

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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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,

Fall is here; the season of fullness and also of dying – the apples are wonderful but the peaches are over, and it's time for deadheading and pruning. In my yard, the Matilija poppies which take over everything in the summer are dying back and need to be cut down so that they can grow and bloom again next year. But on the other hand, the white crowned sparrows are back and the yard is full of finches and sparrows fighting over the bird feeders.

There are seasons in the church as well – the obvious ones which we celebrate with different colors as the long green season of Pentecost ends with the Reign of Christ (white) and Advent, the blue season of waiting and preparation begins. There are also more subtle seasons – the seasons of the Holy Spirit. The seed is sown, it grows when no-one is looking and then the fields are green moving to gold and the harvest comes... then it all starts again. Unlike the seasons of the year, these seasons of the Spirit are subtle and unpredictable and may overlap with one another – harvest in one place overlaps with spring in another.



As my time as your Rector begins to draw to a close and our paths diverge (we have until May 31 together) the seasons of the Spirit will change and there may be times when it seems as though things we have cherished are coming to an end – the harvest is in – and we don't see the seeds growing. Dave Alm moving on after more than a year as our Music Director is an example of this – we have enjoyed his musical skills and his leadership, we will harvest the benefit of this at the Christmas Celebration of Carols on December 18, and currently we are in the darkness and uncertainty of not having found a new musician. Yet we know that seed grows in darkness and we look with hope for what God will do next in our music program.

In times of uncertainty when the harvest has been gathered in and the winter seems cold and dark, we can be sure that God is still at work in and around us. God is still as faithful to St. Benedict's as s/he has always been. Whatever the spiritual season, we are the people of God and God is with us.

There is a passage in Isaiah 43 which keeps coming to my mind: "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make... rivers in the desert.... to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise." (Is. 43: 18-21)

God is doing a new thing in our midst. We don't know exactly what it is. Change is never comfortable but we are the people whom God formed for Godself so that we might declare God's praise. That is our joy and our vocation – to declare God's praise even through the winter seasons of the Spirit, knowing that in the winter season the ground is being prepared (by zillions of bacteria and fungi) to welcome the seed which will grow into the new thing.

I look forward to seeing the new things that God is doing at St. Ben's.

With Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Caroline'.

Caroline J.A. Hall

@StBens_LosOsos

Transition Team Report, October 2022

Alan Kiste, Transition Team Convener

The Parish Council and Transition Team met with Bishop Lucinda during her visit on Sunday, October 9. The Bishop agreed to the Parish Council's plan to conduct a "Search in Place."

Some definitions:

- 1) A "Search in Place" means that the congregation can begin working on the "Congregational Profile" before Caro+'s retirement in the spring rather than waiting until she retires to begin the process. We hope that this will allow us to begin the search as quickly as possible. In addition, during the time between Caro+'s retirement and the call of a new Rector, we will have pulpit supply rather than an interim priest.
- 2) The "Congregational Profile" is an extensive document that describes our parish worship, work, and ministry, the physical plant, church finances, as well as the skills and gifts we will be looking for in a new rector. The whole parish will participate in the creation of the profile through four congregational conversations that will be scheduled over the next several months. In addition, parish committees and ministry teams will be asked to write about their work and goals.

Because we will not be calling an interim priest, we will all need to be particularly mindful of taking care of each other and the church during the search process. Pulpit supply priests will only be available to lead worship, not provide pastoral care. However, the Parish Council believes that our experience during Caro+'s sabbatical makes us well-positioned to provide such care.

Be on the lookout for upcoming announcements about our congregational conversations and for ways you can contribute to the effort. As always, if you have questions about the transition and search process, please contact a member of the Transition Team (Brian Spolarich, chair; Michael Lucas, Lorienne Schwenk, and Jane Wu) or Parish Council.

Finally, the Transition Team is looking for one or more additional members. If you would like to join us, please let us know!

And, don't forget to pray!

O God our Firm Foundation, you have blessed St. Benedict's with our wonderful Rector, Caro+. I especially thank you for the parts of Caro+'s ministry that are particularly meaningful to you. Be with me, I pray, and be with all of us as we to celebrate Caro+'s many gifts. Be with Caro+ as she too celebrates her time among us. We pray in the name of Jesus, who with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns with you, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

O God of Every Transition and Change, we remember to you 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.

