

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

Tending Mind & Soul in Los Osos, CA



2026 Annual Report

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

Annual Meeting 2026

AGENDA

- Welcome/Opening Prayer
 - Call to Order
- Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes from 2025
- Elections of Vestry Members and Diocesan Delegates
 - 2026 Budget Discussion and Vote
 - Priest-in-Charge Report
 - Presiding Warden Report
 - Committee Reports
 - Appreciations and Awards
 - Closing Prayer

VESTRY AND DELEGATE NOMINATIONS

Vestry Nominations:

- Connie Weldon
- Ed Valentine
- Letty Cotta
- Maureen Titus
- Pamela Bleisch

Nominations for Deanery and Diocesan Delegates:

- Lisa Gonzalez
- Michael Lucas
- Roz Malone
- Barbara Hirahara – Alternate
- John Horsley – Alternate

MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday January 26th, 2025

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

New Vestry and Parish Council members are

- Barbara Hirahara
- Letty Cotta
- Bob Pelfrey
- Jane Wu

Deanery and Diocesan Delegates are

- Lisa Gonzalez, Sandy Fisher, and John Horsley

2025 Budget Discussion and Vote -- Treasurer Lisa Gonzalez

Motion to approve the 2024 financial reports as presented by Pat Stoneman second by Brian Spolarich. Motion passed.

Motion to approve the 2025 budget as presented by Brian Spolarich second by Alan Kiste. Motion passed.

Priest-In-Charge Report presented by Rev. Linzi Stahlecker

Presiding Warden's Report presented by Maureen Titus

Committee Reports

Appreciate and Awards

Appreciation to the financial tellers by treasurer Lisa Gonzalez
Steve Cake, Bryson McKelvey, Alice Welchert, Sandy Fisher, Judith Cadigan, and Diana Hammerlund.

Appreciation of staff – Hannah-Jaye Mathews

Appreciation of retiring vestry members
Maureen Titus, Cathy Gildea and Sandy Fisher

New Presiding Warden is Brian Spolarich

Above and Beyond Awards
Esta Kandarian
Cathy Gildea
Maureen Titus

Vestry Cross
Ron Thompson

Meeting closed at 1:14 pm

2025 BALANCE SHEET

12:10 PM

01/09/26

Accrual Basis

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2025

	Dec 31, 25	Dec 31, 24	\$ Change	% Change
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Checking/Savings				
Mechanics Bank - MMF	354,930.18	0.00	354,930.18	100.0%
Bank of the Sierra - Savings	2,751.66	248,738.66	-245,987.00	-98.9%
Restricted Funds	61,814.48	54,897.96	6,916.52	12.6%
Unrestricted Funds	55,249.00	48,367.87	6,881.13	14.2%
Total Checking/Savings	474,745.32	352,004.49	122,740.83	34.9%
Other Current Assets				
Due from the Rector's Fund	0.00	243.95	-243.95	-100.0%
Due from the Abundance Shop	6,400.15	4,440.22	1,959.93	44.1%
Charles Schwab (TDA) Account	257,253.77	5,096.42	252,157.35	4,947.7%
Prepaid P & L Insurance	1,468.67	0.03	1,468.64	4,895,466.7%
Prepaid Umbrella Insurance	425.72	318.78	106.94	33.6%
Prepaid WC Insurance	162.96	3,789.61	-3,626.65	-95.7%
Total Other Current Assets	265,711.27	13,889.01	251,822.26	1,813.1%
Total Current Assets	740,456.59	365,893.50	374,563.09	102.4%
Fixed Assets				
Stations of the Cross	7,842.60	7,842.60	0.00	0.0%
Sprinkler System	205,986.55	205,986.55	0.00	0.0%
Long Room Build Out	129,339.49	129,339.49	0.00	0.0%
Church Building & Improvements	793,821.89	793,821.89	0.00	0.0%
Kitchen Build-Out	41,090.83	41,090.83	0.00	0.0%
Parking Lot Lights	10,126.00	10,126.00	0.00	0.0%
Sound System	27,155.01	20,368.76	6,786.25	33.3%
Furniture & Equipment	46,899.39	46,899.39	0.00	0.0%
Land	280,500.00	280,500.00	0.00	0.0%
Land Improvements	9,612.29	9,612.29	0.00	0.0%
Total Fixed Assets	1,552,374.05	1,545,587.80	6,786.25	0.4%
TOTAL ASSETS	2,292,830.64	1,911,481.30	381,349.34	20.0%
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Accounts Payable				
Accounts Payable	-1,332.85	-1,708.77	375.92	22.0%
Total Accounts Payable	-1,332.85	-1,708.77	375.92	22.0%
Credit Cards				
Visa Business Card -1805 & 9230	1,108.64	0.00	1,108.64	100.0%
Total Credit Cards	1,108.64	0.00	1,108.64	100.0%
Other Current Liabilities				
Restricted Fund Accounts	430,263.84	72,234.28	358,029.56	495.7%
Deferred Revenue Accounts	12,785.00	12,265.00	520.00	4.2%
Direct Deposit Liabilities	730.49	-4,239.91	4,970.40	117.2%
Clearing	-1,249.39	0.00	-1,249.39	-100.0%
Payroll Liabilities	3,690.71	2,444.20	1,246.51	51.0%
Total Other Current Liabilities	446,220.65	82,703.57	363,517.08	439.5%
Total Current Liabilities	445,996.44	80,994.80	365,001.64	450.7%
Total Liabilities	445,996.44	80,994.80	365,001.64	450.7%

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2025

	Dec 31, 25	Dec 31, 24	\$ Change	% Change
Equity				
Endowment Fund	42,517.51	42,377.51	140.00	0.3%
Church Land & Building Fund	1,545,587.00	1,545,587.00	0.00	0.0%
Unrestricted Fund Retaind Earn	237,907.41	153,282.69	84,624.72	55.2%
Net Income	20,822.28	89,239.30	-68,417.02	-76.7%
Total Equity	1,846,834.20	1,830,486.50	16,347.70	0.9%
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	2,292,830.64	1,911,481.30	381,349.34	20.0%

