.

At **10am on Christmas Day** we will enjoy a quiet service with just an acapella carol or two and follow it with brunch. If you plan to come and can help with food, please let Caro+ know.

Victorian Christmas Historic Walk of San Luis Obispo

Sunday, Dec. 16th, 5-6:30 p.m.

Come on a guided stroll, co-sponsored by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and the History Center, past 15 holiday-lit Victorian houses in the Old Town historic district. We will recall the Christmas customs, events, and locales of the 1890s, starting with lemonade and cookies furnished by the kind members of St. Stephen's. Meet in front of St. Stephen's Church at the corner of Nipomo and Pismo Sts. No reservations needed, but a flashlight might be handy.

Leader: Joe Morris, [805-549-0355](tel:805-549-0355)



Earth Care: On Care of Creation: on Dec. 2

On Sunday, Dec. 2, St. Benedict's will welcome *Mr. Jeffrey Diehl*, Vice Chair of the legislative committee responsible for the 79th General Convention resolutions related to Care of Creation. The convention, held July 5-13 in Austin Texas last summer passed 19 resolutions out of 29 originally proposed on Care of Creation.

All are invited to join the Earth Care Committee after the 10:30 service to hear Jeff tell us about these resolutions as they offer direction and leadership to Episcopal congregations. Jeff is a member of our neighbor parish, St. Barnabas, Arroyo Grande.

EVENT!

In summary, these actions of General Convention are reported as follows:

- Together, the new legislation creates a new staff role at church headquarters for the Care of Creation, encourages parish action and commitment on a wide variety of things
- continues grants for local environmental ministry projects, continues support for the church's UN climate-change conference delegations
- supports marginalized communities impacted by environmental racism as well as communities impacted by the transition away from fossil fuels
- calls on church staff to use carbon offsets when they travel
- recognizes that water is a human right and urges churches to ban plastic water bottles
- expresses support for using local food at church events
- opposes a new oil pipeline on Ojibwe land and drilling on sacred Gwich'in lands
- lays out next steps on fossil-fuel divestment
- supports carbon-tax policies, and much more.



We have the Reflective Service from 8 to 9. That's followed by the General Service from 10:30 to noon...which is immediately followed by the All-Banjo Service from noon to 2.

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