

The Benediction

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

The Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall

Rector

The Rev. Barry Turner

Associate Priest

The Rev. Susan Plucker

Associate Priest

The Parish Council

Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden

Sandy Fisher, People's Warden,

Cathy Gildea, Clerk

Lisa Gonzalez, Treasurer

Pamela Bleisch

Esta Kandarian

Helen Schnieders

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Sunday Services

8:00 am (2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday each month) - Eucharist, live at church and available on Zoom (link may be found in the Benediction Weekly under the News tab on our website.)

10:30 am - Eucharist, live at church and live-streamed on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/stbenslososos/

or on our website:

<http://www.stbenslososos.org/facebook-including-live-stream/>

Service leaflets are available each week under the Worship tab on our website

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Dear Friends,

Like many of you, I'm still processing the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v Wade. I totally get that human life is precious to God and therefore never to be taken lightly, but the life of the mother is as important as the life of the child. Also, if we take the idea of precious human life to its logical conclusion we should all be pacifists and against the death penalty.



I could go on and on.

But I won't, because beyond a certain point it isn't useful. Wringing our hands about how badly things seem to be turning out is as useful as shouting back at people on the TV. They can't hear. And we can't make it better by worrying, or by listening to every pundit.

Jesus made it quite clear when he said "You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed." (Matt 24:6). We need not be alarmed because we serve the Prince of Peace. Allowing ourselves to rest in that peace, even as we continue

to be engaged and active citizens is of great importance. It is important to us and our blood pressure, but it is also important as part of our mission – to reconcile all beings to one another and to God – reconciliation happens when there is serenity not when there is much noise and anxiety.

Cultivating our own inner peace is an important part of being disciples of Jesus. We can trust with Paul that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." (Rom 8:28). That's us – all things work together for good for us, the people of God. All things. Even our own aging and mortality – it is all part of what God is bringing together for our blessing and for the blessing of the earth and all its inhabitants.

The Serenity prayer was written by the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr just before the Second World War in times when much was going wrong in the world. Its earliest published version had courage first, "Father, give us courage to change what must be altered, serenity to accept what cannot be helped, and the insight to know the one from the other."

Niebuhr was not shrinking from confronting the evils of his time, but finding an approach that enabled him to do so effectively. He became one of the most influential thinkers of the 1940s and 1950s in public affairs. If we are to be similarly effective in confronting evil and changing what must be altered, we too must cultivate a trust in God that allows us the serenity to accept what cannot be helped.

May God bless you with serenity, and activism.

With love,

Caroline J.A. Hall

@StBens_LosOsos

A Report From Your Transition Team

Alan Kiste, Convener

As we look ahead to the changes in store for us with Rev. Caro's retirement next year, your Transition Team suggests that we all add prayers for transition to our prayer practice. Prayer is a powerful way for us to center our hearts, minds, and spirits into an attitude of readiness for where God will be leading us over the next months and years. Here are some ways to get started:

Creator of New Experiences, who has blessed our Parish and our community with a spirit of service, prepare my heart, mind, and spirit for the changes, challenges, and chances yet to come. In the name of God, my rock, Christ my brother, and the Spirit my guide and friend, three-in-one forever and ever. Amen.

O God of Many Blessings, I praise and thank you for the years of service of our Rector, Caro+. And for the wonderful and blessed times we have had together. I especially thank you for *some work of Caro+'s time with us that is particularly meaningful to you*. May you continue to bless Caro+ in her upcoming retirement. Continue to abide with her in the Spirit, who with you and our Lord Jesus, lives and reigns with you, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

O God of Every Transition and Change, we remember to our friend, our future Rector. We do not yet know them, and they do not know us. But we ask that you will fit and knit us all together so that we will all have hearts, minds, and spirits open to that "still, small voice" that directs us toward your will. In the name of the Spirit who shelters us, the Son who walks with us, and you the Parent who watches out for us, together in the Trinity. Amen.