Monthly Potlucks Returning

Esta Kandarian

Good news! First Sunday potlucks are returning to St. Ben's. We will begin on **Sunday, November 6th**, after the 10:30 service. Please bring your dish to share with 6-8 people to the kitchen. Volunteers will serve you in the great room. From there, please enjoy your food on the veranda. Food assignments, by last name, are as follows:

A-H main dish

I-Q side dish or salad

R-Z dessert



I am so happy we will be able to enjoy good food and fellowship again on a regular monthly basis. Please come even if you forget or are unable to bring food--there is always plenty!

Highlights from the Parish Council

- We received recommendations from the Transition Committee and agreed to start the preparation phase of the Search process now, and to look for a priest-in-charge or new rector without an interim phase.
- We planned and looked forward to the Gratitude Dinner.
- We agreed dates for the annual pledge campaign.
- We received the financial reports and noticed with some concern that pledged giving is way behind our expectations. A few people who pledged have moved/died so we will not get all the anticipated income. We agreed to send a letter reminding people to fulfill their pledges and continue their generosity in giving
- We received with sadness a report from the Rector mentioning the resignations of Ed Himelblau as newsletter editor, Pamela Bleisch from Children's programming and Dave Alm as Music Director
- We discussed preliminary quotes for replacing the current aging heating system with heat pumps
- We endorsed Jen Crompton for ordination to the priesthood. Yay Jen!
- We rejoiced that the Abundance Shop continues to do well and approved Esta's recommendation for the company to do the carpet replacement
- Monthly potlucks will start again in November but with a couple of people serving the food to reduce people breathing into each other's faces etc.



Pamela telling a story at Messy Church.

Finances

We expected to be behind this year as we decided to pay the Rector full-time but we are more behind than usual. This is partly due to lower Sunday offerings and partly to people who pledged to support St Ben's this year being later with their pledges than we budgeted. This is leaving us with cash flow issues and we are having to pull from reserves.

Inflation is challenging us all but if you can catch up with your pledge payments or give a little more in the next couple of months it will help a great deal! Thank you.

You will be receiving your 2023 pledge cards quite soon as our **Ingathering Sunday is November 13**. Please be praying about how you will support God's work in and through St. Benedict's in 2023. Every little helps – thank you for your generosity.

All Saints

November 6th is our celebration of All Saints. If you have loved ones you would like to be remembered during the service, please give their names to Hannah-Jaye. Also, if you would like their photo to be included in the slide show, please get them to Hannah-Jaye no later than Wednesday November 2nd.

This is also our first post-pandemic potluck. Please bring your dish to the kitchen and it will be set out and served by our hosts for the day. If you would like to host on a future first Sunday, please let Barbara Hirahara know.

Diocesan Convention

This business meeting for the diocese, which stretches from Palo Alto to Nipomo, takes place every year. This year, the delegates from St Ben's, who you elect every January, are Lorraine Schwenk, Diana Hammerlund and Lisa Gonzalez. The clergy are also expected to be there. Because of Covid this will be a fairly brief Zoom meeting and there will be an in-person gathering in Salinas to which we are all invited in April.

The Convention will agree the diocesan budget for the year (St. Ben's contributes one tenth of our income to the work of the wider diocese); will elect people to participate in governing bodies – Roz Malone is running for Commission on Ministry and Jane Wu for Board of Directors; and pass resolutions. The resolutions this year include one on land acknowledgments, one establishing a study group to see how the deaneries might function better, and one which comes up every year about minimum compensation for clergy.

You can get more details on the diocesan website: <https://www.realepiscopal.org/convention/>

Thanksgiving is Coming!

We will have a **thanksgiving dinner at the church starting at 1pm**. Everyone is welcome. Please try to sign up in advance with what you can contribute so that we know we will have all the basics, and much more! Look forward to seeing you.



