

The Benediction

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

The Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall

Rector

The Rev. Barry Turner

Associate Priest

The Rev. Faye Hogan

Associate Priest

The Rev. Susan Plucker

Associate Priest

The Parish Council

Stef Shuman, Sr. *Warden*

Jane Wu, Jr. *Warden*

Lisa Gonzalez, *Treasurer*

Deb Garza

Diana Hammerlund

Steve Hirahara

Esta Kandarian

Alan Kiste

Michael Lucas

Lorienne Schwenk

Benediction Publisher:

The Rev. Dr. Caroline J. A. Hall

Benediction Editor:

Kit Gould, kit.gouldr@gmail.com

Sunday Services

Refreshments and fellowship follow service.

8:00 am Holy Communion
with inclusive language

10:30 am Holy Communion
with music

First Sunday of each month:

10:30 am One service of Holy
Communion with music

2nd & 4th Sunday of each month:

9:30 am Family 'Messy Church'

1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday each month:

10:30 am Children's Chapel

Church: 2220 Snowy Egret Lane

Los Osos, CA 93402

Mailing: PO Box 6877

Los Osos, CA 93412

(805) 528-0654

office@stbenslososos.org

www.stbenslososos.org

Dear Friends: When I lived in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, I would occasionally visit the village of Eyam in nearby Derbyshire and marvel at [the sacrifice made by the 1000 people who lived there in the 1660s](#). It was the time when the bubonic plague was decimating the people of Europe. The plague arrived in Eyam in a trunk of clothes from London. Rather than allow the plague to spread to the nearby cities of Manchester or Sheffield where thousands would die, as was happening in London, the clergy of the village persuaded the people to self-quarantine. Food was brought to them from outside the village and left at a particular stone, but the people themselves stayed home. Over the next year, a quarter of the villagers died, but the plague was contained.

I never dreamed that anything similar could happen in my lifetime. Yet here we are, sheltering at home in order to protect ourselves and our friends. And let's face it, it's getting old. I want to be able to hang out with you, I want to drop by and give you a hug... I want to get on with things. But the loving thing is to stay home, to wear a mask when I go out, to choose to limit my freedoms so that others may freely live.

It may be several months before we can open the Abundance Shop. It may be several months before we can all meet physically again as an expression of the Body of Christ in Los Osos. We may have to go on meeting on-line for much longer than we want to!

The frustrations and fears are mounting not just in our own minds but in those of our society. There are demands that we reopen stores, that we get on with things. But there is also the fear of infection as visitors come to the coast, staying in our motels, playing on our beaches, perhaps not keeping to the rules.

In this time of fear and anxiety it is easy to get caught up in it or to become depressed, especially for those of us who go easily to anxiety or depression. It is as though on some level we can hear the anxious, depressed and scared song of humanity and it is easy to start humming along.

But Jesus said, "You are the light of the world". We are the light, the salt, the hope, the resurrection people.

We know that God's love encompasses all. We know that we are held in the palm of his hand, that we are the apple of his eye. We know that Jesus gifted us with the peace that passes understanding. And that is our gift to humanity today.

Rather than humming along to the sad, scary music, Jesus is calling us to sing the hymns of hope and of joy. Jesus is calling us (changing the metaphor) to live as the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

This is a subtle thing. It really isn't about what we **do**, which is a good thing since we really can't do much, but about how we **are**, about how we use our thoughts. Whenever you find yourself humming to the scared song of the culture, or tapping your feet to the angry rhythms of the protesters and politicians, this is an opportunity to turn your mind to the songs of the resurrection, to the songs of hope and above all of peace.

Let us together breathe the peace of God into our world.

And now, may the peace of God which passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in the love and knowledge of his son, Jesus. Amen.



