

# St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Annual Parish Meeting Jan 28, 2024

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## AGENDA

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- Welcome/Opening Prayer
  - Potluck
  - The Year 2023 in Photos
  - Call to Order
  - Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes from 2023
  - Elections of Vestry Members and Diocesan Delegates
  - Financial Reports
  - 2024 Budget Discussion and Vote
  - MMR /Parish Profile
  - Presiding Warden Report
  - Committee Reports
  - Presentation of Congregational Cloister Groups
  - Appreciations and Awards
  - Closing Prayer
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## NOMINATIONS

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### **Vestry Nominations**

- Michael Lucas 3 year term
- Brian Spolarich 3 year term

### **Deanery and Diocesan Delegates**

- Lisa Gonzalez
- Diana Hammerlund

**Annual Meeting for St. Benedict's Episcopal Church Los Osos  
Sunday February 5th, 2023**

Meeting called to order at 12:15 pm by Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall with prayer

Election of Vestry and Parish Council and Deanery and Diocesan Delegates. Slate of candidates was elected by acclaim.

Candidates for Vestry and Parish Council are Sarah Chesebro, Sandy Fisher, Berkeley Johnson, Diana Hammerlund  
Deanery and Diocesan Delegates are Lisa Gonzalez, Esta Kandarian, Lorraine Schwenk. Alternate is Diana Hammerlund

Financial Report presented by Treasurer Lisa Gonzalez

Resolution to approve budget as presented by Diana Hammerlund second by Jane Wu. Motion passed.

Mutual Ministry Review presented by Alan Kiste

Discussion of results of the selected questions from the parish survey

Rector's Report presented by Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall

Appreciate and Awards

Thank you to the Wardens

Maureen Titus

Sandy Fisher

Jane Wu (from 2022)

Thank you to retiring Vestry members

Esta Kandarian

Sandy Fisher

Above and Beyond Award

Barbara Hirahara

Vestry Cross

Ed Himmelblau

Meeting closed at 12:53 pm

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## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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We did it again! The 2023 budget was \$23,000 underwater; by a combination of donations and cost control, we swung the results from Negative \$23,000 to Positive \$21,000! We are indeed “the little church that can”. The Abundance Shop income exceeded estimates by \$13,000, and the pledge income exceeded estimates by \$8,000. On the expense side, the only major overrun was for building maintenance (primarily the new heating system) of over by \$15,000. And to compensate, we saved about \$20,000 on rector’s expenses upon Caro’s retirement. Good work, everyone.

For 2024, we propose a balanced budget with a small surplus. It feels good to have gotten to that situation. The figures presented here are based on Lisa’s proposed 2024 budget.

Thank you, everyone, for your generosity, and Happy New Year!

Stephen Cake, Chair, Finance Committee

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## FINANCIAL REPORT

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St. Benedict's Episcopal Church  
2023 Operating Budget Performance  
January through December 2023

	<u>Jan - Dec 23</u>	<u>2023 Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
<b>Operating Income/Expense</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
Abundance Shop	63,000.00	49,500.00	13,500.00
Annual Pledge Income	124,872.75	116,420.00	8,452.75
Loose Offering	20,674.00	23,000.00	-2,326.00
Flowers	630.00	250.00	380.00
Fund Raising Activities	1,340.34	900.00	440.34
Honoraria	120.00	0.00	120.00
Interest Income	74.61	0.00	74.61
Memorials & Legacies	1,175.00	0.00	1,175.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>211,886.70</u>	<u>190,070.00</u>	<u>21,816.70</u>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>			
Church Building Expense	33,101.07	19,053.46	14,047.61
Church Land Support	18,189.95	14,304.00	3,885.95
Church Program Expenses	1,703.12	3,795.00	-2,091.88
Education & Study	349.81	700.00	-350.19
Music Ministry	8,240.37	17,470.00	-9,229.63
Outreach Expense	24,303.55	22,114.90	2,188.65
Rector Compensation & Benefits	52,892.43	73,933.02	-21,040.59
Trailblazer Priest Expense	23,044.16	23,464.16	-420.00
Supply Clergy Expense	2,935.00	3,300.00	-365.00
Worship, Prayer & Spirituality	7,149.48	7,221.72	-72.24
<b>Total COGS</b>	<u>171,908.94</u>	<u>185,356.26</u>	<u>-13,447.32</u>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<u>39,977.76</u>	<u>4,713.74</u>	<u>35,264.02</u>
<b>Expense</b>			
Administrative Expense	19,351.35	25,031.22	-5,679.87
Financing Expense	1,319.01	2,000.00	-680.99
Finance Office Expense	0.00	800.00	-800.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>20,670.36</u>	<u>27,831.22</u>	<u>-7,160.86</u>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<u>19,307.40</u>	<u>-23,117.48</u>	<u>42,424.88</u>

**St. Benedict's Episcopal Church  
Other Income  
January through December 2023**

	<b>Jan - Dec 23</b>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Other Income</b>	
Diocesan Gift	5,600.19
Laundry Love Income	2,634.69
Rev. Faye Hogan Memorial	31,255.27
Blessing the Future	5,840.59
Memorial Gifts	101.15
Building Fund Pledge Income	8,270.00
Building Fund Loose Offering	6,342.00
Building Account Interest	26.83
McLeod Fund Contributions	0.00
McLeod Fund Interest	12.30
Endowment Income	13,969.18
Clergy Funds Income	5,233.20
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>79,285.40</b>
<b>Other Expense</b>	
Clergy Funds Expenses	5,773.74
McLeod Fund Expenses	0.00
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>5,773.74</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>73,511.66</b>

