

The Benediction

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

The Rev. Jen Crompton

Trailblazer

The Parish Council

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Sunday Services

8:00 am (2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday each month) - Eucharist, live at church and available on Zoom (link may be found in the Benediction Weekly under the News tab on our website).

10:30 am - Eucharist, live at church and live-streamed on

Facebook:

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

Spring Forward into Action!!!

Not only do we move our clocks forward in the Spring, we also are fortunate to see our beautiful landscapes change into lush green hills and colorful wildflowers. As I drive on Los Osos Valley Road, I am always happy to see the beautiful California poppies that seem to appear out of nowhere. We have had our share of stormy, windy, rainy weather this year as well. Hopefully you have all weathered the storms without major problems.



St. Ben's hosted the Deanery Meeting Sunday March 3rd in the afternoon. There were about 30 attendees discussing various topics. On Sunday March 10th the Bishop visited St. Ben's and provided a beautiful service. She seems to be pleased to see how St. Ben's is rallying around and moving forward as we search and pray for a new priest.

We had a wonderful Holy Week, many activities, services, and music with the loving help and expertise of

so many St. Ben's members. We could not have done all the services without each "team" member stepping up to share their skills. I won't even try to name everyone since I may forget someone, we are so blessed. Hopefully you had an opportunity to walk and view or sit quietly in the church to contemplate the Stations of the Cross.

There will be more events being held at St. Ben's in April. On April 6 there was a Climate Solutions Community Forum sponsored by the Earthcare team. On April 14th, the Central Coast Readers Theater will be performing, hopefully you plan on attending, there are several St. Ben's members involved. Bring your friends to this great program.

Rogation Sunday is May 5th this year. This is an ancient church festival to seek blessing for a community and its sustenance. Asking for God's blessing on agriculture and industry which ties in with Earthcare team. Some churches celebrate the beauty of the earth, bless the grounds of the church or plant new plants during this time.

Thank you for your continued support, everyone is a valued member of St. Ben's.

Peace and Love,

Maureen Titus

Psalm 50:1-2,10-11

The city perfect in its beauty, and the cattle on thousands of hills and all living things in the fields, our hills and streams our rivers, lakes, reservoirs and seas that in all these things we might glimpse a reflection of your glory and your gracious love for each one of us.

An Update from Your Search Committee

Brian Spolarich, Chair

We are continuing in our journey together as we search for a new rector. Here's where things stand currently.

The application period for our Priest-in-Charge opportunity at St. Benedict's ends on April 8th. At that time Canon Martha will forward all application materials to us after her review: getting these at one time avoids any "recency bias" for candidates who applied earlier (or later) in the process. The Search Committee will then review these materials and determine which candidates with whom we wish to conduct a first interview, which will be a videoconference via Zoom.

We cannot share any specifics about of the status search process, including the number of candidates who have applied. The entire search process is entirely confidential: this protects those who apply and protects us. If you have questions about the process at this point, please talk to me only and I will try to answer as best as I can. I would ask that everyone trust the process and trust the Search Committee and Vestry who have been elected and appointed to provide leadership at this crucial time. I will share that I am optimistic and hopeful.

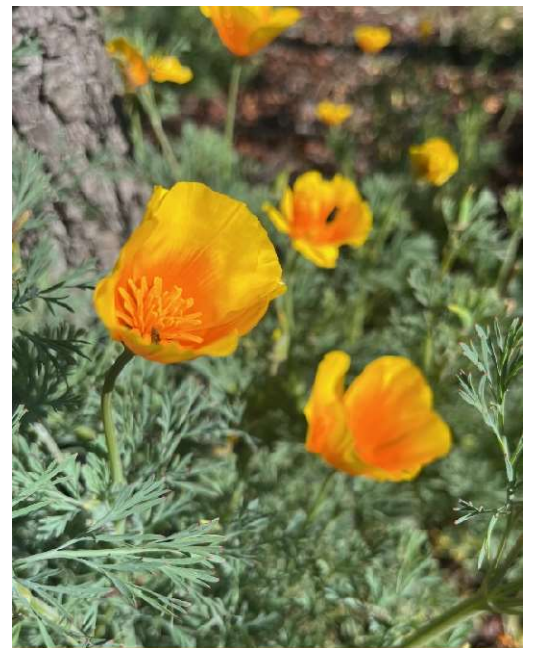
I also want to share a set of insights that emerged at the parish leadership retreat we held in February led by the Rev. Art Stevens. I encourage everyone to read these points and reflect on them, as the first one was a startling revelation to me about an assumption that I have brought to this work that is problematic (and was exactly the message I believe we needed to hear that day, thank God for Rev. Art!)

- We do not *need* a priest to be a "successful" parish.
- We will only hire the priest who is right for us and shares our hopes. We will not 'settle'.
- A priest's role is, first and foremost, to empower us to act on our hopes. They should be:
 - Good at showing and demonstrating the way of Jesus.
 - Good at discerning how the Holy Spirit is at work.
 - Prayerful and reflective.

