

# The Benediction

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

**The Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall**

Rector

**The Rev. Jen Crompton**

Deacon Trailblazer

**The Parish Council**

Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden

Sandy Fisher, People's Warden,

Cathy Gildea, Clerk

Lisa Gonzalez, Treasurer

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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/](http://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,**

Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35).

The way we love one another and also extend that love beyond the boundaries of "us" is a mark of our mission and ministry. Just as we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves individually, so as the community of Christ we are called to extend love to our neighbor as well as to ourselves.

I know that each one of you is extending love within the relationships that you have with family, friends and acquaintances. Each one of you is a "missionary" in the sense that you are engaged in God's mission to draw all beings into reconciliation with each other and with God through seeing the Christ in each one and extending love as best you can. And we have some good systems set up for expressing God's love in the community - through the Abundance Shop, Community Dinners, People's Kitchen and Laundry Love. Although only about 20% of the congregation are actively involved in these ministries, the rest of us can support them with our encouragement, our prayers and our contributions.

We have a less clear system for loving one another. Much of this happens informally through friendship networks, some of it gets organized through the Rector or others who step up. From time to time we create special care teams when someone is having a particular crisis. This was true for Stef Shuman as her life became difficult, and finally a few people rotated sitting vigil with her in her last hours. The nursing staff was surprised, and commented on our love for her - they see too many people dying alone.

Often our informal system works, and sometimes it doesn't. As we anticipate a time when I will not be here, it is time to shore up our systems of care. We need your participation. If you need our help, or would just like to let us know what is happening in your life, there are three ways you can do so; firstly you can email [pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org](mailto:pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org); secondly you can complete a card that you will find in the pews; and thirdly you can contact Hannah-Jaye in the office.

We will do our best to respond. If you are still not getting what you need or feeling unloved and uncared for, please consider talking to me or emailing [pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org](mailto:pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org) to let us know. And always remember that you can email [prayers@stbenslososos.org](mailto:prayers@stbenslososos.org) and we will pray. If you would like to be added to the list to be a pray-er, or if you would like to be more involved in pastoral care when the need arises please let Hannah-Jaye know.

As we love one another, as we love each person God sends in our direction, not only will they know we are Christians but we will attract more people to worship and serve God with us here at St Ben's.

Blessings,



Caroline J.A. Hall



@StBens\_LosOsos

## Prayers for Transition

Alan Kiste, Transition Team Convener

Greetings from your Transition Team! We're happy to report that our first Transition event, a book group on, "The Church Cracked Open" by Stephanie Spellers, lead by Lorianne Schwenk, yielded a lot of good discussion and fellowship.

If you weren't able to join us for that opportunity, keep your eyes open for announcements about our next book group, when we'll be reading "When Your Long-Term Pastor Leaves" by Larry Gilpin.

We're also exploring other activities related to Transition, including grief support groups. Please also keep an eye out for those announcements in the Newsletter and the St. Ben's Weekly, as well as announcements during worship.

All of us can be in prayer about the many types of transition our Parish is experiencing: Caro's+ retirement, the passing of our dear friends, changing life circumstances, and the day-to-day ways in which our lives experience change — sometimes welcome, sometimes not; sometimes expected, sometimes not.

In the last Benediction newsletter, we invited you to be in daily prayer regarding transitions and we provided some ideas for daily prayer. We invite you to include the following prayer in your daily prayer practice. This is a prayer from Archbishop Óscar Romero, a martyr of the Catholic Church. (If you are not familiar with Óscar Romero, I invite you to read about him online.)

### The Prayer of Oscar Romero

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.  
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,  
It is even beyond our vision.  
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.  
Nothing we do is complete,  
Which is another way of saying that  
The Kingdom always lies beyond us.  
No statement says all that should be said.  
No prayer fully expressed our faith.  
No confession brings perfection.  
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.  
No program accomplishes the church's mission.  
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.  
This is what we are about.  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted,  
Knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produced effects far beyond our capabilities.  
We cannot do everything,  
And there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning,  
A step along the way,  
An opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.  
We may never see the end results,  
But that is the difference  
Between the master builder and the worker.  
We are workers, not master builders,  
Ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future that is not our own.



## Highlights of Parish Council Meeting

The Parish Council met only once for July and August and dedicated this meeting to looking at the goals set in the February retreat and plans for their completion.