# 2023 BALANCE SHEET

1:52 PM  
01/11/24  
Accrual Basis

## St. Benedict's Episcopal Church Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2023

	Dec 31, 23	Dec 31, 22	\$ Change
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
<b>Checking/Savings</b>			
<b>Bank of the Sierra - Savings</b>			
Building Fund	6,031.77	45,001.83	-38,970.06
Blessing the Future	200.03	1,040.13	-840.10
Central Cst Readers' Theatre	1,307.22	1,779.43	-472.21
KCBX Fund	747.82	1,954.67	-1,206.85
Landscaping Fund	2,459.23	2,455.46	3.77
Music	8,144.03	7,521.96	622.07
McLeod Fund	8,025.87	8,013.57	12.30
Rector Search Fund	9,018.58	9,004.75	13.83
Pickering Fund	1.15	0.00	1.15
Rev. Faye Hogan Fund	31,255.27	0.00	31,255.27
Stock Sale Proceeds	62,210.02	62,210.02	0.00
Shields Bequest Fund-2021	50,000.00	55,000.00	-5,000.00
Operating Savings	48,673.33	48,598.74	74.59
<b>Total Bank of the Sierra - Savings</b>	<b>228,074.32</b>	<b>242,580.56</b>	<b>-14,506.24</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>			
US Bank - Rector's Fund	2,909.11	4,356.33	-1,447.22
Bank/Sierra - Rector's Fund	0.00	50.00	-50.00
US Bank - Trailblazer's Account	1,560.35	550.46	1,009.89
US Bank - Laundry Love	9,785.73	7,337.88	2,447.85
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>14,255.19</b>	<b>12,294.67</b>	<b>1,960.52</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>			
Paypal Account	489.56	0.00	489.56
Bank of the Sierra - Checking	39,583.14	21,721.00	17,862.14
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>40,072.70</b>	<b>21,721.00</b>	<b>18,351.70</b>
Endowment-State Street Global A	37,749.39	23,780.21	13,969.18
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>320,151.60</b>	<b>300,376.44</b>	<b>19,775.16</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>			
Due for Reimbursement	239.98	391.64	-151.66
Due from the Rector's Fund	148.57	660.39	-511.82
Due from the Abundance Shop	2,740.15	2,428.13	312.02
<b>TD Ameritrade Account</b>			
Operating Fund	4,806.66	4,748.45	58.21
Building Fund	495.82	495.82	0.00
<b>Total TD Ameritrade Account</b>	<b>5,302.48</b>	<b>5,244.27</b>	<b>58.21</b>
Prepaid P & L Insurance	1,893.83	251.44	1,642.39
Prepaid Umbrella Insurance	350.29	275.25	75.04
Prepaid WC Insurance	1,977.55	1,481.19	496.36
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>12,652.85</b>	<b>10,732.31</b>	<b>1,920.54</b>

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of December 31, 2023

	<u>Dec 31, 23</u>	<u>Dec 31, 22</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	332,804.45	311,108.75	21,695.70
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Stations of the Cross	7,842.60	7,842.60	0.00
Sprinkler System	205,986.55	205,986.55	0.00
Long Room Build Out	129,339.49	129,339.49	0.00
Church Building & Improvements	755,471.89	750,509.39	4,962.50
Kitchen Build-Out	41,090.83	41,090.83	0.00
Parking Lot Lights	10,126.00	10,126.00	0.00
Sound System	20,368.76	18,328.76	2,040.00
Furniture & Equipment	46,899.39	12,199.39	34,700.00
Land	280,500.00	280,500.00	0.00
Land Improvements	9,612.29	9,612.29	0.00
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<u>1,507,237.80</u>	<u>1,465,535.30</u>	<u>41,702.50</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><b>1,840,042.25</b></u>	<u><b>1,776,644.05</b></u>	<u><b>63,398.20</b></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
<b>Accounts Payable</b>			
Accounts Payable	2,710.60	9,210.37	-6,499.77
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<u>2,710.60</u>	<u>9,210.37</u>	<u>-6,499.77</u>
<b>Credit Cards</b>			
FIA Card Services - Credit Card	-28.79	800.46	-829.25
<b>Total Credit Cards</b>	<u>-28.79</u>	<u>800.46</u>	<u>-829.25</u>
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>			
Caro's Party	-668.71	0.00	-668.71
<b>Restricted Fund Accounts</b>			
Rector Search Fund	9,018.58	9,004.75	13.83
Ukraine Fund	3,479.22	2,504.22	975.00
JW Fund	0.00	370.00	-370.00
Landscaping Support	2,709.23	2,705.46	3.77
Shields Bequest Fund-2021	55,000.00	55,000.00	0.00
Music Fund	8,180.35	7,368.28	812.07
Organ Fund	500.00	500.00	0.00
KCBX Fund	1,222.82	1,221.67	1.15
CC Readers' Theatre	1,254.19	1,779.43	-525.24
Vacation Bible School	1,218.16	1,218.16	0.00
Earthcare	646.00	581.00	65.00
Community Dinners	0.00	20.00	-20.00
<b>Total Restricted Fund Accounts</b>	<u>83,228.55</u>	<u>82,272.97</u>	<u>955.58</u>

**St. Benedict's Episcopal Church**  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of December 31, 2023

	<u>Dec 31, 23</u>	<u>Dec 31, 22</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
<b>Deferred Revenue Accounts</b>			
Deferred Blessing Pledge	0.00	500.00	-500.00
Deferred Building Pledge Income	1,000.00	300.00	700.00
Deferred Pledge Income	0.00	13,200.00	-13,200.00
Carol Baker Fund	100.00	100.00	0.00
<b>Total Deferred Revenue Accounts</b>	<u>1,100.00</u>	<u>14,100.00</u>	<u>-13,000.00</u>
<b>Direct Deposit Liabilities</b>	230.87	0.00	230.87
<b>Clearing</b>	-253.70	0.00	-253.70
<b>Payroll Liabilities</b>			
CA - ETT Payable	2.66	0.00	2.66
CA SUTA Payable	89.99	0.00	89.99
CA SDI Payable	24.16	0.00	24.16
CA Taxes Withheld	20.33	0.00	20.33
Fed WH Tax Payable	164.00	62.00	102.00
Fed Medicare Payable	125.12	50.00	75.12
Fed Social Security Payable	535.10	213.84	321.26
<b>Total Payroll Liabilities</b>	<u>961.36</u>	<u>325.84</u>	<u>635.52</u>
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<u>84,598.37</u>	<u>96,698.81</u>	<u>-12,100.44</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<u>87,280.18</u>	<u>106,709.64</u>	<u>-19,429.46</u>
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>			
Note Payable - Bank of Sierra	14,693.80	24,810.20	-10,116.40
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<u>14,693.80</u>	<u>24,810.20</u>	<u>-10,116.40</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>101,973.98</u>	<u>131,519.84</u>	<u>-29,545.86</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Endowment Fund	25,520.49	23,780.21	1,740.28
Church Land & Building Fund	1,465,535.30	1,465,535.30	0.00
Operating Fund Retained Earning	154,068.42	172,321.18	-18,252.76
Prior Year Adjustment	125.00	0.00	125.00
Net Income	92,819.06	-16,512.48	109,331.54
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>1,738,068.27</u>	<u>1,645,124.21</u>	<u>92,944.06</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><b>1,840,042.25</b></u>	<u><b>1,776,644.05</b></u>	<u><b>63,398.20</b></u>

