



St Benedict's Episcopal Church

~ Tending Mind and Soul ~

Los Osos, California

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023 8:00 am

You are warmly welcome at St. Benedict's for who you are
and where you are on your faith journey!

About Our Service

An all-gender restroom is located through the white door at the left of the sanctuary. All other restrooms are located by exiting out the doors and going down the outdoor wooden walkway towards the red door and then down the hallway to the left. Please ask an usher for assistance if needed.

We invite everyone to stand and sit during various parts of the service. Indicators are found within parentheses throughout the bulletin. Apologies if any are missing.

Please silence your phones.

During Communion

We have gluten-free wafers available. Please let your nearest usher know *before the service begins* if you would prefer a gluten-free wafer, and they will inform the celebrant.

We use wine per the Canons of the Episcopal Church; it is offered either from the common cup or individual cups. If you prefer to abstain from alcohol for any reason, you may cross your arms over your chest and receive the cup by sight. Taking Communion with just one element (Bread) is considered complete.

(please stand as you are able)

Celebrant: Blessed are you, holy and living One.

People: *You come to your people and set them free.*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

See the back page with Advent Prayers

Celebrant: Let us pray.

All: *All-compassionate and most merciful God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Canticle J

A Song of Judith

Judith 16:13-16

I will sing a new song to my God,

* for you are great and glorious, wonderful in strength, invincible.

Let the whole creation serve you,

* for you spoke and all things came into being.

You sent your breath and it formed them,

* no one is able to resist your voice.

Mountains and seas are stirred to their depths,

* rocks melt like wax at your presence.

But to those who fear you,

* you continue to show mercy.

No sacrifice, however fragrant, can please you,

* but whoever fears the Lord shall stand in your sight for ever.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant: Christ be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Let us pray together.

All: *Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen*

(please be seated for the readings)

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Reader: *A Reading from the Book of Isaiah*

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,

because the LORD has anointed me;

he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,

to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives,

and release to the prisoners;

to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: *Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.*

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

Then they said among the nations, *
"The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Reader: *A Reading from Paul's letter to the church in Thessalonica*

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Reader: *Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people*

People: *Thanks be to God.*

(please stand as you are able as we welcome the Gospel)

John 1:6-8,19-28

Gospeller: The Holy Gospel of Our Savior Jesus Christ According to John

People: Glory to You, Lord Christ.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Gospeller: The Gospel of Christ

People: Praise to You, Lord Christ.

Discussion

Rev. Jen Crompton

[We pause for a few moments' reflection before affirming our faith.]

(please stand as you are able)

Affirmation of Faith

Let us join in the affirmation of our faith.

All: ***We believe in God the Creator,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Redeemer,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with God's love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in One God: Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit. Amen.***

Source: Common Worship, Church of England

Prayers of the People

Holy God, you come to us, you inspire us, you enable us; grant that we may proclaim your loving presence and show your saving power. Let your church be seen to be working for justice and righteousness, for liberty and peace, that we may live at peace and oppress no one. Make us instruments of peace within our communities and within our homes. Holy One of freedom, ***hear us.***

We remember before you all who are seeking freedom: we pray for nations burdened with great debt, for families who have lost their homes, peoples denied justice. We pray for all who are suffering from violence or tyranny. We pray for the work of Restorative Partners, the Poetic Justice Project, Amnesty International, and all who care for prisoners and captives. Holy One of freedom, ***hear us.***

Gracious God, teach us to appreciate what we have and to be aware of all that is done for us. Let us not take each other for granted. Let us hold fast to all that is good and abstain from every form of evil. May our homes be places of holiness and hospitality, of grace and goodness. Holy One of freedom, ***hear us.***

We remember in your holy presence, God of Mercy, all whose lives have been diminished by poverty or neglect, all whose confidence has been lost through harsh treatment or scorn. We pray for those who have been betrayed, especially those betrayed by loved ones. We remember all who have suffered through robbery or slander. We pray for all who have lost their dignity through illness. We remember all who are suffering from physical and economic hardship; all who are in need of relief, all who are discouraged.

We pray that all who are bereaved at this time may be strengthened. We remember friends and loved ones in their troubles, especially those in the bidding book...

[here prayers are added from the bidding book and
you are invited to add your own prayers silently or aloud]

Holy One of freedom, **hear us.**

Merciful God, you have done great things for us already, and yet, greater things are yet to come. We pray for all who have departed from us, that they may be numbered with your saints and know the glorious liberty of the children of God. Holy One of freedom, **hear us .**

Celebrant: *Come, Holy Spirit of God, come upon us, that you may send us out in your power. Fill us with your grace and goodness, that we may be able to bring the Good News to the oppressed, to comfort the broken-hearted, and to bring liberty and freedom to your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, for ever and ever. Amen.*

From "Traces of Glory" by David Adam — © Morehouse Publishing 1999

Confession and Absolution

Let us confess our sins to God.