These insights are motivated by practical and spiritual realities. The first one is simply this: there are more vacancies than there are priests to fill them, and churches seeking part-time clergy are at a real disadvantage. If we do not find a priest quickly this doesn't mean that we are "doing church wrong", or--even worse--that "God doesn't approve of us". Many churches like us are in the same situation. The church that Art and Judy attend near their home does not have a permanent priest and they "make it work". I am confident that God hears and answers all prayers, but the answer is not always the one we are wanting and expecting.

The second reality is deeper and reflects the changing model of clergy leadership. Gone are the days that the priest "ran the church" and we could just show up and be consumers. I recognize as much as anyone the enormous amount of work that has been distributed among the members of our parish to ensure our worship services and other activities continue in the ways we enjoy. We have taken real responsibility for our common life. We should each continue to discern where our energy and our passions lie so that we each are engaging in ways that are life-giving for us. And where we do not have energy or passion, we should ask if that thing needs to continue, and if it does, ask if someone else can assist or it can be done differently.

As I said previously, I am very excited and enthusiastic about the search process. But I do not want to pretend that we know how long this process will take, and that we simply need to "get through" the next few weeks/months until the next priest arrives, and things go "back to normal". The new normal with a new, ¾-time priest, whenever that person arrives, will be different than the "normal" before. Let us be open to that new reality when it arrives, and continue to care for ourselves, each other, St. Benedict's, loving God and each other, as we wait.



This Olde Church, Roof Edition

Michael Lucas

It doesn't seem possible that such a 'new' church could need work, but wooden buildings, just like some of us, have some need of replacements with age! Our church was roofed 24 years ago. Some founders recall a 50-year shingle was promised, but as an architect I can say look for the asterisk! Our Elk shingles of that era were very good, perhaps the premier roofing product company [in a former life as a practicing architect I specified them] and sadly lasted longer than their manufacturer Elk did. Today, a 25-year pro-rated warranty is about the limit. There is only so much one can do with asphalt and fiberglass. It should be noted our specific micro environment with coastal sea winds is especially hard on the roof, despite our lacking a freeze/thaw cycle. It was not a product or installation flaw--just hard life on the roof!

How did we find out? We have experienced no problems with leaks. With the agreement to move forward with solar last March, we began to have possible solar contractors get onto the roof inspecting conditions in consultation our utility manager for the solar power contract, ReVolve. One of those possible contractors noted that the roof would not outlast the solar system, and we would have to re-shingle it after the solar installation, which means a take-down of the solar at our costs while being re-shingled. We solicited a roof contractor in the summer of 2023 to replace the shingles for early last fall, and we did find two who thought they could work in the fall--most told us they were booked well into winter. After review of those proposals, the vestry chose to postpone the roof and the solar at that time. We likely could have gotten a few more years [suggested maximum was two] from the roof, but we would jeopardize the solar benefits within our contract with ReVolve, that take advantage of a 'grandfathered' rate schedule with PG&E. As you are likely aware, we have some of the most expensive power in the country, and the Revolve schedule, taking advantage of tax credits offered, gave us an almost "half price" sale on our power.

We have had a new start with roof contractors this winter/spring, and we invited seven. Two were booked into September already, and five did give us bids. In reviewing the contractors and bids, the vestry has approved moving forward with Nieporte Roofing of San Luis Obispo, at a projected cost of just under \$38,000. Importantly, this is significantly less than last summer's estimates, and our lowest 3 of 5 bidders was within 4% of each other. Some good things come to those who wait! We are scheduled for a mid-August installation and hopefully we will be able to proceed with ReVolve later this year.



Abundance Shop

Esta Kandarian

It has been a time of transition at The Abundance Shop. In March, we said goodbye to beloved volunteer Lorri Gill, who moved back to Iowa. We marked the occasion with an enjoyable farewell lunch at Celia's Garden Café.

Celeste Pennington, who has been our excellent custodian for several years, is now also working at the shop three days a week processing donations. It is such a joy to have Celeste keeping things on track so beautifully!

We had a charming display of Easter bunnies and other spring decor this year! Thank you, as always, to volunteer Linda Crawford, who creates all our lovely displays!

We still have many Raikes bears and other collectables for sale. Thank you to volunteer Ricki Haddad, who so generously shares donations from the estate sales at which she assists.

Thank you to our entire staff of volunteers! It takes all of us to keep up with this often fast-paced shop.



Climate Solutions – need you!

Don Maruska

Do we need to take dramatic actions to stop global warming? Yes. Are there things we can do in our own lives now to make a difference? Yes. Can you learn how and have help? For sure.

About 50 people attended the “Climate Solutions Community Forum” at St. Benedict’s on Saturday, April 6. You can watch videos of the events by following the links at www.StBensLosOsos.org/creation-care. Meanwhile, here are a few headlines.

Antarctica Is Melting – An Urgent Call to Stop Global Warming

Don Maruska shared insights from his experience as a special guest on an expedition to Antarctica in December 2023. Learn how Antarctica has held 70% of the fresh water on the planet. As the earth warms, polar amplification hits the poles especially hard. In the last 10 years, a surface area of ice equivalent to France and Germany has melted. This has huge ripple effects on the ecosystem and its capacity to support key species and capture and convert greenhouse gases into living carbon.