2025 PROFIT AND LOSS

12:08 PM
01/09/26
Accrual Basis

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual January through December 2025

	Jan - Dec 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
Abundance Shop	45,000.00	45,000.00	0.00	100.0%
Annual Pledge Income	111,075.00	115,000.00	-3,925.00	96.6%
Loose Offering	29,092.86	19,500.00	9,592.86	149.2%
Flowers	899.52	500.00	399.52	179.9%
Fund Raising Activities	947.72	900.00	47.72	105.3%
Honoraria	1,555.00	0.00	1,555.00	100.0%
Interest Income	1,234.67	0.00	1,234.67	100.0%
Memorial & Tributes	2,399.70	0.00	2,399.70	100.0%
Total Income	192,204.47	180,900.00	11,304.47	106.2%
Cost of Goods Sold				
Church Building Expense	20,549.38	21,430.25	-880.87	95.9%
Church Land Support	5,158.47	6,125.00	-966.53	84.2%
Church Program Expenses	2,136.07	3,250.00	-1,113.93	65.7%
Education & Study	250.00	700.00	-450.00	35.7%
Music Ministry	16,628.42	17,300.70	-672.28	96.1%
Outreach Expense	17,143.52	18,090.00	-946.48	94.8%
Priest-in-Charge Expenses	89,308.11	86,835.50	2,472.61	102.8%
Supply Clergy Expense	1,110.00	2,000.00	-890.00	55.5%
Worship, Prayer & Spirituality	12,347.64	8,933.86	3,413.78	138.2%
Total COGS	164,631.61	164,665.31	-33.70	100.0%
Gross Profit	27,572.86	16,234.69	11,338.17	169.8%
Expense				
Administrative Expense	27,353.97	24,338.08	3,015.89	112.4%
Total Expense	27,353.97	24,338.08	3,015.89	112.4%
Net Ordinary Income	218.89	-8,103.39	8,322.28	-2.7%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
Laundry Love Program	-1,948.43	-3,600.00	1,651.57	54.1%
Community Dinners Program	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Rev. Faye Hogan Memorial	2,725.33	0.00	2,725.33	100.0%
Shields Bequest Income	224.70	0.00	224.70	100.0%
Blessing the Future	757.02	4,240.00	-3,482.98	17.9%
Building Fund Pledge Income	17,250.00	16,550.00	700.00	104.2%
Building Fund Loose Offering	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00	100.0%
Building Account Interest	149.35	0.00	149.35	100.0%
Flower Bed Fund Income	20.31	0.00	20.31	100.0%
McLeod Fund Interest	155.04	0.00	155.04	100.0%
Endowment Income	8,369.08	1,200.00	7,169.08	697.4%
Clergy Funds Income	6,589.63	0.00	6,589.63	100.0%
Vestry Restricted Fund Income	850.59	0.00	850.59	100.0%
Total Other Income	37,642.62	18,390.00	19,252.62	204.7%
Other Expense				
Building Repairs	11,663.72	0.00	11,663.72	100.0%
Clergy Funds Expenses	5,375.51	0.00	5,375.51	100.0%

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
January through December 2025

	Jan - Dec 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Ask My Accountant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Total Other Expense	17,039.23	0.00	17,039.23	100.0%
Net Other Income	20,603.39	18,390.00	2,213.39	112.0%
Net Income	20,822.28	10,286.61	10,535.67	202.4%

2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church 2026 Proposed Budget

	2025 Budget	2026 Proposed Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Total Abundance Shop	45,000.00	54,000.00
Annual Pledge Income	115,000.00	145,700.00
Total Loose Offering	19,500.00	50,545.00
Total Flowers	500.00	515.00
Total Fund Raising Activities	900.00	927.00
Honoraria	0.00	0.00
Memorial Gifts	0.00	0.00
Interest Income	0.00	1,200.00
Total Income	180,900.00	252,887.00
Direct Service Costs		
Total Church Building Expense	21,430.25	27,828.16
Total Church Land Support	6,125.00	6,263.75
Total Church Program Expenses	3,250.00	4,306.00
Total Education & Study	700.00	2,706.00
Total Music Ministry	17,300.70	18,745.00
Total Outreach Expense	18,090.00	29,039.66
Total Priest-in- Charge Expenses	86,835.50	121,160.00
Total Supply Clergy Expense	2,000.00	1,500.00
Total Worship, Prayer & Spirituality	8,933.86	10,790.04
Total Direct Service Costs	164,665.31	222,338.61
Gross Profit	16,234.69	30,548.39
Administrative Expense		
Total Administrative Expense	24,338.08	28,850.58
Total Expense	24,338.08	28,850.58
Net Ordinary Income	(8,103.39)	1,697.82

PRESIDING WARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

My role as Presiding Warden, what the Canons of the Episcopal Church call the Senior Warden, is to serve as a lay partner to our Priest-in-Charge. This includes organizing and facilitating Vestry meetings, helping set agendas, serving as the primary lay point of contact with the bishop and diocese, sharing responsibility for parish property, ensuring continuity of leadership when needed, and supporting the Vestry in fulfilling its canonical responsibilities for governance, finance, and property. The Presiding Warden is appointed from the Vestry by the Priest-in-Charge, while the People's Warden, currently Michael Lucas, is selected by the Vestry. Of course, like everything at St. Benedict's, our work depends on the dedication of many people, both on the Vestry and throughout the congregation, but the Presiding Warden has a particular job.

This past year was an eventful one in exercising these responsibilities!

Earlier in the year, we extended the lease for the Abundance Shop for another five years, committing us to the current location through June 2031. With the help of John Cribb, a former parishioner with local real estate expertise, the Vestry discerned that this space remains the best available option at the right price point, and that relocating the shop was not feasible in the near term.