Highlights of the Parish Council Meetings

Parish Council meetings are normally held on the third Sunday of the month at 12:30. There will be a combined July/August meeting on July 30. Everyone is welcome to attend. During April and May the Council:

- Applied to start the process to become a Green Business (see the article in this newsletter)
- Agreed to put up a flag provided by Bryson McKelvey "Pray for Ukraine"
- Welcomed the new format Messy Church – kudos to Pamela Bleisch for getting this up and running with help from Neita Oates
- Reviewed the training requirements for leaders and employees regarding safe church, sexual harassment, mandated reporting and anti-racism and agreed a policy. Thanks to Cathy Gildea for her leadership on this.
- Agreed not to have potlucks yet but to revisit this decision at the July/August meeting
- Welcomed Jen Crompton as our new trailblazer
- Agreed to replace carpet in Abundance Shop either with new carpet or with vinyl
- Thanked Esta Kandarian for her hard work in the shop and encouraged her to take a one week vacation

General Convention

The Episcopal Church (TEC) usually meets in convention once every three years. This meeting includes four lay and four clergy deputies from each diocese (there are 100 dioceses in the United States and another 13 from outside the States) meeting as the House of Deputies and the bishops meeting as the House of Bishops. The convention receives resolutions from all over the church and has a series of committees which review and refine the resolutions before presenting them. Every resolution has to be agreed in both houses with the same language.

Resolutions cover everything from whether to include Bishop Barbara Harris in the list of people we remember each year to support for ending the death penalty.

Alongside the hard work of decision-making for the church there is usually a meeting of the Episcopal Church Women, worship services, receptions and gatherings of all kinds and an exhibition hall where you can buy all things Episcopalian and learn about the work of different Episcopal groups and networks.

This is not a normal year. Due to Covid, the convention was postponed from last year and so there are only two years before the next one. Concerns about avoiding a super-spreader event have led to this year's convention being shortened from ten days to four and all the legislative committees where resolutions are discussed and hashed out have happened in advance online. Anything very contentious is being postponed until the next convention.

This year's convention is July 8 – 11 in Baltimore. Caro+ is going as an alternative clergy deputy. She has been many times before as an LGBTQ activist but not as a deputy. Please hold her and the whole convention in your prayers.

Caro+ will be visiting family and friends on the East Coast just before and just after the convention so will be good from the evening of July 5, returning on the morning of July 19.

Summer Book Study

As part of St. Ben's journey into the future, into becoming New Church - the church we are becoming - the Transition Team invites you to reflect on where the Episcopal Church has come from and where we are going.

The Rev. Stephanie Spellers who serves as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Canon for Evangelism and Reconciliation has written a short book, "The Church Cracked Open." It will be the basis of a summer discussion, every Wednesday evening for four weeks at 7pm on Zoom.

The study will follow the chapter outline:

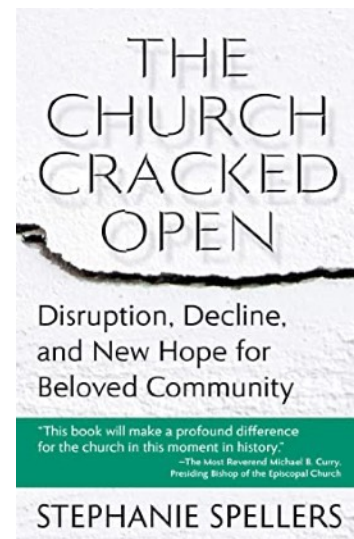
July 6: The Reality of Disruption and Decline, New Hope for Beloved Community

July 13: The Origins of the Nightmare, The Church of Empire

July 20: Shards of Light, Lose your life - Kenosis

July 17: Gain your Life- Solidarity, Walk in Love - Discipleship

For more information, contact Lorient Schwenk (purrsbythesea@gmail.com) who will facilitate the conversation in our normal [Zoom room](#).



Becoming a Green Business

Congratulations to Lorient Schwenk who has turned Cambria Chamber of Commerce into a certified Green Business!

We are planning to do the same here at St. Ben's. Why? Because it's the right thing to do and also because it helps people know that we seriously walk our talk when it comes to Creation Care.

In order to get this certification we have to show that we have green equipment and policies when it comes to heating, lighting, transport, waste and supplies. If you would enjoy being part of making this happen, please let one of the wardens (Maureen Titus and Sandy Fisher) know. Thank you.