Caroline J. A. Hall

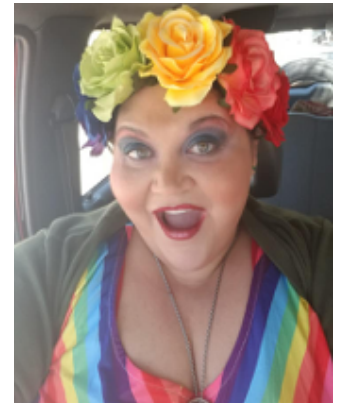


@StBens_LosOsos

Rachel Espinosa

Unexpectedly, Rachel died on Saturday April 25. Her heart stopped and we do not know why, but may know more after the autopsy. She has struggled with many health problems but this was a shocking surprise for everyone who knew her.

We remember her for her beautiful soprano voice, her enjoyment of her friends and her zest for life. Rachel was an important member of the choir and for several years attended Vespers regularly. She was a loyal friend and deeply caring person. She is greatly missed.



Finances

This is a scary time for the world as the economy tanks and small businesses in particular are closed indefinitely. As you know, St Benedict's operates on a shoestring, and depends for its income on your donations and the Abundance Shop. With the Abundance Shop shuttered, 30% of our income is not happening. With no plate being passed on Sundays it's easy for us to forget to support the work of the church.

We are very grateful for all of you who have continued to pay your pledges and your regular donations despite not coming to church. And we are grateful for a Payroll Protection Loan which will cover the loss of income from the shop for several months. Right now the church is paying its employees who are not working (Abundance Shop and Church-care) and hopes to be able to continue to do so. Our ability to continue to support our staff in this way depends upon your generosity.

Thank you to those of you who have made generous donations to the Rectors Discretionary Fund which make it possible for us to support those in our church community and beyond who are struggling at this time.

Highlights of the Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council met in retreat in February and reviewed the responses to the Mutual Ministry Review and our Mission statement, and Core Values.

The Council adopted some ambitious goals for 2020-22:

- Complete the fire-sprinkler system.
- Develop a membership/hospitality group to connect with visitors, facilitate participation of new members, and encourage fellowship and service between all members.
- Establish a Transition Team to plan for the Rector's retirement and search for a successor, determining the appropriate timeline and steps to the search process, documenting organizational structure, such as preparing a specific list of Caro's activities/responsibilities.
- Explore ways to budget for full-time clergy position; establish finance committee; focus on stewardship education & communication.

Normally financial statements and approved Parish Council minutes are posted on the noticeboard. If you would like a copy emailed to you please contact Stephanie in the office. (office@stbenslosos.org).

Sprinkler System

Thanks to the indefatigability of Jane Wu and Michael Lucas, a milestone has been reached in the saga of the fire sprinkler system.

The latest hitch was that the County required new drawings to bring the design up to the latest codes. The drawings have been drawn and stamped and approved and the permit should be issued by the time you read this!! Probably because of the recent wildfires, and possible because of a mistake made and buried in the mists of time we actually need more tanks. These will be appearing very soon.

Praise God!

Hollister Institute

Soul Feast – An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life

Interested in deepening your spiritual life in the company of like-minded people? Consider joining us for a discussion based on Marjorie Thompson's classic book Soul Feast.

This is not primarily a book study, rather it is a conversation about the issues and ideas raised by Thompson in the book and offers an opportunity for sharing and reflection. However, participants will have a more profound experience if they choose to purchase and engage with the book itself.

After each meeting, there will be suggestions for experimenting with a particular spiritual practice and the group will include reflection on our individual experiences with the spiritual practice from the previous week. Nonetheless, if you are unable to participate in one or more sessions please come anyway, the conversation promises to be rich and fruitful. **Tuesdays at 10:15am following Prayers for the Morning at 9:45am.**

- May 5 Hunger and Thirst for the Spirit
- May 12 Chewing the Bread of the Word
- May 19 Communication and Communion with God
- May 26 Gathered in the Spirit
- June 2 Reclaiming Sabbath Time
- June 9 The Practice of Self-emptying
- June 16 Of Conscience and Consciousness
- June 23 Companions on the Journey
- June 30 Entertaining Angels Unawares
- July 7 Developing A Rule of Life

This conversation will be led by Rev. Carol Brubaker Walton and Caro+.