Shortly thereafter, Laura Gaither unexpectedly resigned as manager of the Abundance Shop. The Vestry faced a compressed timeline to address both leadership and operational needs. While we considered temporarily closing the shop, we discerned a path that allowed it to remain open with reduced hours during the search process. We received strong applications and were delighted when Patti Toews accepted the position. She brings valuable skills and experience and is already making a meaningful difference. I am deeply grateful to Patti for saying "Yes!", and to Esta Kandarian for continuing to support the shop through the end of the year.

Over the summer, Linzi+ shared that serving two congregations simultaneously was no longer sustainable and that she planned to conclude her ministry with St. Luke's, Atascadero. This prompted the Vestry to evaluate whether we could increase Linzi+'s call to full-time. Through a combination of existing funds, new pledges, and generous gifts from several parishioners, we identified approximately \$35,000 per year to support this change for the next three years. Bishop Lucinda met with the Vestry and, after prayerful and detailed discussion and discernment, endorsed the plan. This fall, Bishop Lucinda, Linzi+, and I signed a new Letter of Agreement, enabling Linzi+ to serve St. Benedict's full-time beginning January 1. The Vestry also intends to work this year toward calling Linzi+ as our permanent Rector, and we will share more about that process in the months ahead.

Alongside these major decisions, the Vestry attended to many behind-the-scenes operational details essential to parish life. After paying off our mortgage at the end of 2024, our treasurer, Lisa Gonzalez, proposed consolidating our banking with Mechanics Bank, which has a local branch and better supports the Abundance Shop's needs. The Vestry also worked closely on worship and event planning, budget development, financial review, and facilities care. The Building and Grounds Committee addressed several important projects, with special thanks to Michael Lucas for work on sanctuary and kitchen floors and for coordinating termite tenting. Looking ahead, we anticipate several significant building projects, including parking lot repairs, addressing dry rot, and beginning work on a long-term master plan for the property we steward.

While much of this work is practical, it is also deeply spiritual. We attend to finances, buildings, and staffing so that St. Benedict's can continue its life-giving ministries and support those who serve as our employees: Linzi+, Paul, Hannah-Jay, Celeste, and Patti. We strive to do this work prayerfully, collaboratively, and in ways that invite many voices into the conversation. If you have ideas for things you'd like to see happen in our parish, things you're curious about, or ways that you would like to participate more deeply (or at least learn about), please let me or another Vestry member know.

I am so grateful for the growth and renewed energy St. Benedict's is experiencing, and for the extraordinary generosity of this community. Thank you for your faithfulness, trust, and willingness to say "Yes!" as we work together to make God's Kingdom more visible in Los Osos.

Faithfully,
Brian Spolarich

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE ANNUAL REPORT

Dear People of St. Benedict's,

I submit this report as your full-time priest in 2026, and I could not be more delighted to be doing so!

Last year I served St. Benedict's in a $\frac{3}{4}$ time capacity. In addition to ensuring the continuity of many long-established offerings at St. Ben's, what's noted below have been particular areas of focus:

Liturgy:

I was, and continue to be, enormously grateful for the dedicated and proactive support of St. Ben's Liturgy Committee in 2025. Thank you!

Towards the end of last year, service bulletin production, which for years has been faithfully undertaken by Jen Muse and Cathy Gildea, transitioned into the parish office. Hannah has now taken on the task of formatting the bulletin for Sunday worship (and all other services). The seamless transfer of this task was only possible because of the immense amount of thought and care taken to establish a robust system at St. Ben's for bulletin production. St. Ben's owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Cathy and Jen for creating this system, and the process which makes weekly bulletin production as pain-free as I believe it can be! Thank you to Hannah for taking this on, and thank you to Jen and Cathy for *years* of service, and for creating an amazing legacy system for bulletin production and archiving that will be a foundational part of the process here at St. Ben's long into the future.

Worship & Prayer:

Having first started during Lent, 2025, Morning Prayer took a break over the summer and then resumed in September. Morning Prayer (Monday-Friday) has become a stable, reliable, and foundational spiritual practice at St. Ben's, offering a way for folks to pray together, talk together, and deepen relationships, each weekday morning at 8:30am on zoom. Regular attendance averages 10-12, and as many as 20-25 folks attend as they are able. I consider the offering of daily prayer to be a vital part of parish life, and discipleship formation, so I'm delighted St. Ben's can now say weekday Morning Prayer is part of the life and mission of this parish.

In 2025, St. Ben's observed the full Triduum as the culmination of Holy Week: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. St. Peter's joined us for Maundy Thursday, and St. Stephen's joined us for the Easter Vigil – at which the parish shared in the great joy of Jeff

Meyer's baptism! Thanks be to God! Thank you to all who served, read, and sang for these services, Holy Week is a tremendous undertaking and is only possible with the broad participation of so many folks. Thank you to Paul for a music program that carried our liturgies so exquisitely and meaningfully, thank you to the choir, and thank you to Alan and Brian for canting; thank you to the Altar and Flower guilds for preparing and making the sanctuary beautiful to behold; and thank you to Sandy for tending the new fire of Easter!

St. Ben's welcomed many new and familiar faces into church for Christmas, great thanks to the ushers for offering St. Ben's hospitality to all who came! We had joy-filled liturgies on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The worship space looked incredible! Great thanks to the Altar Guild and to the Flower Guild for all your dedication and creativity, and thanks to Paul and the choir, and to St. Ben's readers for co-creating a meaningful liturgical experience for all, especially those unfamiliar with the customs of the Episcopal Church.

I also want to thank our acolyte, Payton, for her faithful presence! It is *always* joy to serve alongside you!!

Community

New this year, were *Coffee Hour Conversations* in the time after worship; an opportunity for us to talk together and learn together in the context of a curated conversation. We talked about why we worship the way we do; during the Season of Creation we gathered to talk about the role of the church in responding to the climate crisis, and how we might lean into our spiritual heritage to discern a way forward, and Don gathered us for a conversation about what the natural world is telling us about climate change. Later in the year this time of conversation focused on our collective hopes for the life and mission of St. Ben's in 2026; we had time to discuss parish finances, and walk through the proposed 2026 parish budget.