Celebrations at the end of July

Two big celebrations coming up in rapid succession:

On **July 21**, Jen Crompton will be ordained as a deacon at Epiphany Church in Marina at 5:30pm. This is a big day for them and some of us plan to be there. If you are interested in car-pooling please talk to Caro+.

On **July 22**, Salud Carbajal plans to be at St Ben's to award Caro+ her Woman of the Year Award. This will be at 4pm and everyone is invited. If you have friends who know Caro+ and would like to celebrate, please bring them along! It will be a "happy hour" style reception catered by the Parish Council.



Blazing a Trail: Community Building

Jen Crompton

Hello, St. Ben's! Your friendly neighborhood Trailblazer Jen Crompton here with an initial installment of what I hope to be regular newsletter articles about our work together. This first installment is about the path blazed before me, my hopes for how we all can work together moving forward, and a few requests. Don't worry; I know you are more than up for the task after meeting many of you.

Canon Brian, working with some congregations in Monterey, blazed a trail before me, leaving some suggested guidelines for my work. The heart of my work lies in coalition and community building to help folks reimagine their ministries and imagine ministries that might not yet exist. The process is about building sustainable relationships that will live past my time with the community. It begins with meeting and listening to what the Spirit is doing within the community.

Over the next few months, there will be a series of meetings with individuals and groups along with my Discovery Team to look at "why are we here," getting to the heart of the purpose of ministry at St. Ben's, not the mission statement but what is the purpose of the church in practical terms. These conversations intend to provide a foundation for the rest of our work together. This is not intended to be a simple question but a prayerful moment of discernment and deep reflection on the difference it makes that we are here as a community. Don't worry; there will be many opportunities to share thoughts and reflections. More will come in the weekly email newsletter and Sunday worship announcements.

We start with the 'why' because it is the foundation for everything else. While the initial topic we will be pondering is connecting more young adults to the community, I also want to leave you with an additional question "What do you dream for this congregation and the communities it serves?" I'll be asking us to hold multiple questions as we pray and discern where the spirit is moving us. Don't hesitate to contact me with questions, comments, or if you have initial thoughts on the work we will be doing together. jen@stbenslososos.org

Sunday Server Scheduling

Maureen, our Presiding Warden recently said, "I'm no longer on the flower roster – I guess I did something wrong." Of course she didn't, and we would love to have her back doing flowers again...

During the pandemic we went to a minimal staffing level, and in the process of getting back to the new normal some people who used to do things on Sunday mornings aren't doing them anymore. So if, like Maureen, you used to do something and would like to do it again, please let Lorieanne know. Or if you would like to try something new, please let her know that as well.

We have plenty of people willing to read so lectors may only be asked once every two- three months; but we can use more help with altar guild, ushers, online hosts, eucharistic ministers, coffee hour, tellers, oh and flowers. Eucharistic Ministers and Altar Guild both get training in advance. So, if you can get to church ten minutes ahead of time and would like to share your practical skills and love with the community, don't be shy.

Laura Thompson is ready to pass on the leadership of the flower team, so if you love to make things beautiful and decorating the church can be part of that, please talk in the first instance to Sarah Chesebro.

Bible Conversations: Changes are coming!

Lisa Gonzalez

It has been my great pleasure to convene the weekly "Bible Conversations" on Sunday mornings between the services. We've explored New Testament gospels and epistles, Hebrew Bible prophets and the Psalms. We've read and explored these readings with open hearts and minds, and from many different religious backgrounds and traditions. My thanks to all who have participated and shared their insights on these eternal words with others.

Since this is the summer, we will go on hiatus in August.

But come September, we will be returning at a new time and location. We'll be meeting on Thursday afternoons at the home of Jane Wu and Sharon Porter in San Luis Obispo. We hope this new time will allow more people to attend and share their thoughts during the sessions. We'll try to finish by dusk, so that those who have trouble driving at night will be able to attend.

This is not a "Bible Study" in the traditional sense; there are no "right" answers but it is more conversations about our personal insights and ways we can apply the readings to our personal ministries and lives. I'm not "teaching" – I'm "convening" the group and you are the "teachers". We'll use techniques I've learned from mentoring "Education for Ministry" groups, and will look to the participants to suggest readings and themes we can cover together. We also enjoy reading from different versions of the Biblical translations, so you can bring your favorite.