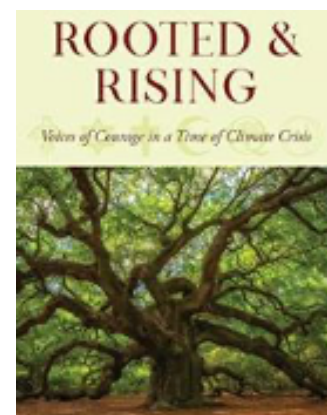
<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/89760080012> or call 669 900 6833 meeting ID 897 6008 0012

Rooted and Rising – a book discussion, Thursdays at 2pm starting May 14

This fascinating book draws together stories from people of a wide range of different faith perspectives about how they keep themselves encouraged and hopeful in a time of climate crisis. There is lament, as there must be, but there is also courage, resilience, and action. The authors write:

We challenged our colleagues in the faith-and-climate movement to join us in sharing their stories of struggle and strength and to give us a glimpse of what sustains them when they are frustrated, depressed or despondent. We wanted to hear about their sources of hope and to learn what keeps them going in the struggle for a just and sustainable future.

Each of the writers in this volume is dedicating their energy and their vision to finding solutions to the climate crisis and to serving the common good. It is not about facts and



figures but about the people who are responding to the call to work for change. As the authors say,

This is a book about personal stories and testimony, about witnessing to what we love, what we yearn for, what we mourn, and what we are fiercely committed to protecting.

Each section of the book includes three essays and then suggestions for spiritual practice. One section will be covered each week:

- May 14: Rooting in Interfaith Friendship
- May 21: Rising in Local Action
- May 28: Rooting Science and Policy in Faith and Spirituality
- June 4: Rising from the Margins
- June 11: Rooting in Liturgy, Moral Vision, and Vocation
- June 18: Uprooted, Replanted and Rising
- June 25: Grief, Love, and Trees

The discussion will be led by members of the Earthcare group on Zoom; <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81626646241> or call 669 900 6833 meeting ID 816 2664 6241

Being Church when the church is closed

A big thank you to everyone who participates in our on-line community. It is a stretch for us, but connecting through live-streaming on Facebook and chatting on Zoom, really does keep us closer. If you are having trouble connecting please let us know and we will do our best to help you find your way in. We want to worship with you.

We are the Body of Christ even when we cannot meet for worship and if you are feeling disconnected please pick up the phone and call someone, anyone. You can always call Caro+ or someone in your cloister group. If you are not sure who is in your cloister group either Caro+ or Stephanie (office@stbenslososos.org) will be happy to tell you.

We continue to serve those who are living on the edge. The Community Dinners organized by Los Osos Cares continue every Thursday with takeout food. Our turn to serve is May 7 – please contact Barbara Hirahara or Maureen Titus to see how you can help, and our next turn at 40 Prado in June 6. And of course. Laundry Love is every last Wednesday.

But most of all, we are the church. The church is where we are, each one of us. We are being the church when we get up in the morning and greet the day and ask “God show me today how best I can serve you.”

The Shire at Canterbury

Berkeley Johnson, Chaplain

Just a quick update to let you know Canterbury has been active this spring quarter! Because of your past generosity, we have restricted funds available and have been able to respond to the needs of students and young adults as they arise.

Because of your ongoing generosity, we are making it through this difficult period, even with the cancellation of our recent chili cook-off fundraiser. Please know, there is a link on our Shire at Canterbury Facebook page for donations, or you can send them in the old-fashioned way, to the address below. Checks can be made payable to "SLO Canterbury Foundation."

Students have been joining in for Sunday worship online with St. Stephen's. Berkeley preached on the Fifth Sunday in Lent on the raising of Lazarus, and that sermon is available on the St. Stephen's Facebook page, and our Believing Out Loud! group has been meeting through Zoom on weeknights this quarter as well.