Coffee Hour Conversations will be back in 2026!

St. Ben's gathered for table fellowship at the Star Party in January; we shared an Agape Meal with the folks at St. Peter's (on Maundy Thursday) in April; in June, Alan and Brian opened their home for a Newcomer's Gathering (thank you, Alan and Brian!); in November, St. Ben's celebrated all ministry leaders and volunteers at the Gratitude Dinner, and later that month, friends and family were invited to gather at St. Ben's for Thanksgiving Dinner ... and, of course, St. Ben's kept its famous Potluck Sunday going throughout the year on the first Sunday of every month! St. Ben's is blessed to have so many folks who are called to serve this community in hospitality ministries (thank you to everyone who has set-up, brought food, and cleared up after a gathering!) – I am especially grateful to Barbara Hirahara for her care of St. Ben's kitchen space, her organization of our weekly coffee hour hosts, her willingness to coordinate our table fellowship events, and for her love of building community through food and hospitality – thank you, Barbara!

St. Ben's monthly vestry meetings have been offered me a meaningful time in community, and tremendous support throughout the year. I have been inspired by the love each member of the vestry has for St. Ben's, and I've been energized for the work of church by the enthusiasm each person has for this new chapter of the parish's life. Thank you, vestry! And special thanks to Presiding Warden, Brian Spolarich, for your companionship and counsel this year.

The Abundance Shop

This year the Abundance Shop celebrated 30 years of service to the Los Osos community!

... and there was a great deal of transition at the Abundance Shop in 2025. In April, Laura Gaither joined the shop as Manager, working alongside Esta in anticipation of Esta's retirement. Laura brought her many years of experience in the consignment/antique/thrift sector to the shop, and we learned a great deal from her leadership while she was with us. In September, Laura made the difficult decision to step away from this role to focus on her health.

Our collective prayers were answered, when, after a search process which offered up many wonderful candidates, Patti Toews accepted the vestry's offer to jump on-board and serve as the shop's new manager. Patti started work at the shop in early December.

After many years as a truly glorious and rather organic community effort, part of Patti's charge is to build some organizational structure for the shop, to offer it stability through clarity of process. As faithful volunteers age, retire, or deal with increasing mobility issues, it's critical the shop can withstand shifts in its volunteer base and staff.

To support Patti's work, the vestry developed both Mission and Vision statements to guide the development of Policies and Procedures:

MISSION STATEMENT

As a ministry of St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, The Abundance Shop is a neighborhood of donors, volunteers, goods, and services for the Los Osos community, a place where people gather to share our common abundance.

VISION STATEMENT

The Abundance Shop seeks social, economic, and environmental justice through our love of neighbor and the useful transformation of time and merchandise.

Finally ... in December, Patti gathered the volunteer team and folks from St. Ben's so we could all say a collective and heartfelt ****THANK YOU**** and celebrate the remarkable service of Esta Kandarian as she retired!

The Abundance Shop and St. Benedict's will always be indebted to Esta for her time at the shop, her leadership, her wisdom, and her care of this ministry. Thank you, Esta!!!

Celebrations of Life

In 2025, St. Benedict's offered Burial liturgies for these beloved folks:

- January 5, Michele Fellows
- March 9, Judy Schloss
- July 26, Kevin Cadigan
- August 1, Bobbie Shields
- August 16, Brian McHugh

I begin this new year in joy, with hope – and infused with great gratitude for having been invited into this remarkable faith community!

Respectfully submitted, with love -
Linzi+

PEOPLE'S WARDEN REPORT

The role of the People's Warden is to support the Priest and Presiding Warden and to be the primary person for taking care of the building and grounds. 2025 again showed that to maintain the outstanding beauty of our eighty-year-old/twenty-five-year-old structure and stunning grounds requires a large number of people and moving parts. I am especially indebted to the work of Ron Thompson on our infrastructure in the ground and St. Francis Garden, Liz Maruska on the care of the Vernada and bulb gardens, JW for his volunteering in continued mowing and taking care of interior areas, Jane Wu for her expertise in projects and costs, and Barbara Hirahara for her guidance in the care of the kitchen. Hannah has been an outstanding staff person in keeping records and taking care of some key maintenance issues.

With the arrival of Linzi+ as $\frac{3}{4}$ time priest, we had a chance to rethink ways we manage the mission of the church we have had some distribution of duties. In terms of support for the mission and programs I set up the calendar for guest preachers and use of lay leaders in preaching or reflections over the year and have begun the planning of the 2026 calendar. Sandy Fisher and I are licensed lay preachers- thank you Sandy for your vision, and we had the gifts of Brian Spolarich, Lisa Gonzalez, Berkeley Johnson, Don Maruska, and Rev. Mike Eggleston to provide reflections- thanks to you all as we transitioned to having Linzi+ lead us full time in 2026! Rev. Dr. Caro Hall+, Sister Greta Ronningen+, Brother Dennis Gibbs+, and Rev. Karen Sigfried+ also spoke to us and allowed for us to receive the Eucharist when Linzi+ was away or serving St. Luke's. I did some minor maintenance/fixups work at the Abundance Shop and helped staff the counter on our days serving at People's Kitchen at Prado Day Center.

In terms of the traditional role, I initiated a monthly Buildings and Grounds report for Vestry that outlines current and expected projects and expected scale of costs. This is a work in progress toward making an annual calendar of usual and anticipated costs and work as well as larger expenses that we might anticipate due to the age and construction of our building. We have been typically reacting to most of these issues, and this will let us plan more effectively and use our resources wisely. Jane Wu has been instrumental in helping frame these issues and work with our Finance Committee.

2025 brought about some new unexpected challenges. We discovered we had termites, which for a 25-year-old wood building in our area is not uncommon. We received three bids, and Key Termite was the bidder selected. We had areas identified and treated and we tented the whole building in May, all without impacting our worship schedule. After consulting with four bidders, we initiated a new contract for control of landscape critters with Eco-Advantage who also take care of the cemetery lawns across Los Osos Valley Road. We moved from a contractor cutting our lawns to having JW cut them, including the difficult perimeter cutting for fire mitigation. JW procured a new mower for us as well- thank you JW!