# 2024 BUDGET

3:06 PM  
12/16/23  
Accrual Basis

## St. Benedict's Episcopal Church 2024 Draft Budget

Ordinary Income/Expense	Total YTD as of Dec	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	Notes
<b>Income</b>				
Abundance Shop				
Gift	70,000.00	55,000.00	60,000.00	
Abundance Shop Tithe	-7,000.00	-5,500.00	-6,000.00	
Total Abundance Shop	<u>63,000.00</u>	<u>49,500.00</u>	<u>54,000.00</u>	
Annual Pledge Income	124,872.75	116,420.00	115,000.00	Projected Pledges
Loose Offering				
Givers of Record	16,734.00	20,000.00	16,000.00	
Christmas Offering	845.00	1,000.00	1,500.00	
Easter Offering	1,506.00	1,000.00	1,500.00	
Sunday Offering	1,629.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	
Total Loose Offering	<u>20,714.00</u>	<u>23,000.00</u>	<u>20,000.00</u>	
Flowers				
Flowers, Christmas	200.00	125.00	250.00	
Flowers, Easter	430.00	125.00	250.00	
Total Flowers	<u>630.00</u>	<u>250.00</u>	<u>500.00</u>	
Fund Raising Activities				
Instrumental Music Concert	81.00	0.00	0.00	
Scrip Sales	1,259.34	900.00	900.00	
Total Fund Raising Activities	<u>1,340.34</u>	<u>900.00</u>	<u>900.00</u>	
Honoraria	120.00	0.00	0.00	
Interest Income	74.61	0.00	0.00	
Memorials & Legacies	1,175.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>211,926.70</u>	<u>190,070.00</u>	<u>190,400.00</u>	
<b>Direct Operating Expenses</b>				
Church Building Expense				
Insurance - Liability & Bldg	5,010.36	5,627.00	5,627.00	
Repairs & Maintenance	18,545.02	3,000.00	3,000.00	
Utilities				
Janitorial Service	3,213.60	3,640.00	3,640.00	
Janitorial PR Taxes	340.34	278.46	278.46	
Alarm Monitoring	1,008.00	1,008.00	1,008.00	
Gas & Electric	3,952.31	5,000.00	4,500.00	
Trash Collection	1,031.44	500.00	1,080.00	
Total Utilities	<u>9,545.69</u>	<u>10,426.46</u>	<u>10,506.46</u>	
Total Church Building Expense	<u>33,101.07</u>	<u>19,053.46</u>	<u>19,133.46</u>	
Church Land Support				
Sexton Salary	1,800.00	1,800.00	1,800.00	
Annuity Interest	8,671.00	8,004.00	8,004.00	
Land Maintenance	3,600.00	0.00	3,600.00	Squirrels
Landscape Maintenance Expense	2,856.91	3,000.00	3,000.00	
Property Taxes	287.04	300.00	300.00	
Weed Abatement	940.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Total Church Land Support	<u>18,154.95</u>	<u>14,304.00</u>	<u>17,904.00</u>	

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church  
2024 Draft Budget

	Total YTD as of Dec	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	Notes
<b>Church Program Expenses</b>				
Hospitality	407.30	1,500.00	1,500.00	
Newcomer Activities	0.00	150.00	150.00	
Newseletter (Printing & Postage)	819.60	1,220.00	900.00	6 Issues + Postage
Advertising & Promotion	325.00	600.00	600.00	
Operating Supplies	94.74	200.00	200.00	
Weekly Bulletins	56.48	125.00	125.00	
<b>Total Church Program Expenses</b>	<b>1,703.12</b>	<b>3,795.00</b>	<b>3,795.00</b>	
<b>Education &amp; Study</b>				
Adult Education	63.00	200.00	200.00	
Sunday School/Messy Church	286.81	500.00	500.00	Messy Church
<b>Total Education &amp; Study</b>	<b>349.81</b>	<b>700.00</b>	<b>700.00</b>	
<b>Music Ministry</b>				
Musicians - Payroll	5,365.00	13,700.00	0.00	
Musicians - Payroll Taxes	864.65	1,370.00	520.00	
Musicians - Worker's Comp Ins	112.92	100.00	0.00	
Musician - Supply	1,075.00	800.00	6,500.00	52 x \$125/wk
Choir Expense	177.80	500.00	500.00	
Piano Tuning, Moving & Repair	0.00	400.00	400.00	
Music License & Resources	645.00	600.00	700.00	
<b>Total Music Ministry</b>	<b>8,240.37</b>	<b>17,470.00</b>	<b>8,620.00</b>	
<b>Outreach Expense</b>				
Canterbury	1,846.70	1,846.70	1,904.00	
Community Outreach (1%)	1,846.70	1,846.70	1,904.00	
Diocesan Fair Share	18,850.00	18,421.50	19,040.00	
<b>Total Outreach Expense</b>	<b>22,543.40</b>	<b>22,114.90</b>	<b>22,848.00</b>	
<b>Rector Compensation &amp; Benefits</b>				
Rector Cash Stipend	37,023.54	47,307.64	42,000.00	6 mo (\$96K annual)
Rector Housing Allowance	7,142.23	6,700.00	6,000.00	6 months
Rector Pension	3,379.68	6,715.38	8,640.00	6 months at 18%
Rector Medical Insurance	4,540.00	6,310.00	3,600.00	6 months (\$600/month)
Rector Expense Account	0.00	2,500.00	1,250.00	
Rector - Telephone Allowance	500.00	700.00	600.00	
Clergy Conference	0.00	400.00	400.00	
Worker's Compensation Insurance	306.98	300.00	300.00	
<b>Total Rector Compensation &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>52,892.43</b>	<b>73,933.02</b>	<b>62,790.00</b>	
<b>Trailblazer Priest Expense</b>				
Trailblazer Priest Contract	22,964.16	22,964.16	9,951.15	+4% for 5 months
Trailblazer Program Expense	80.00	500.00	500.00	
<b>Total Trailblazer Priest Expense</b>	<b>23,044.16</b>	<b>23,464.16</b>	<b>10,451.15</b>	
<b>Supply Clergy Expense</b>				
Supply Clergy	2,860.00	3,000.00	4,720.00	16 Sundays x \$295(thru June)
Supply Clergy Mileage & Expense	75.00	300.00	300.00	
<b>Total Supply Clergy Expense</b>	<b>2,935.00</b>	<b>3,300.00</b>	<b>5,020.00</b>	