So, if you've wanted a more extended exploration of the Bible, please contact me at 805-441-3386 (cell) or by e-mail at lgonzo@fix.net And you don't have to be an expert...we're here to explore together!

Messy Church at St. Benedict's

Pamela Bleisch

St Benedict's has begun offering a new form of hands-on worship for all ages: Messy Church. Messy Church is a way of being church that is informal, casual, and welcoming. Messy friends of all ages join in creative activities, a celebration with story and song, and then gather for supper together. In May, we gathered to paint wooden eggs and hear the story of David and Goliath. In June, we gathered to make lion masks and hear the story of Daniel in the Lion's den.

Based on the values of all ages together, celebration, creativity, hospitality, and centering ourselves in Christ, the Messy Church movement started in an Anglican church in England in 2004; it is now found across the globe, in a wide range of Christian denominations and traditions.

Messy Church at St Benedict's meets on the **third Friday of each month, 5:30-7 pm**. July 17th will be our next Messy Church; come join the fun!

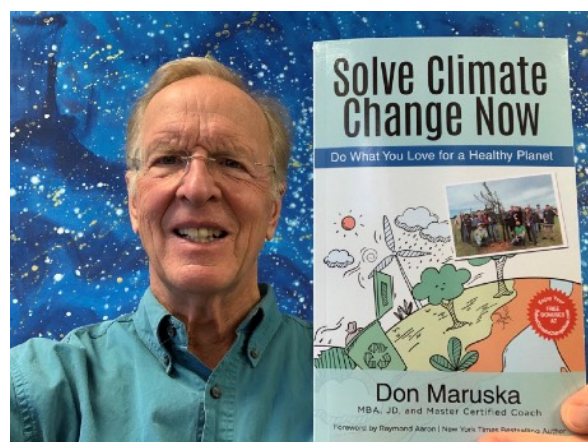


Don Maruska shares St. Ben's climate story in new book

"We can solve climate change now. By 'we,' I mean you, me, family members, friends, coworkers, community organizations, faith-based groups, and more." That's the opening sentence from my new book "Solve Climate Change Now: Do What You Love for a Healthy Planet." I make that bold statement because I've seen what groups like St. Benedict's and many others have done and can do. Indeed, the book includes stories and examples from St. Benedict's journey along with illustrations of a dozen more people and groups who are showing how we can make a difference. I'm grateful to Caro and to John Horsley who kindly provided comments you'll see printed in the book. You'll even note that the cover includes a photo of the community tree planting at St. Benedict's.

Now is not the time to wallow in despair about climate change or simply wish that somehow our leaders will take care of the problem for us. They need us to show through our awareness, actions, and advocacy that we are making a difference. This will attract the broader base of support needed for us to secure a healthy planet for ourselves and generations to come.

I hope that you will join in the many opportunities to flex your strength. The book shows how each of us can find things we love to do that will meet climate needs. One thing you can do to get started is to read the book and figure out what you'd enjoy doing. It'd also help if you'd write a review of the book on Amazon to encourage others to read and share the message. You can see Bob Pelfrey's



thoughtful review that's already on Amazon. More voices will help. As an encouragement to you and as a fundraiser for St. Benedict's, I will give members of St. Benedict's complimentary copies of the book with your donation to St. Benedict's Earthcare ministries. Suggested donation is the cover price of \$15 per book.

I'm also providing workshops and online sessions for businesses, faith-based groups, and community organizations to muster their capacity to gather and inspire others. You can read and see short videos about these opportunities at www.SolveClimateChangeNow.com. I'd love to explore with you any ideas you have to help this calling flourish more abundantly. In any event, I give thanks for each of you and the Spirit alive in our community. Please let me know how I can be supportive of you and the planet we share.