In May we were able to get the final approvals from all parties and officially operate our solar array, a long process of reviews and approvals begun several years ago under Rev. Caro Hall+. Ours is a system leased through non-profit firm RE-volv and includes a long-term payment schedule. RE-volv were able to utilize federal solar tax credits not available to churches and provide us with a lower cost electrical service than previously through PGE. While we will not see savings over 2024/2025 continue in the long term, we will pay a lower rate than through PGE and own the system by 2045. Re-volv takes care of any maintenance or repairs over the 20-year term. Linzi+ blessed the system in October during a special post-service event that Don Maruska and the Earthcare group put together which had regional coverage in various media.

In Spring, St Ben's member Celeste Pennington retired as our custodian for cleaning the long room, sanctuary, and Snowy Egret side offices and spaces. Thank you, Celeste, for your care of us for so many years! After consultation with several local churches, we looked at several models and costs structures and decided to go with a local cleaner hired through Coverall, a larger professional service provider. Coverall does all the insurance and screening required by our Diocese and we have been very happy with the work of Rubin Uribe, a Los Osos resident- thank you Rubin! JW continues to clean the Los Osos Valley Road spaces and Barbara Hirahara the kitchen- thank you JW and Barbara!

Several larger costs items were not addressed in 2025 have been moved into 2026, and the congregation should be aware of them. First, the wood exterior trim, veranda railings, and especially the window exterior sills [the exterior siding is cement board] are prone to dry rot and require periodic repair/replacement/repainting. While this has been addressed in previous work across the years, several larger areas require attention soon and possible repainting of the siding apart from the veranda is a good practice at this point as well. Second, our parking lot needs some attention- either a surface sealing that may last a few years or a major resurfacing similar to what was done in collaboration with our neighbors to our private Snowy Egret Drive in 2022.

Among her many gifts, Linzi+ has also brought a new perspective on the way we use our spaces, especially regarding an anticipated larger pastoral role and difficulties of many of our congregation with stairs to the former study loft. It is a good time to consider a new and updated Master Plan to the one St. Ben conducted as outcome of the 2017-37 Strategic Plan. Among other issues, we have several remembrance trees promised that need sited within a larger plan and may wish to look at issues like a possible columbarium to the west, and use of the large fields to our east, as well as rethinking use of some spaces we already have and expanded parking. This Master Planning is an endeavor that requires us all to stop and think and dream in 2026.

If you would like to be a part of any of these adventures, please contact Linzi+ or me, and your skills, talents and discernment are welcome! - Michael Lucas

ALTAR GUILD REPORT

This has been an amazing year for me. I've learned so much more than last year. I'm able to answer questions about Altar Guild and "fix" things that come up. Thank you to our Altar Guild members: Sarah Chesebro, Lisa Gonzalez, Pat Stoneman, Elaine Beckham, JW and Letty Cotta (who will be back up and running in no time). You all make this such a rewarding experience, and are a huge blessing to the church.

We are back to using the common cup only, and we are using red wine instead of white. Again, thank you to Alan Kiste for making the bread every month. It makes a huge difference in the Eucharist.

We are having staining issues with the red wine on the small linens that we are working out, so it's easier for the Altar Guild to clean them. We are purchasing new small linens to replace the ones that are worn out. A BIG thank you to Elaine Beckham for faithfully cleaning and pressing the linens for us.

I also want to say a BIG thank you to Lisa Gonzalez for purchasing the wine when we run low. She's done this faithfully for quite a while.

Not much else has changed in Altar Guild. I've been learning the "changing of the colors" in case Sarah Chesebro is unavailable. I love learning more and more about the setting up of the church and their meanings.

Thank you for continuing to put your trust in my leadership. I continue to look forward to serving in this ministry for many years to come.

If you are at all interested in becoming an Altar Guild member, please reach out to me.

Blessings to you all,
Diana Hammerlund
Director of Altar Guild

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The Membership committee has not met formally this year. However, the greeters/ushers continued to extend a warm welcome to newcomers and existing members as they entered our doors.

We appreciate Barbara Schippers who has continued to write and send out cards to new people attending our services.

Since we have not met formally over the past two years, it may be time to dismantle this committee. Our parish might be better served by continuing to welcome newcomers and regular attenders as we have been doing so with our greeters. We also would continue to be well served by Barbara Schippers continuing written correspondence with newcomers. If anyone would like to join Barbara with written correspondence, I am sure she would welcome your assistance.

Serving Together,
Barbara Schippers
Sandy Fisher

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE REPORT

The landscape benefitted from cutting back the bushes in front of the verandah so there are lots of new pink blossoms. The hanging baskets were replanted in November to refresh the blooms. Michael Lucas trimmed back other areas of the garden to great effect. Some new rock roses were planted by the gardeners to fill in the gaps. The paperwhite narcissus are already blooming as are some of the February Gold small flowered narcissus in front of the verandah. Ron and the gardeners have been looking after the St Francis garden.

The trees that were donated by EcoSlo continue to grow apace and add a lot to the landscape.

Thanks for your interest and support of the gardens of St Benedict's church.

Liz Maruska

COMMUNITY DINNERS REPORT

This program has served over 46 thousand meals since it began in 2018, and continues to serve dinner every Wednesday from 5:00 to 6:00 to anyone who is hungry.

Eight years ago St. Benedict's became aware of a need to feed folks in our community. To better care for and provide for our community St. Ben's began the Community Dinner program which offers dinner to anyone wanting a meal. Over the years St. Benedict's Church partnered

with other like-minded organizations, and together we have served over 5700 dinners at the Los Osos Community Center this year, and over 46,000 meals total in those 8 years. What started in 2018 as St. Ben's serving potluck meals to a small group of 20, has grown to providing over 120 plus meals each Wednesday.

