

# The Benediction

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

## The Rev. Jen Crompton

Trailblazer

## The Parish Council

Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden  
Sandy Fisher, People's Warden  
Cathy Gildea, Clerk  
Lisa Gonzalez, Treasurer  
Esta Kandarian, Abundance Shop  
Pamela Bleisch  
Sarah Chesebro  
Diana Hammerlund  
Berkeley Johnson  
Helen Schnieders

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Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden

## Benediction Editor

Cathy Gildea, cathy@gildea.com

## 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:

facebook.com/stbenslososos  
or on our website:  
stbenslososos.org/facebook  
including-live-stream/

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

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Message from our Presiding Warden, Maureen Titus

Happy Fall to Everyone,

Today I am Grateful for... this time of year, we honor the Season of Gratitude for all we have and the wonderful loving dedicated community we call St. Ben's. We will be planning our Gratitude Dinner for Friday October 27. This is when the Parish Council provides and serves dinner for those who have given so much for our church and other outreach programs this past year.



It has been a year since Rev. Jen Crompton joined us and St. Stephen's/Canterbury Ministry as a Trailblazer. So many events have been centered around this outreach ministry to encourage and embrace more to join us in this journey. I am Grateful for all the time each person has given to be part of this team with Rev. Jen. We are blessed to have them with us into the new year. Rev. Jen has been, since their ordination in June, an integral part of the visiting clergy since Rev. Caro retired.

Last year the Transition Committee started the work and passed that research on to the Search Committee to create the Parish Profile which is almost ready for the Parish Council to review and vote on. So very Grateful for the time and dedication each person has provided to be part of these committees. Many hours, a copious amount of discussion, and much research has taken place.

So very Grateful for the visiting clergy we have had since June and their willingness to provide St. Ben's with loving, thought provoking, and inspiring messages during their time with us. They are very much appreciated by everyone.

For those in our church who have been responsive with all prayer requests for those who have reached out for our support and love, much Gratitude and love to each one of you, more than words can say.

Finally, I want to say how Grateful I am for everyone who has continued with annual stewardship contributions, prayed for St. Ben's, and continues to do so. We will move forward, face any and all challenges as this church has done in the past. A new Rector is waiting out there for us!

Peace, Love and Gratitude,

Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden

*"We can succeed only by concert. It is not, "can any of us imagine better, but can we all do better?" Abraham Lincoln*

## A Report from Your Search Committee

Brian Spolarich, Chair

We have reached an exciting milestone in our transition process with the completion of a draft of the Parish Profile, which was sent to the Parish Council earlier this month. This is a significant accomplishment and represents the culmination of work that began with our first transition-related meetings in January. Thanks be to God! Canon Martha, our transition consultant, said of our latest version: "This profile is BEAUTIFUL. This profile is one I'll be using as an example for other parishes."

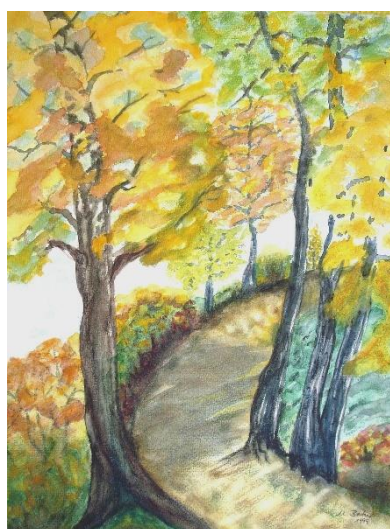
What's next for the Profile? Here's the process:

- The Parish Council has completed its review of the Profile and provided feedback to the Search Committee, which we will incorporate into another version.
- Once the Parish Council is satisfied, the Vestry (that is, the confirmed Episcopal members of the Parish Council) will vote to approve the Profile.
- Our Presiding Warden Maureen will then send this to Bishop Lucinda for her approval.
- If the Bishop has any changes, it goes back to the Search Committee, then approval by the Vestry, and then approval by the Bishop.
- Once the Bishop has approved, we will post the final version of the Profile on our web site and share it widely with the congregation at that time.

The Parish Profile is intended to be a relatively short document (ours will be around 10 pages) and should be an accurate and compelling description of St. Benedict's as a parish, with the purpose of attracting clergy for whom we would be a likely good "mutual match". In secular terms, this is essentially a very detailed job advertisement. So, while the Profile is important, the ultimate purpose is to attract clergy to apply, and invite them into conversation with us.