Living Simply So Others Can Simply Live

See how Ian and Alicia Denchasy have created a self-sufficient home, off-grid in Atascadero. Hear the lessons they’ve learned about how we can have a good life without all the clutter that we’re drowning under from our consumer culture. Be inspired by what’s economical and within our grasp. They’re now working on a new off-grid location for their popular A-Town Humble Pie business.

How Local Agriculture Can Help Reduce Greenhouse Gases

Matt and Jean of MJ Family Farms have brought the benefits of regenerative agriculture to their farm in Creston. Learn how this form of agriculture shifts agriculture from an egregious producer of greenhouse gases to a means of drawing CO₂ out of the atmosphere and holding it in living soil that nurtures healthy food. Look for the fresh eggs they sell at the local Farmers Markets.



What You Can Do to Bend the Curve for a Healthier Climate

Climate Fellows from Cal Poly and Cuesta shared an array of practical ways each of us can make a difference now. There are many things we can do and need to do to boost awareness, action, and advocacy for a healthy climate. See what fits for you and find not only ideas but also resources to enjoy reducing your greenhouse emissions and even save some money.

The Forum benefited from the sponsorship and support of the Earthcare Team at St. Benedict’s, ResilientSLO of SLO Climate Coalition, Rotary Club of Los Osos, People of Faith for Justice, Central Coast Center for Ecological Civilization, and Yes We Can Peace Builders.

We hope you will take some time to enjoy these videos and act.

Spring at St. Benedict's

Cathy Gildea

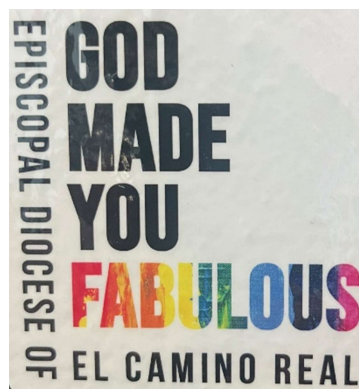
Spend a few minutes the next time you're at church to take in the beauty of spring. Not only do we have such a beautiful setting with our amazing views of the Los Valley and the Hollister Peak, but our own gardens are starting to come into bloom. Thank you to all who nurture our grounds.



Trailblazing at Central Coast Pride

Mark your calendar now for this year's Central Coast Pride events. Help us show up and show the love at this year's Trans Pride and Pride in the Plaza. These popular events kick off June Pride month.

May 11th Trans Pride
June 1-2nd Pride in the Plaza



Liturgy Committee Sings Alleluia!

Sarah Chesebro

On Monday April 8th the Liturgy Committee met for a debriefing of the Holy Week services beginning with Palm Sunday and ending with Easter Sunday.

In short, we sang “Alleluia” we did it! This was, of course, a first for the Liturgy Committee who planned five services for Holy Week, and for our dear Rev. Jen Crompton who presided over all of them; Huzzah!

As we progress through the Church Year, we are continually learning about the liturgy especially as we transition from one season to the next. We have come to expect a variety of liturgical services as each style may speak to us in a different way to draw us closer to God. We use The Book of Common Prayer, Enriching our Worship, and portions of The Iona Liturgy (with approval from Bishop Lucinda Ashby).

As we review each Sunday service and other special services, we take note of “What Went Well” and “What Needs Improving”. Thanks to Cathy Gildea, who in her professional life dealt with developing processes, and Jen Smith who is also a whiz with spreadsheets and document development, we now have templates for our varied Sunday services in addition to the “Liturgy Planning Spreadsheet” for the development of each service. This spreadsheet also includes notes on what we have learned and links to resources.

Oh, and then of course there are our inspirational and beautiful hymns. The Liturgy Committee has a sub-committee for the selection of hymns. This task involves a knowledge of the Readings and a love of music. Ideally all hymns fit in some way with the Readings. Music selections are taken from The Hymnal 1982; Wonder, Love and Praise; Lift Every Voice and Sing II; and Gather. The sub-committee includes The Rev. Judy Stevens, John Horsley, and Roz Malone. They know when they have hit the mark as all the congregation are singing joyfully! A special thanks to Hannah-Jaye who found recorded music for each hymn when we were without a musician.

So, when you are holding your service bulletin, please know that a lot of research, hard work and love for our congregation has been poured into it to “come together as a faith community to worship God, to meet God and to build one another up in the Body of Christ”.



The Liturgy Committee is comprised of The Rev. Jen Crompton, The Rev. Judy Stevens, The Rev. Jerry Walton, Cathy Gildea, Jen Smith, John Horsley, Roz Malone, Bryson McKelvy and Sarah Chesebro. Recently, Jerry+ and Roz have stepped down from the Committee but are still on call for consultation. We give them many thanks for their valuable contributions.

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St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

2220 Snowy Egret Lane

Los Osos, CA 93412

St. Ben's Events

April

April 6

Climate Action Workshop

April 14

Central Coast Readers Theater

April 20

Men's Breakfast at Celia's Café

April 21

Vestry Meeting

May

May 1

Community Dinner

May 5

Rogation Sunday

May 11

Trans Pride Event

May 19

Pentecost