Every week the dining room is set up with tables and chairs at the Los Osos Community Center where folks can sit together while socializing and enjoying their meal. Meals are also served "to go" and some folks ask to take home more than one meal, either to enjoy the following day or to share with a friend or a neighbor. The Wednesday meals are provided alternately by several of the service organizations and churches in Los Osos...each taking a weekly turn. Los Osos Cares helps with coordinating and provides ingredients from their pantry when needed.

When it's our turn to prepare and serve the food St. Ben's asks for volunteers to provide the side dishes that accompany the main course prepared by St. Ben's kitchen staff.

There are people in our congregation who continually volunteer to provide generously when asked to help. They are very much appreciated, both by the folks enjoying the meals, and also by the kitchen staff who value their help providing the over 120 meals.

From its early beginnings Maureen Titus and Barbara Schippers have cooked seasonal favorites...enchiladas, tacos, chili dogs, stews, pasta dishes and lasagnas. We've also, upon occasion, served pizza from Costco. The side dishes, green beans or other vegetables, potato salad or cole-slaw, sometimes fresh fruit cups, garlic bread or chips are contributed by those in our congregation who raise their hands and volunteer.

St. Benedict's hopes to continue providing meals to whomever wants a free, hot and tasty meal. This program contributes to our church's community wide outreach. **WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE** in the lives of seniors, single moms, single men, the un-housed and the hungry in Los Osos by providing a dinner 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 next year ahead.

Best wishes and thanks to all who participate.

Amen!

Barbara Schippers for St. Benedict's Community Dinners Outreach

LAUNDRY LOVE PROGRAM REPORT

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. Most participants, both housed and unhoused, are from Los Osos. LL volunteers are members of St. Benedict's and people from the wider community. LL offers two shifts, from 11:00 – 1:00 and 4:00 – 6:00. At the later shift members Roz and Jim Malone generously provide pizza and protein bars. Guests enjoy the pizza enthusiastically – for some it is the only meal they have that day.

Our local Laundry Love is a member of a national organization that offers thorough information on how to start and maintain a LL, ideas for fundraising, listing on a website of participating locations, quarterly Zoom meetings, and free Earth Breeze detergent sheets – no plastic bottles or pods needed!

From January to December 2025, we spent \$4,564.00, an average of \$380 a month. We served 293 people and did 658 loads of wash. This monthly service to our neighbors is rather expensive. A load of wash costs from \$3.50 to \$8.00 and dryer time is 25 cents for 4 minutes (!). We have been funded by grants, which are time-limited, and individual donations.

Speaking of \$\$, a special shout-out to Maureen Titus who is our two bit bookkeeper (two bits is a quarter :)). After each Laundry Love, Maureen does her best to balance the books, no mean feat since we start each month with hundreds of dollars in quarters. Some quarters are so banged up the machines won't accept them. Some quarters are Canadian (not many of these coming to the States anymore). Some get dropped and roll under machines – etc. Maureen is like the woman in the parable of the lost coins – searching diligently until she finds – most of them. Thank you, Maureen!

As with most non-profit services, the need for funding is ongoing. The need for an infusion of volunteers is also very real – also true of nonprofits as most everyone at St. Benedict's can attest. Do you have a few dollars to spare once a month, a couple of hours? However you participate when you reach out to your neighbors, you are doing God's work. You might be the only Gospel your neighbor hears this month.

Submitted by Alice Welchert

EARTHCARE ANNUAL REPORT

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.

- In 2025 Earthcare sponsored an IPL (Interfaith Power and Light) online program for the month of July titled "How to Avoid Plastics". The self-guided (daily) sessions enabled participants to become familiar with the incredibly invasive role of plastics in our environment, e.g., the body of every human being on Earth contains the equivalent of a credit-card amount of plastic in his/her body. Several members of Earthcare participated in the program.
- Overall, however, 2025 was not a typically active year for Earthcare. Realizing this, the Earthcare committee used the last meeting of the year to look forward to a more activist and meaningful 2026.

A recurring theme in this wide-ranging discussion was the need to de-couple creation care thinking from our culture's overly pragmatic habit of compartmentalizing solutions, including relying on yet more technological solutions- thus often worsening the problem. It was noted that re-visioning creation care should focus on a vision of nature as a living whole rather than as a series of isolated problems-to-solve, as seen in the approach to nature in the creativity of indigenous people.

After a wide-ranging discussion, the group agreed on the following action item: the scheduling of three once-a-month coffee hour presentations on creation care led by Linzi+: Feb 15th, March 22d, and April 19th. These presentations would lead up to the celebration of Earth Day, April 22d, with an appropriate liturgy (TBD) on Earth Day Sunday, April 26th. The content of the presentations would be, in effect, a re-visioning of Earthcare as a source of spiritual ideas and practices, in which political action would be a byproduct- not the primary goal- of this spiritual vision and practice. The proposed coffee hour presentations will be the first step in this reorientation process. Earthcare, in other words, is planning for 2026 to be a year of renewal. Please consider joining us in this effort

Submitted by Bob Pelfrey

PRAYER AND PASTORAL CARE REPORT

This has been a year of transition at St Benedict's Church, and with that comes change.

I've been thinking about some questions as St Benedict's begins a new year together.

What exactly does Pastoral Care mean?

How do we love and care for each other when there are needs that require extra help and attention?

How can we make this ministry more visible and more helpful for our community?

How might each of us meaningfully participate in pastoral care?

Submitted by Helen Schnieders

FLOWER GUILD REPORT

St Ben's. The year started with the Feast of Epiphany and the Three Kings Star Party. The joyful Christmas flower arrangements of the previous year were removed to make way for flowers of Epiphany. The following month, for Ash Wednesday, then Lent, flowers stopped being used, and were replaced with a group of twigs, dry straw and the like gathered for the altar arrangement.

Forty days later, palm and foxtails were arranged for a Palm Sunday display. At Easter, lilies were brought to church for the first time in several years. That was exciting! A collection of cheerful spring flower window arrangements were prepared. A variety of white flower arrangements appeared the remainder of Eastertide, until Pentecost with red flowers.