- Redo “Welcome to St Ben’s” video
- Include entrance interview in Membership Committee charge
- Potlucks are ok again as long as they are served by people masked and gloved
- The Gratitude Dinner will be Oct 28
- Parish Council will call members to touch in.
- Add a prayer for our common life to Benediction Weekly and change format so announcements are more prominent.
- Support Jen’s work
- Publicize Messy Church at the Abundance Shop

Committees:

- We do not currently have a Safety and Disaster Preparedness task force
- Request committees to provide quarterly reports
- Maureen will head the Stewardship Committee

In additional business the Parish Council

- Sent a letter to Bishop Lucinda in support of her pro-LGBTQ+ stance at the Lambeth Conference
- Approved a budget for replacing the Abundance Shop carpet

## Passing the Plate

We stopped passing the offering plates back at the beginning of the pandemic. But now we know that COVID is not spread by germs on surfaces, so it is time to start once more. You are encouraged to consider making a thanksgiving gift on a Sunday morning for all God’s grace even if you make your regular pledge online. When the plate comes to you, take a second to thank God for all God’s gifts, even if you do not make a donation this time.

## Brynn Albanese plays St. Benedict’s - September 10

Brynn is a well-known and loved multi genre violinist on the California Central Coast. She has been seen front and center as Soloist and Concertmaster on numerous Performing Arts Center stages with a wide variety of groups in the area as well as the ever-popular World Music Band, Café Musique. She is the Founder and Artistic Director of Cambria’s largest Concert Series, Cambria Concerts Unplugged. Brynn is now a Therapeutic Music Practitioner and End of Life Doula in Hospitals and Skilled Nursing Facilities.

During the Pandemic, Brynn created a One-Woman-Show using backing tracks and recordings of her own band in the living room of her Cambria home. Seeing that people were starving for LIVE music, in person, she took to the streets, cul-de-sacs, medians, yards, balconies and driveways and has performed over 145 Concerts since April 2020. A mix of European Gypsy, Latin jazz, Classical with a twist, Opera covers and a big splash of Celtic... she has created a lively, engaging and interactive show that she has now taken on the road!



**EVENT!**

**Saturday September 10 at 2pm.** Donations \$20 at the door. Kids are free.

## SLO Deanery Offers “A Storied Pilgrimage with Race”

Our diocese has put together a twelve-session series which explores the personal stories of people around the diocese on issues of race. It is a holy offering of video interviews, education, action items, and room for reflection. Many of the leaders and clergy in the diocese have been through

the series, and we are excited to offer the series to all those in the SLO Deanery. Each session will be one hour on zoom and will be led by the clergy of the Deanery.

The sessions will be every other Thursday evening at 7:00pm starting September 8th and running through February. Zoom login information and session pre-work information is below. Each session is stand alone, so you are welcomed to attend even if you have not attended prior session. No reservation is needed, just join the zoom meeting shortly before 7:00pm. This series meets the Anti-Racism training requirements of the diocese.

**Thursday, September 8th at 7:00pm:** The first stage of our “Storied Pilgrimage with Race” series, Bishop Lucinda Ashby interviews Brett Wormley of St. Andrews Saratoga about his life and experiences. “I’m not concerned with names or labels ... I care about what is in people’s hearts.”

**ZOOM LOGIN** We will use the Zoom video conferencing service for this gathering. Click this link to attend via your computer or device: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81150369907?pwd=Yzd5UTFwWl2d2pTWk>

## Altar Guild

The Altar Guild serves each Sunday by setting up and creating sacred space and then putting the vessels and linens away at the end as well as by looking after everything else we use in worship. There are openings for two or more detail-oriented people to join the team. If God is calling you to this special ministry please talk to Sarah Chesebro.



## HELP WANTED - Build the Community

Calling all St. Ben’s friends, family, and those who have thought about connecting with our community. Trailblazer Jen here, and I’m looking for anyone who might be interested in being a part of the next phase of my work in the community. I’ve been trying to meet folks and do some research, and now the fun continues, but this phase needs you. It requires a community and a team of folks willing to ask some questions and take our work beyond the walls of the church. This phase aims to discover some of the church community’s passions and what assets exist and help move those into action by finding ways to connect those assets to the outside community. The hope is to try a few things and see what happens. I’m looking for folks to join my Discovery Team. Let’s see if we can find a connection for it now or re-work it so that it’s possible. Want to try evening prayer in a park somewhere? Let’s talk about it. Let’s explore how to take the things that excite you to be part of St. Ben’s into the community. And as we take this amazing love we feel here out into the community, we might be surprised how the spirit moves within our community.