SLO Deanery offering of "A Storied Pilgrimage on Race"

Our Diocese has put together a twelve session series which explores the personal stories of those across 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 is one hour on Zoom led by the clergy of the Deanery. **The sessions are every other Thursday evening at 7:00pm**. Each session is stand alone, so you are welcomed to attend even if you have not attended the prior sessions. No reservation is needed, just join the Zoom meeting shortly before 7:00pm. This series meets the Anti-Racism training requirements of the Diocese.

Session Five - Thursday, November 3rd at 7:00pm (led by Caro+)

After opening in prayer we will discuss the homework from the prior session. Here are the links to that homework:

Reference -- View the video, "A Struggle for Identity: Issues in Transracial Adoption":

<https://www.cultureunplugged.com/documentary/watch-online/play/51562/Struggle-for-Identity--Issues-in-Transracial-Adoption-Special-Edition>

Action -- Visit the US Census website:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-census-main.html>

How would you classify yourself?

Reflection -- View the Chinese artwork, "Jesus and the Woman at the Well," and answer the related questions:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dCzhm-eXTIP7PyIRg6Z2ixoDd7_K1Zjp/view

After reviewing the homework we will watch the video for Session Five. In the fifth stage of our "Storied Pilgrimage with Race" series, The Rev. Jani Wild interviews The Rev. Ale Trillos, rector of St. Paul's-San Pablo Episcopal Church in Salinas, about her life and experience immigrating to America.

Zoom login: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81150369907?pwd=Yzd5UTFwWl2d2pTWk8oNUlTak5NQTo9>

To dial in call 1-669-900-6833. When prompted put in the meeting id of **811 5036 9907#** and when prompted for a password put in **136424#**, and then hit # a second time.



Advent

This year we will be engaging in an Advent reflection called [Living Well through Advent - Practicing Simplicity with all your Heart, Soul, Strength and Mind](#).

There are several ways you can take part:

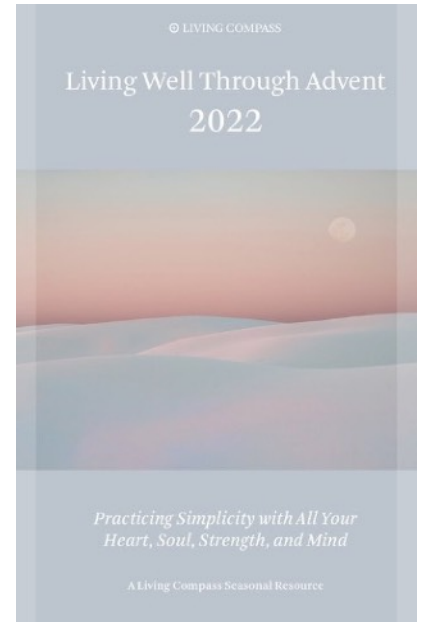
Join an in-person conversation happening on Thursdays at 10am for about an hour at the church, starting on December 1st for four weeks

Get a daily reflection by email by signing up here: <https://www.livingcompass.org/advent> (Scroll down)

Pick up a printed booklet of daily reflections from the church (available in a few weeks)

Buy it through Kindle or get free pdf download here: <https://shop.livingcompass.org/collections/advent-and-lent-resources/products/living-well-through-advent-2022-8-5-x-11-pdf-file>

Thanks to Roz Malone for finding this for us.



Christmas Giving

You may want to consider giving some alternative Christmas presents this year. Perhaps a gift of goats? Or clean water? Or a beehive? Episcopal Relief and Development provides assistance around the world through partnerships with local dioceses and congregations. You can read their Gifts for Life catalog here: <https://support.episcopalrelief.org/gifts/catalog>

Christmas Celebration

Dec 17th 5pm Blue Christmas service – a simple quiet service for those who find Christmas a challenge.

Dec 18th 3pm Celebration of Carols with the St Benedict's Singers conducted by Scott Glysson and accompanied by Paul Woodring

Dec 24th Christmas Eve. 4:30 all ages Carols and Communion around the Creche, and 8pm Festival Eucharist with candles and Carols.

Dec 25th Quiet 10:30am service followed by brunch

Poinsettias

Help make the church festive for Christmas. You can donate a poinsettia in honor of a loved one for a suggested donation of \$15. Envelopes will be available at the back of the church in December.