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church  
2024 Draft Budget

	Total YTD as of Dec	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	Notes
<b>Worship, Prayer &amp; Spirituality</b>				
Technician Payroll	5,824.00	5,408.00	5,623.28	52 wks x \$108.14 (+4%)
Technician PR Taxes	527.18	413.72	449.87	
Technician Workers Comp	0.00	100.00	100.00	
Audio/Video Technology Expense	269.33	500.00	500.00	
Worship & Liturgy (Booklets)	0.00	200.00	200.00	
Altar Guild Expenses	472.52	600.00	600.00	
<b>Total Worship, Prayer &amp; Spirituality</b>	<b>7,093.03</b>	<b>7,221.72</b>	<b>7,473.15</b>	
<b>Total Direct Operating Expenses</b>	<b>170,057.34</b>	<b>185,356.26</b>	<b>158,734.76</b>	
<b>Gross Surplus</b>	<b>41,869.36</b>	<b>4,713.74</b>	<b>31,665.24</b>	
<b>Indirect Operating Expense</b>				
<b>Administrative Expense</b>				
Administrator Salary	8,274.24	8,760.96	9,360.00	468 hrs x \$20/hr (fast food rate)
Administrator PR Taxes	732.56	670.22	748.80	
Administrator WC Ins Exp	66.48	100.00	100.00	
Diocesan/Spring Conven Expense	150.00	500.00	500.00	Spring Meeting/Convention on-line
Bank Charges	241.23	0.00	0.00	
Copier Maintenance	2,397.54	2,200.00	2,300.00	
Copying & Printing	265.33	500.00	500.00	
Dues & Memberships	100.00	120.00	150.00	
Employee Recruitment	343.49	0.00	100.00	
Payroll Processing Expense	185.50	220.00	260.00	
Breeze Fee	81.33	0.00	100.00	
eGiving Fee	547.34	900.00	500.00	
Paypal Fees	141.71	60.00	60.00	
Insurance - Umbrella	300.96	350.00	350.00	
Computer for Office	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	New Office Computer
Office Equipment	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	Computer for new Rector
Office Supplies	629.12	750.00	750.00	
Postage	452.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	
Telephone	1,521.15	3,700.00	1,620.00	\$135/mo?
Wifi Service (Enhanced)	1,140.00	1,200.00	1,320.00	\$110/mo?
Vestry/Lay/Clergy Training	0.00	0.00	650.00	
Web Site Expense	1,733.77	2,000.04	2,000.00	
<b>Total Administrative Expense</b>	<b>19,303.75</b>	<b>25,031.22</b>	<b>25,868.80</b>	
<b>Financing Expense</b>				
Interest Expense - Loan	1,348.42	2,000.00	1,500.00	\$462 cash per month (\$5,544 total )
<b>Total Financing Expense</b>	<b>1,348.42</b>	<b>2,000.00</b>	<b>1,500.00</b>	
<b>Finance Office Expense</b>				
Audit/Review Expense	0.00	800.00	400.00	
<b>Total Financing Expense</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>800.00</b>	<b>800.00</b>	
<b>Total Indirect Operating Expense</b>	<b>20,652.17</b>	<b>27,831.22</b>	<b>27,368.80</b>	
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>21,217.19</b>	<b>-23,117.48</b>	<b>4,296.44</b>	
<b>Rector Search Expenses</b>			9,000.00	Funds already Available

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## PRESIDING WARDEN REPORT

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What a year it has been!!!! As I review the calendar, I am amazed what St. Benedict's has accomplished with so many diverse situations and events. Working together has been our major strength whether it be Caro+ retirement, Rev. Jen's ordination, Bishop Lucinda visits, welcoming visiting priests, lay clergy or infrastructure issues. Gratitude is still the word foremost in my thinking.

Almost everyone has been involved with the process for parish profile creation from the large group events to the committee writing the profile to share our community and congregation with a future Priest. We are almost there and hope to receive the Bishop's final approval for publication very soon. There are not enough words to express my thanks for the entire committee and Brian Spolarich as the leader. It has been a "long and winding road with potholes". While we have heard there isn't a large group of Priests looking for positions, I believe God will provide someone who would like to share our journey and enhance our goals at St. Benedict's.

We have had several costly infrastructure repairs this year, most importantly the fire pump for our sprinkler system in the church. That was quite an educational process for me, and I am so grateful for Michael Lucas helping with that journey. Critters were to blame for "eating" the wires in the motor which then caused the pump to not function. Cal Fire was involved with this project, and they were very helpful in allowing us to continue using the sanctuary for services with suggestions. The west side porch project was finally completed with Michael Lucas' skills. The hot water system failed, however, with a generous donation we were able to replace the tank. I think that is all for the past year, enough!

The solar project will be addressed as soon as we are able to have more estimates on the roof replacement. Roofing companies have been overwhelmed with requests for this type of project. It has been suggested this be done proactively, before placing solar panels. As you can imagine this will be a costly project, stay tuned for more updates.

The Abundance Shop is continuing to go above and beyond expectations due to the community of Los Osos, Esta Kandarian, our manager and all the dedicated volunteers. Each committee continues to accomplish ongoing remarkable love and care for the community. Please read each committee report to learn what has been done this past year. Volunteers for Prado, Los Osos Community Dinners, Laundry Love and Earthcare programs exceed expectations every year. You may be inspired to join a committee or help with one of the programs, after you read the reports and understand how we are truly reaching out to our community. We are following the concept of "caring for Jesus" by helping those in our community who are in need.

Rev. Jen Crompton has been an integral part of St. Benedict's providing Sunday services twice a month and community outreach with the Trailblazer team. The Abundance Shop pop-up with coffee and cookies is very popular for many people who stop by. Rev. Jen has helped me with many decision-making issues. I am grateful and thankful for their presence and counsel. We have a few more months to enjoy and share our gratitude with this remarkable person.

The Altar Guild and the Liturgy Committee have been amazing since Caro+ retired. They have been an integral part of our services. We couldn't do the services without their time and knowledge every Sunday.

During Ingathering time in the Fall, we had several speakers address the importance of donations and pledges for the ongoing programs. They also expressed their thoughts on stewardship for St. Benedict's to continue our role in the community.

The Vestry/Parish Council cannot say it enough, they have had to make serious decisions for St. Benedict's over the past year. We have had lengthy and multiple meetings to cover all the issues and concerns during this transition time. Lisa, our Treasurer, has been keeping us on track every month. She is a wealth of knowledge for the Vestry. I am forever grateful for their time, questions, and thoughtful discussions. As said last year about St. Benedict's, the term, "Can Do Congregation" continues to be appropriate.

We will have a photo journey to share during the Annual Meeting, the old saying, a picture speaks a thousand words is so true. Hope you enjoy our travel down memory lane for the past year.

Finally, I want to say a huge THANK YOU to everyone who has said yes when I asked for help, information, or advice. There is no way I could be in this position without each one of you. We are building a stronger congregation during this time and continuing the tradition of being a "Can Do Congregation".

God bless everyone and I wish you Peace, Love and Joy for 2024.

Respectfully and gratefully submitted by Maureen Titus

"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new." Author unknown

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## PEOPLES WARDEN REPORT

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In 2023, we had major building issues that were costly and time consuming. The furnace heat pumps were installed and working great. The steps on the west side of the church needed a major overhauling. We hired a handyman to do the job. When he wasn't able to finish it, Michael Lucas stepped up and completed it. We had to replace the water heater and an anonymous doner provided the funding to accomplish this. The monthly squirrel abatement has continued. The rats were getting into the kitchen so Derrick from O,Conner Pest Control came out and put up barriers so they could no longer get in. However, we did not realize that the rats also got into the pumphouse where the sprinkler pump for fire prevention was kept and was invaded by the critters causing major damage to the pump. Maureen Titus and Michael Lucas have overseen all of these major building issues.

In 2024, we hope to not encounter such major building issues. We will continue to do building maintenance, hopefully, to not encounter such major issues in the future.

We have a great congregation that steps up and does what is needed without too much complaint.

Serving Together,

Sandy Fisher

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## TRANSITION TEAM

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Transition Team Members: Brian Spolarich (Chair), Alan Kiste, Michael Lucas, Roz Malone, Lorraine Schwenk, Jane Wu

Search Committee Members: Brian Spolarich (Chair), Michael Lucas, Jane Wu, Bob Pelfrey, Diana Hammerlund, Lettie Cotta, Barbara Hirahara

This report covers both the work of the Transition Team and Search Committees. The Transition Team was responsible for facilitating and overseeing the transition from Caro+ to the next permanent priest, while the Search Committee is responsible for creating the Parish Profile and managing the process of searching for a new priest, in cooperation with and following the processes as established by the diocese.