As a reminder of the process so far, everyone was invited to provide input into what would ultimately go into the Profile through the congregational meetings and other transition-related activities in the first few months of the year, and the Search Committee has worked faithfully to synthesize and incorporate this into the words of the Profile. We all elected the Parish Council, and the Parish Council appointed the Search Committee, to do this work on our behalf.

Looking forward, once we have finalized the Profile and published it, we will post a job advertisement on the Episcopal News Service web site. We are also developing "first round" interview questions which I will discuss with Canon Martha in early October and we will finalize soon.



### Transition Prayer

O Lord,

You are the light that illumines our path.

You are the map that gives us direction.

You are the peace that makes us strong.

You are the guide whom we faithfully follow.

May your light illuminate our entire lives.

And your guidance bring direction to our work.

May we find inspiration in your Word,

And peace in our hearts as we follow you. Amen.

## Highlights from the Parish Council

We're responding to God's call to grow in the spirit! During this time of transition, the Parish Council is called to give special attention and focus to where we are going and who God is calling us to become. We have spent much of our time during the month of September in prayer, reflection, and discussion as we discern together God's intentions for our community. This focus will continue through the search and transition process and manifest in many ways, including our Parish Profile and conversations with candidates when that time comes. We are very excited to share with you our new welcome statement and vision for St. Benedict's.

In response to parishioner feedback, the Parish Council has decided to change our welcome statement from *"Whoever you are and wherever you are on your faith journey, there's a warm welcome for you here!"* to *"You are warmly welcome at St. Benedict's for who you are and where you are on your faith journey."*

We believe this more fully expresses our desire to positively affirm the radical inclusiveness we feel in our hearts.

It is a challenging task to discern and articulate our common future as a synthesis of our many perspectives, lived experiences, and hopes and dreams. We invite you into conversation with us and with each other as we seek to live out our mission in Los Osos and beyond, using our vision as a centering tool for that work.

### Our Vision

We embrace the fact that the world around us is changing, and along with it, the role of mainline traditional churches like St. Benedict's. We must seek new ways to embody our mission as followers of Christ in order to continue to thrive today and in the future. We dream of collaborating with our rector to imagine and build new ways of engaging in our community that push us to grow beyond traditional "outreach" methodologies.

Specifically, we hope

- to identify new ways to be relevant to the current challenges and modern lives of people around us;
- to explore new forms of worship including music;
- to continue the work of the Trailblazer Discovery Team to extend the church's reach beyond our land and our building to find new ways to bring the Holy Spirit out into our community;
- to continue to work on our own ability to manifest an environment of full inclusion; and
- continue to be in the vanguard on issues of environmental stewardship.

Thank you all for your prayers and encouragement during this time of many extra tasks and responsibility.



## Blessing of the Animals

Join Rev. Jen again this year for the Blessing of the Animals Sunday October 1 at 1:30 p.m. next to the South Bay Community Center. As we end the Season of Creation with St. Francis Sunday, we take our Blessings out into the community. Invite your friends, family, and neighbors to join us. We will most likely be under a tree or in the shade. Feel free to bring a chair if you like and have some extended social time with your church community. There will be a very brief service to bless all of the animals that gather. All animals are welcome. You may also bring a photo if your animal is not a fan of the public, is more of a homebody, or is with us in spirit.



## Abundance Shop Lives Up to its Name

Esta Kandarian

The Abundance Shop continues to be richly blessed! Revenue so far this year is up by over 25 percent from last year. Frankly it was challenging keeping up over the summer, but our team is strong this month in time for the busy holiday season.

Many thanks to the volunteers making this possible. Church members who currently volunteer are Steve Cake, Maureen Titus, Mike Eggleston, Ann Lucas, Paulette Penner, Vivian Leinio, and Michael Lucas. Current community volunteers are Linda Crawford, Lori Gentile, Lorri Gill (so glad she is back from the summer in Iowa), Ricki Haddad, Wanda Lo, Mary Stein-Webber, Nellie Regalado, Iris Alexandra, Sue Halverson, Gretchen Burke, Risa Sunshine, and Lisa Duncan-Purcell.

We have attractive new signs out front matching the one just installed at church. Thank you, Ron Thompson, for working with Ron Crain to design and install the signs!

We have fall decor out now and are about to add Halloween. Volunteers are already busy pricing a super-abundance of Christmas decor, which will go out after Thanksgiving. Please stop by and visit!