Discovery Team Update

Rev Jen Crompton

St. Benedict's Deacon Jen here, coming to you with an update from our Discovery team. We are excited to host a table at the Baywood Oktoberfest in partnership with our new member committee. The event is today, October 30, in Baywood Park from 9-5, and we would love to see you there. We will be offering some blessings to go, sharing upcoming events and ways the community can get involved or support our work. We hope to do some similar types of community engagement activities in the future so keep a look out for announcements on how you can participate. A huge thank you to those who have already signed up to help with the table and share their love for St. Ben's with the community; additional volunteers are always welcome. It's going to be a lot of fun. We are thinking about doing something similar in partnership with the abundance shop with prayers or blessings to go, and we will keep you posted as that gets finalized. A quick reminder if you are still interested in being a part of this inspiring work but just haven't had a chance to let me know, don't worry; there's still time. Just find me during coffee hour or send me an email at jen@stbenslosos.org.

I continue to be blessed and excited by how the spirit is moving in this community. As we all navigate through the month ahead, I wonder how we connect what we hear and learn on Sunday during church service to our lives during the week. The same goes for any morning or evening prayer, spiritual conversations, or community outreach events we might attend. How do they sustain us, and how are they deepening our connections and conversations with each other and our faith? Have you tried that prayer in action we discussed during my sermon on October 16? How is it going? I hope you will bring these conversations to coffee hour and share them with the community. As always, I'm grateful for your love and support and look forward to our next chat. (The sermon from 10/16 is available on the St. Ben's website here <https://www.stbenslosos.org/sermon-archive> if you couldn't attend)

The Season of Creation at St. Benedict's

John Horsley

The Season of Creation at St. Benedict's this year began on September 1, the World Day of Prayer for Creation, with a noon prayer meeting on Zoom, put together and led by the Rector. As well as prayers of thanksgiving for Creation, the prayer meeting included readings from the medieval mystic Hildegard of Bingen and Paul's letter to the Romans, and a reflection by Bishop Lucinda Ashby.

On the Sundays in the Season of Creation a member of the Earthcare team came forward during the announcements at the 10:30 Eucharist to speak on the theme "Simple things you can do for a healthy planet". *Don Maruska* spoke on measuring and reducing our carbon footprints by using the Episcopal Church website SustainIslandHome.org. *John Horsley* presented some examples of environmentally friendly products that you can find at local supermarkets, including plant-based detergents and cleaners, refillable water bottles and compostable bags for food scraps. *Bob Pelfry* presented another environmentally friendly product, reusable silicone food storage bags, which can replace single use plastic bags and thus help reduce the proliferation of plastic in the environment. *Mike Eggleston* introduced the congregation to Interfaith Power and Light's Faith Climate Justice Voter campaign. He urged members of the congregation to pledge to be a Faith Climate Justice Voter on cards that he provided or online. *Alice Welchert* told how our current drought (exacerbated by the climate crisis) almost caused the loss of two olive trees in her yard. The drought was one cause of a white fly infestation that she was able to eliminate only after much watering and spraying. We must protect our trees for a healthy planet.

The Season of Creation ended on October 2, the Sunday closest to St Francis day, with the traditional Blessing of the Animals, at two locations in Los Osos.



“Enjoy Being a Climate Solver” free community workshop 10-noon, Saturday, November 12, 2022