The Vestry last year chose to pursue a “search in place” model based on the overall health of the parish and lack of interim priests in our diocese. This meant that we could begin to collect data needed for the Parish Profile in advance of Caro’s retirement. The Transition Team organized several activities in the first few months of this year: the parish survey, “Storytelling” small-group conversations, a parish history and timeline gathering conversation, a “neighborhood walk”, and a conversation about parish and priest roles and responsibilities. Some of the artifacts from these conversations are posted on the walls of the Great Room.

The Transition Team also assisted in coordinating the wonderful celebration that was held in honor of Caro’s retirement: this was a parish-wide effort that everyone contributed to. This was very well-attended and was truly a fitting celebration of Caro’s work and ministry among us.

Applications for the Search Committee were solicited in the late spring, and the Vestry appointed seven members to serve, three of whom continued from their service on the Transition Team. The group began its work in late June, reviewing all the data and materials generated from the Transition Team’s work, and to begin the Parish Profile.

Through a series of conversations over the summer and with ideas from the entire committee, we generated a first draft of the Profile, with Michael as the primary author of the text and Jane and Bob providing editorial input. Through an iterative process of discussion and feedback from Canon Martha, we considerably tightened our document (reduced from 30 pages to 10!) and beautified it with professional design tools. The Profile must accomplish two things: to be a faithful and accurate representation of St. Benedict’s as a faith community, and to be a compelling piece of “advertising” in a competitive situation, where priests looking for a new opportunity can afford to be very choosy.

Through the last three months we have been receiving and responding to feedback from the Vestry, the Canon, and the Bishop. We have been challenged at times by the process and its length, but are working to remain positive and focused. We are also currently working closely with the Vestry and Diocese on how to ensure that our part-time opportunity can be as attractive as possible. We believe the final version of the Profile is imminent, at which point we will post it to our web site, begin advertising, and reviewing applications.

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## TRAILBLAZER REPORT

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During the summer, the Discovery Team hosted tables at all three. Central Coast Pride events. These events were very successful. The individual interactions with those stopping by were very meaningful for all involved. We also had a family we met join us at church the following Sunday. The team also hosted a table at Oktoberfest again with great success. All efforts included increasing engagement from the church community, which was encouraging to see. It is highly recommended that the congregation continue its tabling efforts at these events.

As a part of their work and in partnership with the Search/Transition Committee, the Discovery Team hosted the Neighborhood Walk. Maps of different parts of the community were created to allow for differing ability levels. Some for driving, some for walking, and some for easy observation with little movement. Groups were arranged after service, and folks returned after their observation time for a report. The activity was well attended, and everyone learned valuable information about the surrounding community and neighbors.

The team has continued their Prayer Place Pop-Up next to the Abundance shop. They continue to have strong engagement from the community, with people choosing to stop for prayer and take a cup of coffee and some cookies to go.

The ongoing work of the Discovery Team will be to continue to recruit new members and share their work with others in the congregation. Find ways to build connections between the congregation and the community, to help the congregation turn outwards, and to serve in new ways.

The Discovery team talked about its ongoing role after Rev. Jen is done with their time at St. Benedict's. This will be an ongoing conversation with the team looking at the seeds planted, places this work has clearly taken hold, and potential growth areas for the future.

Submitted by: The Trailblazer Discovery Team (The Rev. Jen Crompton, Sandy Fisher, Cathy Gildea, and Barbara Hirahara)

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## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

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### **Our Stewardship Statement:**

“Grateful for God’s abundant blessing, and mindful that we are called in turn to be a blessing to others, St. Benedict’s seeks to cultivate a culture of appreciation and gratitude for all of God’s gifts, our call to stewardship, care, and justice for our environment and to hold all in our community within a spirituality of generosity. All members are encouraged to live as conscious stewards of all of God’s creation and gifts, imitating Jesus’ example of practical spirituality and response to the injustices and needs of the world.”

This committee helps to educate members of St. Benedict’s about various aspects of stewardship with an emphasis on financial stewardship. We are able to provide information on planned giving, the Endowment Fund and the annual pledge drive. The committee works closely with the Rector, the Endowment Fund and is responsible to the Vestry/Parish Council.

A pledge letter was sent in Fall 2023 by the Presiding Warden. We had several speakers as well with their personal views of what stewardship means to them. There are different ways of giving, immediate, deferred or life income gifts.

Stewardship is not only about money, we also acknowledge it is a life-giving way to respond to God’s call to interact with the world, both as individual believers and as communities of faith. Our commitment and participation to our community of faith has several roles. Whether pledging, serving on the vestry, being an outreach volunteer/service minister, these are all stewardship roles.

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Titus, Stewardship Committee

**Pledge Report 2023:**

	Pledges	2023	2022#	2022	%	\$ Diff
Operating	33	127,220.00	38	129,465.00	98.27%	(2,245.00)
Blessing	4	5,700.00	9	7,420.00	76.82%	(1,720.00)
Building	8	8,400.00	11	8,480.00	99.06%	(80.00)
KCBX	1	600.00	3	450.00	133.33%	150.00
Music	0	520.00	0	0.00	0.00%	520.00
Landscaping+	1	2,400.00	6	2,940.00	0.00%	(540.00)
		144,840.00		148,755.00	97.37%	(3,915.00)

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## PARISH-STAFF LIAISON REPORT

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The Parish-Staff Liaison Group acts as the personnel committee for the Parish, meeting quarterly with the Rector (via Zoom in 2023). The Group’s responsibilities include: reviewing the Rector’s job description, helping the Rector to set Annual Goals and Objectives, providing professional feedback to the Rector, conducting an Annual Evaluation of the Rector, and making recommendations to the Parish Council.

The Group was disbanded in May 2023 upon the retirement of the Rector and awaits the arrival of the Rector’s successor.

John Horsley

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## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

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The Membership committee comprised of Sandy Fisher, Diana Hammerland, Pat Henry, Ann Lucas, and Barbara Schippers continued to explore ways to welcome new comers and sustain existing membership in this post pandemic era. The greeters continued to extend a warm welcome to new comers and existing members as they entered our doors.

We sent out a welcome letter to all new members who had joined us in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. We invited them to a new comer informal afternoon fellowship that took place on April 30, 2023. Brian Spolarich graciously hosted this event in his and Alan Kiste's home.

We have not been able to meet every quarter formally this year as our committee members have been plagued with family illness, deaths in the family and some have had extended times out of the country. However, we have talked informally about how our committee can be more active in 2024.

We know that postcards and phone calls have been productive in the past and we will be more consistent with those ways of reaching out this coming year. We will also explore new ways of reaching out to those who join us online. In addition, we will continue to work with the Discovery team on taking our welcome outside our church walls.