## Finances

We continue to be in a good financial position for 2023. Income is over budget due to early payment of pledges and strong Abundance Shop sales. The impact of using supply clergy in the absence of a rector, combined with the open music director position mean we continue to see lower expenses due to reduced salary and benefits. The combined effect puts us \$62k ahead of budget year-to-date. Thanks be to God! Once we have our new rector and music director onboard, we will have more consistent salary obligations. Looking ahead, it is important to remember that over a multiyear period, the trend is toward fewer pledge dollars. Thank you in advance to our Finance Committee as they help us manage these changes.

**Parish Party at Berkeley's - Sat. Oct. 14, from 2-5 pm**

2167 Pacific Ave., Cayucos

Food, drinks, music, beach, sun, fun!

More details to follow; watch for announcements.



## Stewardship at St. Benedict

Maureen Titus, Stewardship Committee, Chair

As I review the past year and realize what we have accomplished at St. Benedict's I am amazed. We have gone above our expectations to be an integral part of our church and local community and continue to do so.

It has been about a year since we started talking, sharing and writing our Parish Profile to provide a history for our new rector and what we are about and hope to achieve in the future. Stewardship is a central process to be able to continue what we do each week, every month and throughout the year.

How can we practice stewardship to continue what has been established in the past? We can continue to support our church now with our annual gifts, we can create endowments and planned gifts that will thrive even after we are gone.

Gratitude is part of stewardship as well and many of us are very grateful for the past members of St. Benedict's who have given through bequests or property. We will have ongoing expenditures for the structural health of our church building, roofs, heaters and other yet to be created projects on the church property.

We appreciate everyone who has continued to fulfill their pledge commitments and some who have exceeded those. In the words of Stef Shuman, "We are stewards of the gifts God has given us, including the gift of generosity itself. The sustaining of St. Benedict's mission and ministry reflects God's generosity to us, and our gratitude for God's gifts." No gift is too small; we each give according to our circumstances.

From Mother Teresa, "It is not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."

## Season of Creation

John Horsley

The Season of Creation has its roots in the Orthodox Church, where Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I proclaimed September 1 as a Day of Prayer for Creation in 1989. In 2003, the World Council of Churches extended the celebration to October 4, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi. It is now celebrated by billions of Christians throughout the world. The Season of Creation has been celebrated at St. Benedict's for a number of years.

This year we used a resource from the Diocese of Massachusetts in the liturgy for the 10:30 Eucharist. The resource suggests readings and prayers around the theme of Creation for each Sunday in the Season. The liturgy committee invited the members of our Earthcare team be the lectors during the Season of Creation and to choose the readings and prayers for the Sunday they are reading.

This Season calls us to reflect on the beauty and abundance of God's creation and reminds us of our responsibility to care for it. According to the resource from the Diocese of Massachusetts celebrating the Season of Creation is even more important this year because of the urgency of the climate and ecological crisis and the need for a bold, prophetic response.

Why is it important to mark the Season of Creation?

- Because of the urgency of climate and ecological crisis and the need for a bold, prophetic response.
- Because of our Gospel call to grow in faith as we affirm that God in Christ loves, redeems, and sustains the whole of Creation, not only human beings.



## “Let’s Dance with God”

Don Maruska

Where are you in your faith journey? Would you like to feel God’s loving presence more clearly?

Be sure to attend the 10:30 a.m. service, Sunday, October 15, at St. Benedict’s. The Rev. Art Stevens’ sermon will share an inspiring message from his forthcoming book *“Let’s Dance with God: From Fear to Hope, Emotional Toxicity to Love.”* In a lively sermon, he will illustrate how we can find God’s love in even our darkest moments. Rev. Art’s work includes a mandala that has helped thousands of people in churches across the country make sense of their journeys and connect with God’s guidance.

Hope you will make a special effort to attend the October 15 service and enjoy the opportunity to reflect on your journey and the journey of our St. Benedict’s community.



*Mandala depicting Christian life journeys*

## Pastoral Care

The St. Ben's Pastoral-Care Team

In our time of transition as a parish, Pastoral Care may look a little different; but this is an important reminder that the Pastoral-Care Team remains available for anyone in need of support during this time.

One doesn't necessarily need to be having a crisis, or even a "big problem", to contact the Pastoral-Care Team. Perhaps you are simply craving a good chat with someone about what is going on in your life? Sometimes, staying in touch and connecting like that, while things are still ok, can help mitigate or alleviate those bigger issues when they come along down the road.