Then, for more than 20 weeks, Flower Guild members brought a variety of arrangements to brighten the church, with the exception for the Feast of All Saints Day and All Souls Day, which were represented with a bouquet of white flowers. With the conclusion of Pentecost and the welcoming of Advent, we used greenery. Pink alstroemeria were tucked into the greenery for Gaudete Sunday, and for the gentle Blue Christmas evening service, green spurge plants in two small vases were used. Christmas Eve's service was graced with a large arrangement of white mums and carnations in the company of candlelit window arrangements of holly, small mums and berries. Poinsettia flowers huddled next to the crèche. Christmastide continues into the next year.

For all these 52 weeks, a team of 5 Flower Guild members search out the best flowers to beautify St. Ben's Church for all to enjoy during their time of worship. Arrangements take time to create. While we enjoy making the best bouquets, we do appreciate hearing the congregation's compliments. If someone is interested in completing an arrangement once in a while, anyone of us would be happy to explain the colors of the liturgical year and the selection of flowers we use. Most everyone brings to their home prearranged bouquets from the store. Please consider doing the same with us.

We couldn't complete our special arrangements without the wonderful help of our holly gatherers, Ron Thompson and Jim Malone. Michael Lucas hung the Christmas wreaths again.

Flower Guild members are Elaine Beckham, Pamela Bleisch, Sarah Chesebro, Brian Spolarich and myself.

With gratitude,
Sharon Porter,
St. Ben's Flower Guild Director

MUSIC REPORT

2025 wrapped up another fun year for the music at St. Benedict's. We remain blessed to have folks willing to share their offerings of music, voice, and song in our worship services, with a special shout-out to our choir folks. As we start off the new year, we continue to welcome those that wish to add to our joyful noise. The best way to learn is to do; no experience is necessary, just a willingness to come over and join us in song. We make things as accessible as we can (practice tracks available!)

Many of our schedules in this day and age are quite full with work, school, family, friends, medical things, and game-nights; I acknowledge that reality when inviting folks to join the choir. As much as it's great to have a solid core of singers who can make choir-practice nights, rain or shine, (and I am very grateful for that), there is a large circle of folks that have expressed a love of and interest in singing with the choir but who can't make things consistently work in their schedule. None the less, the invitation remains.

I would encourage you to pop in to the occasional choir practice on Thursday evenings, when circumstance allows, just for the fellowship and fun of things, even if you aren't able to sing with us regularly and can't make commitments. Some of us don't drive at night or when the weather is particularly wet, but carpools may be available. Similarly, I invite you to join us on Sunday mornings when we meet around an hour before the service to look at the hymns, chants, and psalms of the service, even if you haven't learned the choir anthem. Singing is fun, and fellowship is a joy, however and to whatever degree you're able to and want to participate.

As a quick note: we don't meet early /every/ Sunday, and sometimes choir practice is off a particular week, so touch base with me if you want to be kept in on the loop and I'll do my best to keep you up to date.

I look forward to making a joyful noise with y'all again this year,

Paul Burkle

DISCOVERY TEAM REPORT

As a reminder, the Discovery Team was started 3+ years ago for the purpose of building connections between the parish and the community in order for the congregation to turn outwards. We have endeavored to explore what needs the community expresses so the congregation can serve in new ways. In short, take the church outside the walls.

This past year we have hosted tables at the Pride event and Oktoberfest. We also organized Ashes to Go and Blessing of the Animals at The Abundance Shop. The congregational support at these events has been well attended.

The piece that was missing this year was “prayer pop ups” which took place in front of the Abundance Shop. These popups have been well attended by the community in the past where we shared coffee, snacks, conversation, and prayer for those who wanted it. However, it wasn’t possible to organize and populate these pop ups with just 2 people on the team.

We are asking the entire congregation the following questions: Is God calling St.Benedicts to continue the ministry of the Discovery Team? If so, how do we move forward from here? If God wants the ministry of the Discovery Team to continue with events and bring the pop ups back, we will need new leadership. We will need the continued support of the entire congregation. We are asking you to spend some time in prayer for wisdom and discernment as to what God wants to do with the Discovery Team at St. Ben’s. Is God calling us to dissolve this ministry for something new? Ask the Holy Spirit if you are called to be an active member of the leadership team that organizes these events.

Barbara Hirahara and Sandy Fisher will always be available for information and support. It has been a privilege to serve on the Discovery Team. Let’s see what the Holy Spirit does next in the ways we connect with our community.

Respectfully Submitted
Barbara Hirahara
Sandy Fisher

LITURGY COMMITTEE REPORT

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

The Committee presently consists of the following members:

The Rev. Linzi Stahlecker – Priest-in-Charge
Hannah-Jaye Matthews – Editor
John Horsely – Hymnist
Bryson McKelvey – Proofreader
Paul Burkle – Musician
Sarah Chesebro - Convenor

Notes about Committee roles:

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

Resources for developing Worship Services:

- The services will be developed using the Book of Common Prayer, Enriching our Worship, The Iona Abbey Worship Book, Book of Occasional Services, New Zealand Prayer Book, and Clouds and Glory Prayers of the Church Year.
- Sources of music will be: The 1982 Hymnal, Lift Every Voice and Sing, Wonder Love and Praise and Liturgy Music Resource.

Prior to and during the Interregnum a Liturgy Committee was formed to develop the service bulletins. A formal “Process for Creating Weekly Service Bulletins” was developed by Cathy Gildea and Jen Smith for which we owe much gratitude. As a result, our Administrative Assistant, Hannah-Jaye, is now the Editor of the Service Bulletins and teams up with Linzi+, John, Bryson and Paul on a weekly basis.

The Liturgy Committee now meets on a Seasonal basis rather than weekly.