Serving Together,

Sandy Fisher

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## ALTAR GUILD REPORT

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The job of Altar Guild is to oversee the beautification of the set-up of the church (those are MY words). 2023 was my first year as "Director of Altar Guild", so I'm still in the learning process. Thank you to Sarah Chesebro for taking me under her wing and helping me "limp" along. I couldn't do all of this without the Altar Guild, Flower Guild and our Sacristan:

- Sarah Chesebro
- Pat Stoneman
- Lisa Gonzalez
- Letty Cotta
- JW
- Sharon Porter
- Brian Spolarich
- Elaine Beckham
- Pamela Bleisch

I now know how to prepare for all the “seasons” (at least I’m getting there). With Reverend Caro retired, it’s tough, but we are doing an amazing job!

We were blessed with an amazing gift in our Sacristy by Letty Cota of beautiful cabinets which Letty, Sarah and myself spent organizing. That was a lot of fun!

We adapted well to using battery operated candles while we weren’t allowed to use fire inside the Sanctuary. Thank you to everyone for being so willing to adapt to the changes we have to make on a moment’s notice.

We have gone from only using the individual cups to using either the Chalice or the cups. This seems to work well for everyone as we are a very adaptive congregation.

I also want to acknowledge Hannah Jaye for being so amazing with the sound system during the services. It’s not an easy job, especially since we don’t have a pianist full time. Having to use recorded music is rough, but needed. I appreciate you!

Thank you all for being a blessing to our church and making our Sanctuary a beautiful place to worship. You all are a blessing to me and our church family.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diana Hammerlund

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## PASTORAL CARE

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Our desire and prayer at St Benedict's is that all feel cared for in this time of transition.

To the best of our ability we are listening to where we can be present to the needs of our parish in ways that offer tangible support.

We encourage everyone to reach out to let us know of a need by way of email...

[pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org](mailto:pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org)

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## CHILDREN’S MINISTRY REPORT

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After consultation with Rev. Jen, and with the approval of the Parish Council, Children's programming at St. Benedict’s is paused, until we have a Pastor or Rector who can discern, approve, advise, and support.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pamela R. Bleisc

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## EARTHCARE COMMITTEE REPORT

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The mission of the Earthcare committee is threefold: to inform the congregation of St. Benedict's about the ongoing climate crisis; to initiate projects and events (including liturgical events) that help the St. Benedict's congregation align itself with various climate change goals; and to help the members of St. Benedict's- as individuals or as a congregation- to join and/or align with specific public climate change activist groups or events. To achieve these goals, the Earthcare committee has sponsored events over the years ranging from assessing St. Benedict's carbon footprint to holding Hollister Institute book seminars to organizing a diocese-wide climate change (or "Creation Care") conference featuring nationally known presenters. 2023 events included:

- On April 15<sup>th</sup> Earthcare sponsored and hosted a public workshop featuring the film *Nation in Transition*. The film described how the people of a Navajo reservation in Arizona made the transition from coal to solar power, including the many social justice issues involved in the transition. Don Maruska designed the flyer for the event and spoke to various groups to publicize the event. John Horsley led a discussion group after the film. More than fifty people attended, most from outside the congregation.
- On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Earthcare sponsored a brief post-Eucharist liturgical service liturgical walk from the church building to the bioreactor (established by Earthcare under Don Maruska's initiative in 2022) on the west end of the property. At the bioreactor, Caro Hall+ said a blessing, and each participant received a cup of the bio-rich fungi the reactor had successfully produced since its installation.
- The Season of Creation describes the five Sundays designated in the Episcopal Church to the theme of Creation Care. In 2023 the five Sundays ranged from September 1<sup>st</sup> to October 4<sup>th</sup>. During this period Earthcare volunteers presented brief (three-minute) commercials to the congregation during the announcement period. Individual Earthcare members also- in collaboration with the Liturgy committee- selected and presented the readings for each Sunday's Eucharist service.

Ongoing issues under Earthcare's consideration include: how to solarize St. Benedict's energy needs; the possible installation of at least one EV charger; continuation of planting new trees on the property; continuing the practice of holding climate change workshops and contributing to the liturgies of Earth Day and Season of Creation.

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## LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE REPORT

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The main events this year have been

1. Cleanup of St Francis garden and replanting of the lavender walkway.
2. Donation from Caro of 2 Ceanothus bushes which are now blooming and very lovely.
3. Replanting of the hanging plants on the verandah in new baskets
4. Replanting of the six containers on the verandah in time for Easter.

5. Additional planting of the hanging baskets after the new plants were made into crispy critters by the extreme heat
6. Cleanup of northside of the church where the plants were extremely overgrown.

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## ABUNDANCE SHOP REPORT

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The Abundance Shop served more people in our community and generated more revenue for the church than ever before in 2023! The shop was able to transfer \$60,000 to the church after paying expenses. The church tithed \$6,000 to 12 local non-profits chosen by our volunteers. The shop was able to assist 32 people, many of them multiple times, with vouchers for clothing and other essentials. Our donation jar at the register yielded \$1900 for the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

We were able to complete several improvements to the shop in 2023. We started the year by finishing the second half of recarpeting project begun in 2022. Staff member Celeste Pennington completed a top to bottom cleaning of the entire store.

Later in the year we had two attractive new signs installed outside the shop which proudly show its ownership by St. Benedict's Episcopal Church. Thank you to Ron Thompson for his assistance in designing and installing the signs!

We also converted one of our three storage sheds into a tool shed accessible to customers. It has proved very helpful in increasing sales space. Thank you to Michael Lucas for setting up the shed and for making several major repairs to it!

We currently have 16 volunteers assisting us weekly (and more!) to keep the shop running smoothly. Maureen Titus, Ann Lucas, Mary Stein-Webber, and Paulette Penner cashier. Linda Crawford, Lori Gentile, Lorri Gill, Ricki Haddad, Nellie Regalado, Wanda Lo, Iris Alexandra, Gretchen Burke, Sue Halverson, Vivian Leinio, Steve Cake, and Mike Eggleston all perform a variety of tasks to process the mountain of donations we receive each and every week. A huge thanks to these dedicated volunteers!

We were blessed for a second year with several visits by the Pop-up Prayer Place brought to us by Discovery Team members Jen Crompton, Cathy Gildea, Barbara Hirahara, and Sandy Fisher. Also, Ashes to Go continues to be a popular annual tradition.

Thank you to all of you who have supported us by shopping and donating! We looking forward to seeing you all in 2024 as we continue to evolve and grow.

Respectfully submitted,

Esta Kandarian, Shop Manager

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## PEOPLES KITCHEN REPORT

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In 2022 St Ben's served 443 guests at the People's Kitchen. Each month the number of people served increased. In February, we served 65 people and by December the number was 84. That is an average of 73 guests each month. In 2023, we served 514 people. The average has increased to more than 85 people per month.

I inherited the People's Kitchen from Pat last June, after her many years of service. It has been an unexpected blessing for me, especially from all those who continuously serve or donate food each time we are scheduled. I appreciate all those who do more than their share, especially when I couldn't be there. The greatest difficulty for me is having those of our members who have provided food, and then step up to give more when we don't have enough to cover the 85-100 people. It would be a joy to be able to tell those who always participate, that they can have a month off because others have stepped up to offer their time or food donations. I know everyone is working hard to keep the church functioning without a permanent priest. We serve at Prado only six times a year. It would be so encouraging if we could have a few more people to participate.