Join me as we turn our passions into action. We will meet in person, on zoom, or in a hybrid format, depending on those interested and their needs. Accessibility is essential to me, so if you want to participate in some way but don’t want to commit to being on the team, just let me know there’s always a way. I’d also love to hear your ideas. I’m always up for a cup of coffee or tea.

Please email me ([jen@stbenslosos.org](mailto:jen@stbenslosos.org)) or talk to me between services or at coffee hour after service. Please let me know ASAP or by Sept. 18 if you might be interested in joining the team. You can always join later I just want to get a sense of interest. Peace...Deacon Jen



## Walk in Love – a five week class, Weds at 7pm starting Sept 7

This short on-line course is for anyone who is interested in being received or confirmed into The Episcopal Church, and anyone who would like to know more about the church. In Walk in Love, the Revs. Scott Gunn and Melody Shobe unpack the basic beliefs and practices of our tradition. Everyone is welcome – each session will last about an hour and will include four video segments with conversation in between. They will take place in our normal Zoom room and be led in the main by Caro+ with assistance from Deacon Jen and Lisa Gonzalez.

Sept 7 The Sacramental Life

Sept 28 A Wonderful Sacrament

Sept 14 The Anglican Way of Christianity

Oct 5 Grow in Grace

Sept 21 The New Life of Grace

## Spiritual Conversation

The next Spiritual Conversation will take place on September 6 at 10:15 when we will watch a TED talk on research into happiness and discuss it together.

Then, starting September 13, the group will dive into Stant Litore's book, *Lives of Unforgetting: What We Lose in Translation When We Read the Bible*, and *A Way of Reading the Bible as a Call to Adventure*. This book is recommended by Cathy Gildea.

From the publisher, "The ancient Greek word for "truth" means unconcealing or unforgetting. Yet today many ideas and stories that were once critical to how early Christians understood, practiced, and defended their faith often remain "hidden in plain sight" in our Bibles. These ideas are concealed from us by the distance between languages, between eras, and between cultures—yet they are so worth unconcealing and unforgetting. In this book, discover:

- The forgotten women who co-founded Christianity
- Whether the first-century church thought there was a hell
- What happens when you realize that in Greek, faith is a verb
- Why gender in the Bible is more complicated than we think
- Which concepts our modern tradition takes for granted that would have been alien to the original readers (like homophobia)

We have also forgotten that to read the Bible is to receive an invitation to adventure—to encounter the impossible, to move mountains, to walk on water. Instead, we have been taught to read the Bible tamely, to make no choices, to risk no questioning of our tradition. What would happen if we took the adventure? If we readers walked out into the wilderness toward God, leaving home far behind? If we stepped out of the boat of our received tradition, out onto the crashing waves?"

Consider joining us for an adventurous read over a six-week period. **Every Tuesday at 10:15 on Zoom.** It's fine to come if you haven't read the book but you may find you want to.

## Pledge to be a Faith Climate Justice Voter

Mike Eggleston

As part of the "Season for Creation" this September, members, friends, attendees of St Benedict's will be encouraged to pledge to be a **Faith Climate Justice Voter**. The pledge will be printed in postcards available in worship on September 25, and reads:

I pledge to protect all of Creation and to ensure that everyone is cared for.

I pledge to be a Faith Climate Justice Voter and to care for every living creature in every community suffering the impacts of our changing climate – free from extreme heat, to wildfires, to devastating droughts, to flooding, to more frequent and supercharged storms. (continued on the next page)

By pledging to be a consistent voter and to vote with climate justice in mind, I am communicating my values in caring for God's Creation, our Sacred Earth, and protecting our children's future."

The Faith Climate Justice Voter is a program of Interfaith Power and Light of which St Benedict's is a member, and is also co-sponsored or endorsed by many other faith organizations, including Green Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Women in Faith (formerly United Methodist Women). Several members of St Benedict's have already made our Faith Climate Justice Voter pledges earlier in 2022, but the opportunity, privilege, and need to vote conscientiously for the good of God's planet earth is always before us.

Examples of ways in which congregations can contribute to Faith Climate Justice, besides turning in our cards on September 25, include: registering voters, sharing IPE's nonpartisan voter reflection guide, writing letters to voters and elected officials and candidates, and of course educating ourselves in ballot issues before the upcoming November 4 election and other election in which we are privileged to vote into the future. Congregations may also designate a "Congregation Captain" to bring opportunities to St Benedict's awareness. Have we volunteers

Mike Eggleston will share more information in the announcement time of our September 25 worship, and will have other resources including Faith Climate Justice Voter pledge cards available that day. In America, voting is a sacred obligation. For Christians, Jews, and others of faith, caring for and tending God's garden is a sacred mission given to humans in Genesis 2:15.