Many thanks to others who have participated in the Liturgy Committee over the last several years and contributed much:

The Rev Judy Stevens
The Rev Jen Crompton
The Rev Jerry Walton
Jane Wu
Roz Malone
Cathy Gildea
Jen Smith

We are blessed to have a team of Supply Priests and Lay Worship Leaders when Linzi+ is on scheduled leave or simply needs a rest including:

The Rev. Karen Siegfried
Sister Greta Ronningen
The Rev. Michael Eggleston
Chaplain Berkeley Johnson
Brian Spolarich
Lisa Gonzalez
Sandy Fisher
Michael Lucas

Paul Burkle, our musician, continues to delight us with his Original Improvisations during the prelude, Eucharist, and postlude. Many thanks and gratitude to Ann Lucas who continues to grace us with her talents on the piano and organ when Paul is on break. The Saint Benedict's Choir is such a gift – Thank you, thank you, thank you.

This past year:

- Linzi+ held a discussion about receiving the Common Cup during Communion.
- We Changed from White Port to Ruby Port for Communion wine.

Please look forward to the following this year:

- Meeting with the Eucharistic Ministers and Altar Guild Members with Linzi+.
- New protocol for adding names to the Bidding Book.

Peace and Love,
Sarah Chesebro

SACRISTAN MINISTRY REPORT

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.

Together the Altar Guild, Flower Guild and Sacristan create a welcoming space for all those who enter our Sanctuary. This year our team leaders, including Diana Hammerlund, Sharon Porter and myself, have worked closely together to help Rev Linzi create her own vision for how those entering into our worship space should be welcomed and enjoy the Liturgy, Celebration of the Eucharist and Love of God.

In 2025:

- The blonde wooden chairs have been removed from the Sanctuary to give the space a less cluttered look. This also brings attention to the wood paneling that was part of the original Camp Robert's Chapel. (We now need to find a home for the chairs as they are residing in the loft.)
- A new ceramic baptismal bowl has been lovingly gifted by Jim and Roz Malone. The bowl was purchased in the little community of Harmony by a local artist.
- Thank goodness for moveable pews! Linzi+ has wanted to create a more intimate space for smaller gatherings and has drawn the pews together in a diamond shape for such occasions as Blue Christmas and Transgender Day of Remembrance. This combined with the beautiful blue candle bowl and many votive candles creates a focal point for these services in our spacious sanctuary.
- The three green panels used during the Sundays after Pentecost and before Advent have been retired for the moment. The installation of the camera above the retable precludes the hangings from being used together. We are looking for ways to reuse these historic pieces of art.
- And, speaking of cameras: Our new system allows us to open the window shade behind the lectern allowing more light to enter our sacred space on Sunday mornings without the Ministers of the Word being backlit for those viewing the service on Facebook.
- As our congregation has grown, so has the need for coffee hour/meal space. Therefore, the Chapel has been repurposed to accommodate larger groups. However, for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, we plan to use the Chapel again for the Altar of Repose. An Altar of Repose is a temporary, beautifully decorated altar where consecrated hosts are placed after the Maundy Thursday Service, symbolizing Jesus' tomb and serving as a focal point for adoration until the Good Friday services when no Eucharist is celebrated.

- Our beautiful piano, donated by the late Ed Richards (local Jazz musician) and Elain Borden, has now been revealed by placing the pew that was in front of it behind it. This gives a focal point for those in the congregation facing North.
- And, many thanks go out to Troy, Rev Linzi's husband, who created a huge cross for our Good Friday Service to be used during the Veneration of the Cross.
- Troy and his sons also refurbished the bench that we use for the Nativity during the Christmas Season. So thankful for this. It is the perfect size, and we would have missed it/had to replace it otherwise.

I am looking forward to more creativity in our ever-evolving worship space.

Peace and Love,
Sarah Chesebro
Sacristan

EMERGENCY OUTREACH MINISTRY REPORT

This ministry had previously been administered by the Rector. During the interregnum, the Administrative Assistant, Senior Warden or Treasurer granted requests for emergency funds usually for rent, food or gas. Early in 2025 The Rev Linzi asked that I, as a member of the Vestry, temporarily administer the monies from the Rector's Discretionary Fund (RDF).

The RDF receives funds from designated gifts and the collection plate on the last Sunday of the month. The Abundance Shop collects donations for the RDF and includes them in the collection plate on the last Sunday of the month.

With the assistance of Jane Wu, guidance for granting requests for emergency funds from the RDF has been drafted, but still needs approval from the Vestry pending a few action items including

- A list of other local resources for people in need.
- Emergency Outreach Flier in English and Spanish including frequency of gifting

Since January of 2025, approximately \$2000 from the RDF has been distributed for residences of Los Osos, Morro Bay or Cayucos for rent; \$1,150 in food cards and \$400 in gas cards.

Gratitude goes out to Hannah-Jaye and Lisa Gonzalez who receive many of these Emergency Outreach requests. It is often heartbreaking to see the faces and/or hear their stories of those in need of funds, especially if we cannot fulfill their requests.

Sarah Chesebro

PRADO REPORT

For many years, St. Benedicts has provided meals and served at the People's Kitchen six times a year. We serve meals on the first Saturday of every even month from February through December. I certainly understand how challenging it can be to provide one more meal for all of our food ministries.... Community dinners, People's Kitchen, and Pot Luck Sundays.

Even though, we are a smaller group many of the other organizations who provide food, we are a successful participant. In 2025, we served 650 meals. We have received many compliments regarding the generous homemade meals that we provide.

In the past year, we have had a few new people step up to offer food or serve at Prado. It has been so helpful to be able to give those who regularly serve to have a break from participating every time. It is my hope and prayer that we will continue to have more folks who can join us a couple times a year at the People's Kitchen.

Connie Weldon

MEN'S BREAKFAST REPORT

Saint Benedict's men's breakfast group meets at 9am on the third Saturday of the month at Celia's restaurant on Los Osos Valley Road (across from the post office).

We currently have six men attending our informal get together. We invite you and a friend to join us Saturday 17January 2026. We have a seat for you.

Ron Thompson