If you do find yourself in need of, or wanting, some pastoral support, please reach out and contact the team. We are doing our best to ensure that the pastoral care needs of our members are being met during this time, but unless we hear from you, or from someone on your behalf, we often have no way of knowing that you are in need of, or would like, support.

There are several ways you can connect help us to know what your needs are:

- [pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org](mailto:pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org)
- [prayers@stbenslososos.org](mailto:prayers@stbenslososos.org)
- The prayer contact person for each week is listed in Benediction Weekly
- Helen Schnieders (818) 324-2646 or email [hellyps5053@yahoo.com](mailto:hellyps5053@yahoo.com)
- Sandy Fisher (661) 805-2882
- Berkeley Johnson (805) 550-5133
- Roz Malone (707) 410 9097

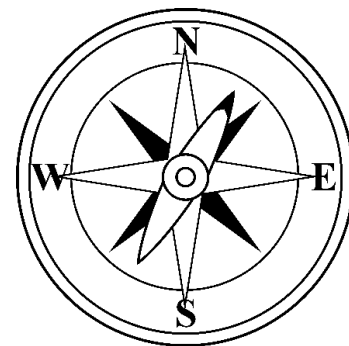


## Discovery Team

Cathy Gildea

It's hard to believe we are more than half-way through our two-year Trailblazer partnership with Rev. Jen. We started on this journey last year by applying for a diocesan grant to co-fund this half-time position. The Trailblazer mission as stated in the grant application is "to help the congregation move into the exploration and implementation of what it means to be New Church." Congregations applying for a Trailblazer grant must be willing to

- Ask and answer challenging questions about the future—both parish and community.
- Be open to uncertainty and opportunity.
- Imagine a new and different role for the church in the community.
- Discuss uncomfortable topics and potential losses.
- Re-explore the history of the parish and community with an eye toward patterns and possibilities.
- Forge new relationships with other faith partners and local agencies.
- Embrace the leadership of a new and often young clergy leader.
- Do things we've never done before.
- Walk faithfully into the unknown as the New Church emerges.



Our application argued, successfully, that St. Benedict's is a community that is willing to live up to these challenging criteria. In addition to the activities like the Prayer Pop-Ups and Neighborhood Walk, the Discovery Team has also engaged in study, exploration, reflection, and discussion of how we "do church" and what it means to follow the spirit in new directions. This is a good complement to the transition work.

Contact your Discovery Team consisting of Rev. Jen, Cathy Gildea, Sandy Fisher, and Barbara Hirahara for more information on how to join us in this exciting exploration. Let us know if you are interested in reading any of the books that have helped inform this work; they include *Emergent Strategies: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* by adrienne maree brown, *Changing the Conversation: A Third Way for Congregations* by Anthony B. Robinson, and *Vital Christian community: 12 Characteristics of Healthy Congregations* by Philip Brochard and Alissabeth Newton.

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### ALL SAINTS

*Please send the office names and photos of loved ones you wish to be commemorated as part of our All Saints service on November 5<sup>th</sup>.*

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## Spiritual Conversation

The weekly spiritual conversation continues with warm fellowship and a discussion based on ideas from Joan Chittister's *Awakenings: Prophetic Reflections*.

"Awakenings is a story of integration, that of a prophetic woman ever seeking liberating justice for her church and her world, animated by the empowering wisdom of the Benedictine monastic tradition. This book interweaves three musical chords--the presence of God, the call to spiritual insight, and the rejection of sexism--that have sustained Joan through her long and inspiring life. No doubt, they will also sustain and empower all who draw on this rich legacy."

--Diarmuid O'Murchu, author, *Doing Theology in an Evolutionary Way*.

The group meets on Tuesdays at 10:30 am on [Zoom](#). You are welcome to join the conversation even if you don't read the book.

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2220 Snowy Egret Lane

Los Osos, CA 93412

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### *St. Ben's Events*

#### **October**

October 1      *Blessing of the Animals*  
October 8      *Bishop's visit & potluck*  
October 15     *Parish Party at Berkeley's*  
October 27     *Gratitude dinner*  
October 29     *Los Osos Oktoberfest*

#### **November**

November 5    *All Saints*  
November 19   *Ingathering Sunday*  
November 23   *Thanksgiving*

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