From Rev. Susan: Blessed people of St. Benedict's, when I arrived at your welcoming doors, I should have warned you that my husband of 40 years (who died 16 years ago) instilled in me a wanderlust that is still active. So, onward I go to the next adventure. The 22 of July, the moving van and I depart for Boulder City, Nevada. Boulder City was planned and built in the early 1930's to accommodate the workforce needed to build Hoover Dam (aka Boulder Dam), thus forming Lake Meade and electricity and a more controlled water supply for the arid southwest. It's a delightful, and attractive small community. And the best part for me is that my son and his family are only 4 hours away in AZ and the others, just that much closer also. No more two-day trips needed to go visit. Hooray!

Of course, the other side of all that excitement and anticipation is the difficult task of saying farewell to this amazing congregation, which it seems I have just begun to get to know, thanks to the isolation requirements of COVID and my Sunday stints at other Episcopal churches of the deanery needing supply clergy for Sunday worship. I will miss our worship together, especially the atmosphere of calm and reverence that pervades the sanctuary when you gather as the people of God. Not every congregation is able to create that. You may be tempted to attribute that to your wonderful rector but know that she can only lead and set the stage. The result comes from all of you working together and it will not be lost when Caro's+ time with you is complete.

Please continue to treasure and care for one another. Hannah-Jay, please keep me in the communication loop. And please know, I will always be a part of St. Ben's. Be in touch anytime and anyway you care too. (susanplucker@gmail.com, 1604 Bermuda Dunes Dr., Boulder City, NV 89005)

Hallo from Bill and Joan Hayes

Sarah and David Chesebro just visited Bill and Joan in Sacramento. Joan has been in skilled nursing because she had a nasty fall, but on the day they visited she was told she could move back to be with Bill. Joan is pictured here with her granddaughter Erin who grew up at St. Benedict's and is now pregnant with her first baby.

Bill and Joan's address is:

1445 Expo Parkway, Apt 323
Sacramento, CA 95815



Stefanie Shuman recently moved to Avila Senior Living on Marsh Street. Please call before you visit as they are keeping her pretty busy at present.

Her new address is:

475 Marsh St #207,
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.



May They Rise in Glory!

Two St. Ben's folk went to be with their maker recently; Tom Pickering died at the end of April and Faye Hogan+ passed on Pentecost Sunday.

Tom Pickering's daughter Susan writes, "my Dad, Tom Pickering, passed away Monday April 25th. We will all miss him very much. He really was the greatest dad ever. A lot of fun and pretty mellow for a guy with 6 kids growing up in the sixties and seventies! An example of his character- he took all 8 of us plus 2 small dogs in a station wagon cross country to Kansas to see his parents. Then on to Yellowstone and Custer's Battlefield, Arches, Bryce, Zion and the Grand Canyon. All without drugs or booze! I know he adored all of you at St Benedicts." Tom and Elizabeth were long-term members of St Benedict's.

Tom and Elizabeth were long-term members of St Benedict's. They worked and played hard, doing all they could to contribute to the life of the congregation. Caro+ says, "I especially remember Tom for several quite different things; for his painstakingly painting the railings of the veranda from one end to the other; for his scripture readings which he often prefaced with a pithy commentary of his own; and for his teasing about politics. When George W. Bush was president, I preached a sermon about social justice and Tom came up to me afterwards with glee and announced that for the potluck he had brought Bush's beans." (Photo: Tom being served by Johnnie Hammerlund at a Tuscan dinner fundraiser.)



Faye Hogan+ arrived at St. Benedict's a few months after Caro+ was made priest in charge. In the few years she was here, she made a big impact on the congregation and our community life. It was Faye's idea to turn the pews to face each other as we have them today.

She also worked as a chaplain at French Hospital – chaplaincy was her first love – and continued to prioritize visiting the sick and teaching about pastoral care after she moved to St Peter's Santa Maria where she was Associate Priest for ten years, until she had to stop freeway driving on doctor's orders.

Faye+ will be remembered for her pastoral care, her sense of humor and her love of story-telling.

During the pandemic, Faye+ kept herself to herself and this isolation no doubt contributed to her developing dementia. For the past year, she has been in assisted living but after breaking her hip was not able to engage in physical therapy so became restricted to her bed and a wheelchair.

Her funeral was at St Peter's, Santa Maria on June 25 with the Bishop of Los Angeles presiding. We will have an informal service here at St Ben's on July 30 at 10:30am after which we will scatter her ashes in the St. Francis Garden.



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