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## LAUNDRY LOVE REPORT

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Laundry Love (LL) is an outreach of St. Benedict's that started in July 2018. On the last Wednesday of every month LL welcomes all low-income community members to Osos Clean Laundry where quarters, detergent, and related supplies are provided. It meets from 11 – 1 and 4 – 6. LL volunteers are both members of St. Benedict's and people from the wider community. From January to December 2023 the total spent for washing and drying was \$5,519.00. The # of people served was 324.

Most months, at the later shift, St. Benedict's members Roz and Jim Malone generously provide pizza. When they are unable to, St. Benedict's buys the pizza. Water is also available and sometimes protein bars are too. Clients enjoy the pizza enthusiastically – for some it is the only meal they have that day.

LL is plastic-free with respect to detergent because we use Earth Breeze detergent sheets (they look like fabric sheets but are made of soap). Earth Breeze donates them free to all Laundry Love programs in the U.S.

Laundry Love is greatly appreciated by our clients. Many, many times participants thank volunteers for this service. Washing clothes at a laundromat is very expensive. An average load is \$5.00 and larger machines are \$8.00 (each participant is allowed up to 3 loads). The dryers are especially expensive to operate – 25 cents gets you 4 minutes of dry time (more expensive than parking in SLO)!

For the last three years, LL has been primarily funded by Dignity Foundation, with additional monies contributed by individual donors. The Dignity grant was time-limited and is no longer available for 2024 and beyond. We still have \$9,786 on hand, enough to fund about 21 months at the current rate. In the future we will need to find other sources of revenue if LL is to continue.

Laundry Love also needs more “human capital.” We need three people per session to make it happen. When one or two people are unavailable we scramble to find replacements. Do you have 2 hours a month to help? Or can you offer to be a back-up for those times when we’re short-handed? This small act will make a big difference to those who are welcomed in with garbage bags of dirty clothes and leave with clean, warm clothes and full stomachs. As St. Teresa said: “Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”

Submitted by Alice Welchert

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## COMMUNITY DINNERS REPORT

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Five years ago St. Benedict's Church began providing once a week dinners to anyone needing/wanting a meal. Those dinners were served to-go during the pandemic as we followed the distancing rules and closed our indoor dining until the beginning of this year when the Community Center once again created a dining room space with tables and chairs and encouraged people sit together to enjoy their meal with fellow diners.

The prepared food is provided by several of the service organizations and churches in Los Osos...each taking a weekly turn to do so. Los Osos Cares has taken over coordinating the weekly meals and providing menu ingredients when needed.

The once a week dinners in Los Osos are going 5-years-strong and St. Benedict's takes part in the weekly rotation by volunteering and coordinating the Community Center Kitchen. St. Benedict's also provides the menu, and prepares the food when it is our turn to serve. What started as providing a meal for a small group of under 20 people has evolved to serving over 100 meals each week. We hope to continue providing meals to whomever needs/wants a free meal as part of our church's community wide outreach.

There are several people in our congregation who continually volunteer to provide generously when asked to contribute a side dish. They are very much appreciated, both by the folks enjoying the meals, and also by the kitchen staff that's in charge of serving the meals.

Maureen Titus and Barbara Schippers have cooked seasonal favorites...enchiladas, chili dogs, stews, tacos, many pasta dishes and lasagnas. The side dishes, such as green beans, roasted vegetables, potato salad, cole-slaw, as well as fresh fruit cups, garlic bread, chips and chili beans are contributed by those who volunteer to do so.

By providing a meal **WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE** in the lives of seniors, single moms, the un-housed and the hungry in Los Osos."The show must go on" we will continue to provide dinners to any and all who would like a meal. We are hopeful to have the continued support of the community and the blessings of St. Ben's in this New Year of 2024.

Best wishes and thanks to all who participate!

Barbara Schippers for St. Benedict's Community Dinners Outreach

**The number of dinners served thru 2023 at the Community Center is well over 5500!  
"make a difference...feed somebody!"**

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## INTERCESSORY PRAYER MINISTRY

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Intercessory Prayer Ministry is a group offering private prayers after the 10:30 a.m. church service on Sundays and are available throughout the week via phone. The weekly contact person's phone number is printed in the Sunday Bulletin.

Our bimonthly meetings are held on the 2nd Sundays of January, March, May, July, September, and November after the 10:30 church service. For more information about this ministry, please call Louisa Beeler (805)543-2898. Leave your name and phone number and I'll return your call.

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## FLOWER GUILD

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Director, Sharon Porter

This has been an exceptional year for the Flower Guild. To give you an idea of why it was, here's a breakdown of all the occasions the Guild brought flowers to St. Benedict's congregation.

Of the 53 Sundays in 2023 that the Guild members presented altar arrangements, 41 were floral, 7 were for Lent (without flowers) and 5 Sundays were our set of reappearing orchids.

We created 21 window arrangements for three occasions, Easter, Christmas and Rev. Caro's Retirement Party. Additional arrangements were completed for Bishop Lucinda's visits for Rev. Caro's last day before retirement and for Rev. Jen's Ordination. Extra flowers were added around the Paschal Candle at Easter, a wreath for the Advent candles and several poinsettia plants for Christmas service. Additional small flower vases were set at the church's entrance, the credence table and elsewhere almost every Sunday. We added greenery to the crèche for the Blue Christmas service.

The volunteer time and artistic consideration of the Flower Guild cannot be understated. We thoughtfully used such flowers as mums, alstroemerias, carnations, sunflowers and baby's breath flowers so they can could over to the next weekend. Searching for greenery could be a quest; Brian Spolarich seemed to have the best source. It took a couple of members about three hours to create the window arrangements where no two were alike. Elaine Beckham, Pamela Bleisch and Sharon Porter enjoyed assembling and creating the seasonal collections, including Rev. Caro's Party. Laura Thompson's Palm Sunday palm arrangements were awesome. Sarah Chesebro's Ikebana arrangements were inspirational. We gratefully received holly from Ron Thompson for our Christmas window arrangements. Marshall Garden's created a gracious arrangement of white mums, carnations and snapdragons for Christmas.

Flower Guild members include Pamela Bleisch (our newest member), Brian Spolarich, Elaine Beckham, Sarah Chesebro and Sharon Porter.

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## MUSIC COMMITTEE

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Music Committee Members: Brian Spolarich

The Music Committee is responsible for assisting the Music Director and Rector in planning and selecting music for the choir as well as other special music offerings.

2023 was a transitional year for St. Benedict's music program as we continue to lack a full-time accompanist or music director. The St. Benedict Singers maintained a membership of around 10 singers for the first half of the year, and were blessed by Sarah Jane Scott, music director at Trinity United Methodist, who continued to rehearse the choir at a mutually convenient time.

The choir presented 8 anthems during Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter, including the John Rutter setting of "The Lord is My Shepherd" from his *Requiem*. In addition, many singers participated in the deanery-wide presentation of the entire *Requiem* at St. Barnabas on May 12<sup>th</sup> in honor of Caro's retirement.