## Be an Active Participant in the Season of Creation

by Don Maruska on behalf of the Earthcare Team

"Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:16)

It's not enough for us to proclaim our love for creation. We also need to act to demonstrate our stewardship. During the Season of Creation September 1 through October 2, members of the Earthcare Team will be highlighting what each of us can do to make a difference. They will draw from their own experiences to give you practical ideas.

Here's a quick outline of planned topics"

September 4 "Measuring and Reducing Your Carbon Footprint" with Don Maruska

The Episcopal Church pioneered offering a free online tool to measure our carbon footprints and learn what we can do to reduce them and save money. Learn how you can take a few minutes to join this effort and benefit from it. You can sign up at [www.SustainIslandHome.org](http://www.SustainIslandHome.org) or get help during coffee hour or online.

September 11 "Choosing Environmentally Friendly Products" with John Horsley

Choices in the food we eat and the products we buy can make a big difference. Hear how members of our congregation have enjoyed shifting their choices.

September 18 "Keeping Plastic Out of Our Waste Stream" with Bob Pelfrey

Plastics not only use fossil fuels but also damage our land and ocean ecosystems. Simple alternatives can give you the convenience of plastic without the negative consequences.

September 25 "Joining the Faith Climate Justice Voter Campaign" with Mike Eggleston

As The Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas has shown us, we can be political (even in church) without being partisan. Learn what you can do to help get out the vote among people who care for a healthy climate and a healthy democracy.

October 2 "Learning from an Olive Tree" with Alice Welchert

Hear how an olive tree can be a joyful way to support a healthy climate and thriving planet.

The St. Benedict's community is doing a lot, and more needs to be done. Let's be a "shining community in the valley" for what's possible.



## To My Church Family...

I really don't know where to start. This church and family mean so much to me; from Barry+ saving my life, to inviting me to Vespers for the first time, to taking the time out on that very black Sunday that I showed up here at St Ben's. That day I was literally going to take my life, But between God and Barry+ that didn't happen. It was like the first day of the rest of my life.

My church family has given me so much and I am so grateful to all of you. If it wasn't for all of you, I don't know where I would be. From Ron and Laura to Kathie West, to Pamela, Steve Cake, Michael Lucas, Bob Pelfrey, Stef, Caro+, Alice, Berkeley...the list goes on and on.

My family means the world to me and when I got sidetracked everyone was still there for me. You guys helped me through difficult times. Thank you all for your support and I hope that someday I can return the same love. You all have a special place in my heart and always will.

Please don't hesitate to ask me if I can help one of you. I hope and pray that we all stay together as family and friends.

Thank you all for your continued support and prayers and help.

Love and God bless, JW

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## Remembering Stef Shuman

We were deeply saddened when our friend and leader, Stefanie Shuman, died unexpectedly on July 17. Stef had been dealing with a variety of complex medical issues for many years and following a fall in late May had moved into assisted living. She had a rapid deterioration in her health, was admitted to hospital with pneumonia, and went into a coma from which she did not recover. Members of her care team sat vigil with her praying and talking to her from when she lost consciousness until after she died two days later.

Stef was an early member of the church. Our first priest, Fr. Tom, who was fond of titles declared her the "Vicar of Everything Else". She continued in that role up until a few months ago. Before we had an office or an admin person, Stef was our volunteer administrator. She produced the service leaflets, organized the Sunday roster and wrote the Benediction Weekly. Stef was a frequent flyer on the Bishops Committee, then the Vestry and Parish Council. She was Senior Warden many times, especially at difficult times in the congregation's life. For example, it was Stef who led us on the discernment process that resulted in moving the chapel from Camp Roberts to Los Osos. She was truly a pillar of the church and a gentle advisor and prodder for the Rector.

Stef will be remembered for her loyalty and love for this congregation and for each of us, as well as for her humility - she declared herself just the "parish typist" - and for her dry wit and humor. But beyond all that, her spiritual walk with Jesus was the foundation of her life and her rich prayer life is an inspiration for us all.

If you missed her memorial service, you will find it here; <https://www.facebook.com/stbenslososos/videos/1457580964736881>



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