All: *God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.*

Celebrant *All Compassionate God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.*

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: *And also with you.*

To maintain safe social distancing, please simply greet others verbally or with a bow or nod.

Birthday & Anniversary Prayers

Those wanting a special prayer for a birthday, anniversary, or any special concerns, may come forward.
Prayers can be found on the white or yellow card in your pew.

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.

(please stand as you are able)

♪ Doxology:

[Hymn tune #400]

[sung] *Praise God from Whom all blessings flow*

Praise God all creatures here below, Alleluia, Alleluia

Praise God the Source of all our gifts

Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Holy Eucharist

EOW1

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People *It is right to give our thanks and praise.*

Celebrant It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy. You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life. Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we say:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace. But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is

my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All: *Christ has died.
 Christ is risen.
 Christ will come again.***

Celebrant: Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ’s Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with blessed Mary and blessed Benedict all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

**All: *Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. AMEN***

The Lord’s Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

***Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your Name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those
 who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
 and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and for ever. Amen***

The Breaking of the Bread

The celebrant breaks the Bread

Holy Communion

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: *Therefore let us keep the feast.*

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

If God is calling you, you are welcome to receive communion when the celebrant invites your section forward. If you prefer to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. As your group is called forward, please spread out to widen the circle and increase safe social distancing.

Silence

Prayer

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen

Blessing

Celebrant: May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path and the blessing of God Almighty. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. *Amen*

Announcements

Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

Eucharist Liturgy Adapted from Enriching Our Worship
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Ministers of the Service

Celebrant:	Rev. Jen Crompton
Preacher:	Rev. Jen Crompton
Flowers:	Brian Spolarich
Altar Guild:	JW Wright
Technical:	Hannah-Jaye Matthews

This Week at St Ben's

Monday	Dec 18
3:30p	Liturgy Committee Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday	Dec 19
9:45a	Prayers of the Morning (Zoom)
10:30a	Spiritual Conversation (Zoom)
5:30p	Blue Christmas service
Sunday	Dec 24
10:30a	Eucharist Service
4:30p	Carols Around the Creche
7:45p	Carols followed by 8p Eucharist

Announcements

Bidding Book Prayers – If you'd like to request prayers for someone to have their names read out during the worship services on Sunday, please write them in the bidding book on the stand by the usher's station as you come into church.

Personal Prayer: If you'd like prayer support during the week, contact Louisa Beeler (805) 543-2898. If no answer, please leave a message and your call will be returned. Prayer requests may also be emailed at any time to prayers@stbenslososos.org and requests for pastoral care may be sent to pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org.

Tuesday Morning Prayers & Spiritual Conversation: The Tuesday Spiritual Discussion group will be using an Advent program sponsored by a group called Living Compass. The four-week program includes Sunday and weekday meditations for the Advent season. The program booklets are available as pdf electronic copies for free or a print copy available for \$1.00 plus postage. A limited number of print copies are available in the back of the church. Order your booklets at <https://www.livingcompass.org/advent-lent>. You do not have to read the book to participate. Tuesdays at 10:30 on [Zoom](#).

Offering the Common Cup at Communion

In an effort to address the ongoing needs of our parish, including the continued assessment of the return to pre-COVID liturgical practices, we will resume offering you wine from the Common Cup (chalice) at the Eucharist. At the Eucharist, you will be offered wine from either the chalice or from an individual cup. If you choose to drink from the chalice, reach for it from the Eucharistic Minister. If you choose to drink from the individual cups, simply acknowledge the chalice with a nod of your head and take one of the small cups from the tray offered by the Eucharistic Assistant. As usual, cross your arms over your chest if you do not wish to receive any wine.



Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge with gratitude the yak tityu tityu yak tilhini (ytt) / the Northern Chumash People, and the Salinan Tribe / the T'epot'aha'l, "People of the Oaks," on whose ancestral homelands we gather, and whose vibrant culture continues today. May we always remember that the Earth does not belong to us, that we belong to the Earth, and that we are all relatives in life. Help us to be instruments of justice and peace for all people in today's world.

Our Mission Statement

St. Benedict's is an inclusive Christian community that celebrates the divine in all beings, and inspires spiritual growth through joyful sacramental worship, loving service, creative expression, thoughtful inquiry, and commitment to social justice.

Our Inclusivity Statement

The people of St Benedict's are called to share God's love as we minister with and to all persons in Los Osos and beyond, providing worship, nurture, fellowship, and service.

Our welcome knows no boundaries of age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, economic condition, or physical or mental ability.

We embrace and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation. We cooperate in ministry with other local churches and groups of God's people as we participate in the worldwide mission of Christ.



St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

PO Box 6877

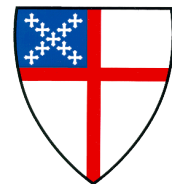
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Third Sunday of Advent - JOY

We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us—in the holiday songs, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations—or our memories—push joy to the side? Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

[Three Candles are lit.]

All:

*Loving God, we open ourselves to you,
trusting that this is how you made us:
you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.
Show us the creative power of hope.
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
That we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.*