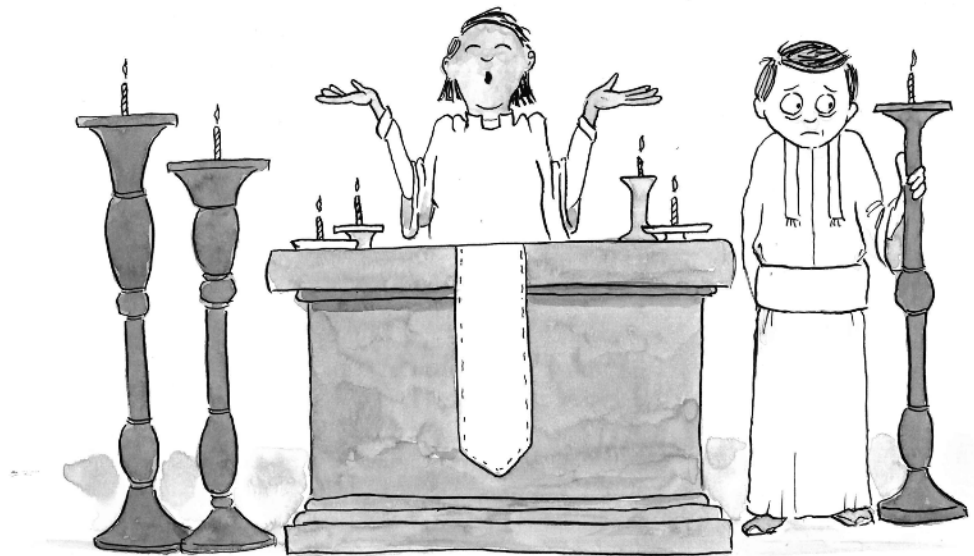
St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church, Los Osos Valley Road and Clark Valley Road, Los Osos, CA

Don’t despair about climate change or wring your hands waiting for leaders to act. You can make a difference now.

The EarthCare Team and the Hollister Institute of St. Benedict’s invite the public to a special “Enjoy Being a Climate Solver” community workshop at 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, November 12, at St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church, Los Osos Valley Road and Clark Valley Road, Los Osos. The program includes presentations and discussions as well as resource tables to help you get results.

- “Hopeful Solutions to Climate Change” with Don Gaede from the Citizens Climate Lobby
- “Reducing Our Carbon Footprints” with Kristen Hazard from ResilientSLO
- “Opportunities for Meaningful Action” with Grant Helete from ECOSLO
- “Doing What You Love for a Healthy Planet” with Don Maruska who is author of “Solve Climate Change Now.”

Learn what you can do to promote climate health for ourselves and generations to come. Whether you are just exploring climate change or a climate activist, you’ll find support for your interests. Invite your family and friends to join you.



‘We give thanks as we begin this glorious season of light even if *someone* forgot to submit the candle order and we have to use the birthday candles from the break room.’

The Joys of Altar Guild Ministry

Sarah Chesebro

In the words of Presiding Bishop Curry, “People go to church to refocus. Focus on God. What you do for God matters. The Altar Guild helps us to refocus. Focus on God the Creator then follow Jesus into the world.” The Altar Guild is charged with this awesome responsibility and privilege of tending to the Sanctuary and enabling our congregation to engage in worship that is filled with order, beauty, peace, and tranquility.

At Saint Benedict’s, the Altar Guild also includes the Flower Guild and Sacristy Team. What joy it is for us to set the stage for the “Sacred Theatre”. As with theatre production, so much happens behind the scenes. During this time of preparation, it is an opportunity for us to experience spiritual reflection as we work with our hands and work in quiet meditation. Sometimes, we work while the musicians and choir are practicing and have our own private concert. Or, while setting up for the 8am service, experience the glory of the sun rising and the Great Blue Herons or White Egrets hunting. While we know that God is everywhere and all of creation is sacred, there are some places where God’s presence is more intensely felt, as in the Sanctuary - a Sacred Space.

The Altar Guild is not a social group. We don’t have potlucks; we seldom have meetings. We are not involved in the business of the church. We don’t take votes or make momentous decisions. Most of what we do is invisible to the congregation and is meant to be that way. The work we do facilitates and enhances our worship and particularly the Eucharist.

Joining the Altar Guild means learning many fascinating aspects of Church tradition, including the esoteric names for all the various vessels, vestments, linens and paraments we use in worship. Most importantly, serving on the Altar Guild is a spiritual ministry. Caring for the Altar is a way to act out our relationship with God. It is quiet, prayerful work.

While Altar Guilds can trace their roots to the women who cared for Jesus, at various times in the history of the Anglican Church, Altar Guilds have been composed exclusively of men or exclusively of women. Today, anyone can be a member of the Altar Guild. You don’t have to have any experience to join the Altar Guild. Your training will consist of hands-on instruction from experienced Altar Guild members.

If you are interested in exploring Altar Guild service, please contact Sarah Chesebro at sarahchesebro@gmail.com or 805 440 3607.

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