After the summer break, it became clear that, given a lack of a "critical mass" of voices across all parts, the lack of a pianist on Sunday morning, and the time required to support other parish activities since Caro's departure, it was not practical to continue the choir at this time.

We continue to work to identify potential interest in our church musician position in the community and have followed through on several leads and interviewed candidates, none of which has borne fruit thus far. Please continue to pray that God will draw our next music director to us soon.

Brian Spolarich

Chair, Music Committee

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## SACRISTAN MINISTRY REPORT

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The Sacristan is responsible for the care and use of the vestments and other hangings and furnishings that are used during worship at St. Benedict's.

As for all of us, this year has been one of change and adaptation with the retirement of the Rev Caroline Hall, the ordination of our Rev Jen Crompton, the hosting of visiting priests and three visits by Bishop Lucinda.

I oversaw the removal of Rev Caro Hall's personal items she used at church including her home communion kit, two albs, cassock and surplus, various stoles, and wool cope. Her kneeler remains at church in the chapel.

The most obvious change in the Sanctuary is the use of the rectangular altar rather than the round one. Rev Jen Crompton requested this as they believe the rectangular altar better facilitates a place for those serving at the altar. This change gives us the opportunity to use the beautiful altar frontals given to us during the formation of our parish.

In the Sacristy, the Altar Guild is overjoyed with the installation of cabinets above the sinks that provides additional storage for items curated during the pandemic. This is a gift from Letty Cotta, the newest member of the Altar Guild. (Diana Hammerlund, Director of the Altar Guild, Letty and I performed spring cleaning in the Fall. Such fun!!!)

The end of the year brought new challenges due to the failure of the water pump for our fire suppressant systems. Until the pump was fixed, we were not allowed to have lit candles in the church. Thank goodness for battery operated candles that were gifted by JW and Sharon Porter. We also purchased handheld battery-operated candles for the Christmas Eve services. Although we didn't need them, as the pump was reinstalled in the nick of time, we still used them at the 4:30pm Family Service and will continue to do so in future years.

In 2024 we look forward to:

- A new credence tablecloth gifted by John Cribb and in memory of Stef Shuman.
- The development of a list of items to be purchased in "Thanksgiving" or "Memory".
- A request to the congregation for an assistant Sacristan. The "shadow sacristan" (my husband David) is mumbling about retirement as he says he is getting too old to climb ladders to change the curtains.

It brings me joy to transform our sanctuary throughout the seasonal changes.

SJC

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## LITURGY COMMITTEE

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During the interregnum, the Liturgy Committee is responsible for planning the worship services and producing the Sunday Liturgy Bulletins and other special service bulletins in accordance with the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

The Committee presently consists of the following members:

- Rev Jen Crompton - Consultant
- Rev Judy Stevens – Consultant and Hymnist
- Rev Jerry Walton - Consultant
- Jen Muse – Editor
- Cathy Gildea - Editor
- Sarah Chesebro – Convener and Proofreader
- Roz Malone – Hymnist
- John Horsely - Hymnist
- Bryson McKelvey – Proofreader

A special thanks to Jane Wu for participating in our fledgling committee after Rev Caro Hall retired and to Cathy Gildea who took over for Jane when she accepted a Diocesan leadership role from Bishop Lucinda Ashby.

Notes about committee roles:

1. While the roles of each member are listed above, all are invited to participate in our weekly meeting discussions and make decisions by consensus.
2. A Hymnist is someone who writes the text, music, or both of hymns. However, in this context, a hymnist is one who selects hymns for the service.

Since the retirement of Rev Caroline Hall, the Committee has met weekly with few exceptions. Our discussions are mainly focused on the review of the previous Sunday's Service. Based on these discussions, decisions and actions of note follow:

- The services will be developed using the Book of Common Prayer or Enriching our Worship.
- An Iona inspired service, at the request of several members of our congregation and with the approval of Bishop Lucinda Ashby, will be held once a month.
- Sources of music will be: The "1982 Hymnal", "Lift Every Voice and Sing", "Wonder Love and Praise", and only previously used Hymns from "Gather".
- The 8am service will basically be the same as the 10:30am service minus the hymns.
- The Sunday Service Bulletin will be sent to visiting priests by Thursday.
- Jen Muse and Cathy Gildea have streamlined the Liturgy Planning spreadsheet by utilizing links to resources. Further, Cathy has created templates for each variation and prepopulated the spreadsheet at the beginning of each Liturgical Season with our schedule of supply clergy (thank you Maureen Titus) and weekly format. These improvements have made it much easier for them to develop the Sunday Liturgy Bulletins and for the proofreaders to review.

The intent of the above decisions was to simplify the work of the Liturgy Committee and to ensure we abided by the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer and Enriching our Worship.

A major challenge has been the selection of hymns that are familiar to the congregation. This is compounded by not having a Music Director/pianist and choir and depending on recorded music. The following has been acted upon to address this challenge:

- A subcommittee of "hymnists" has been formed consisting of Rev Judy Stevens, John Horsley, and Roz Malone. Their purpose is selection of hymns.
- The congregation has been asked during seasonal changes to select hymns they would like to have included in the service.
- A list of hymns previously used is available for the hymnists to reference.
- When a musician or a recording of a selected hymn is not available, Sarah Jane Scott will record the music for us.
- A request has been made to the Parish Council to change the advertisement from Music Director to Pianist in hopes this will attract more applicants.

When available, pianist Ann Lucas and prior members of the choir have enriched our worship service with their talents. A special thanks to Alan Kiste for his solo of "Suo Gân" ("Lullaby") during the 8pm Christmas Eve Service and Ann Lucas for her music during Advent the 4:30pm Christmas Eve service.

Beginning on Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, to address the ongoing needs of our parish, including the continued assessment of the return to pre-COVID liturgical practices, a decision was made, in coordination with the Vestry, to resume offering wine from the Common Cup (chalice) at the Eucharist. A letter was sent out to the

congregation that included guidance from Bishop Lucinda Ashby to help them select how they want to receive the wine.

Two new ministry positions have been created:

- The Eucharistic Assistant - will offer wine from the individual cups while the Eucharistic Minister will offer wine from the chalice.
- The Liturgy Assistant – will assist the officiant at the Service of the Word.

From Rev Jen Crompton: *“I express my thanks for all the hard work everyone is doing and has done to prepare and provide a beautiful liturgical space at St. Benedict’s.”*

While not part of the responsibility of the Liturgy Committee, but integral to the service, a Customary has been developed for visiting priests for a Eucharist Service at the suggestion of Canon Martha Korienek. Rev Jen Crompton and the Lay Eucharistic Ministers have had input into the Customary and have reviewed the Final Draft which is a living document. A Customary is being developed for the non-Eucharist Services (when a priest is not presiding).

From Canon Martha Korienek: *“I wanted to let you know that this customary was **very** helpful on Sunday! Thank you so much for all the effort that went into making this so clear and thorough. It’s a huge blessing.”*