So, not exactly how I had it planned, but we are staying connected, in touch with, and we're supporting one another through this difficult time. Peace be with all of you, and please continue to keep Canterbury in your prayers.

Page 127 Tells Us...This Road Has Been Travelled Before

Lorienne Schwenk

2020 will be a major moment in future history books. A global pandemic, economic uncertainties, some people not working at all, and others thought to be in routine, ordinary jobs are suddenly hailed as heroes. It all feels odd and unfamiliar. No matter what you think or believe, if you are anxious, you are not overreacting. If you want things to be “normal” again, it is understandable. And, we can’t go to church.

That, however, is not unprecedented. And it does not mean that we are out of community. I hope that people are feeling that sense of community with our online worship services. I know I do, and I love seeing peoples’ comments and prayers bubble up while I’m sitting at my table at home. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and right now, that even means the other congregants of St. Benedict’s.

I take great comfort in the stories of our ancestors who were in solitude or isolation either by choice or by other circumstances. I think of the Desert Mothers and Fathers in the first centuries of the Christian Faith who may have been in a cave alone, yet were part of a community praying for them, coming to them for spiritual guidance, and protecting them. We can also think of the Judeans taken into exile, having their homes destroyed, families torn apart, and being displaced to Babylon. And, there are monastics whose lives always contain some time of solitude for reflection and contemplation.

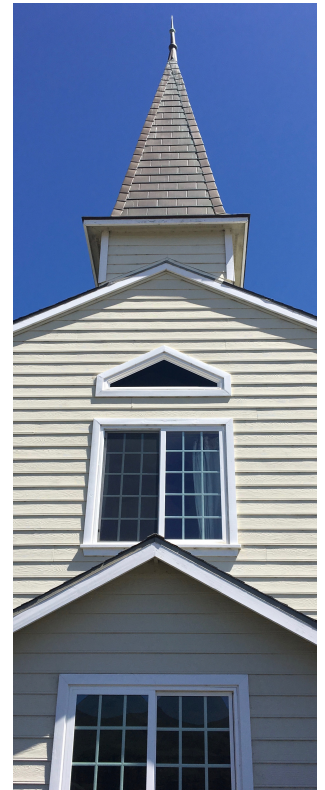
And we have their voices, calling out to God and to us, in scripture and in our prayers. I have been very moved by the Office of Compline, part of the ancient tradition of Hours, and the service done at the end of the day. It feels like it was written for us right now, so I want to encourage everyone to try it at home and fall in love with it as I have. Some sections resonate so strongly. Just a few:

- The opening prayers ask God to “make speed to save us and help us.” What a wonderful reminder to turn our anxieties to God and to remember that God acts in history. God uses us to bring about God’s kin-dom. We are not alone.
- There are a few Psalm options that one can choose:
 - Psalm 4 says “the Lord does wonders for the faithful; when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.” and “Many are saying, ‘Oh, that we might see better times!’”
 - Psalm 31 reminds us that we have a refuge in the Lord and uses images of strong rocks and protective castles for God.
 - Psalm 91 says that God will “deliver you...from the deadly pestilence.” !! And that “You shall not be afraid...of the plague that stalks in darkness, nor of the sickness that lays waste at mid-day.” How timely! How comforting!
- The collects. Oh, the compline collects!
 - Come to me all who labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest...
 - Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness
 - Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night...Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous

So, perhaps you’d like to join me every evening in prayer for those who are hard at work, those who are isolated at home, those who are anxious, and pray the timeless prayers in Compline.

If you have a Prayer Book, it is on page 127. Online, the entire Book of Common Prayer is available. The link for Compline is <https://www.bcponline.org>. Go to Daily Offices, click on Compline.

If you would like to do Compline together via Zoom, please check the calendar on the church website. We are in isolation and we have each other.





Social Media Update: @stbenslosos

We are pleased to announce that St. Ben's now has an Instagram Account: @stbenslosos
Please follow us on Instagram for pictures and events.

Give To St. Ben's

Now available...make your donations online via PayPal, use if you are reading this newsletter on PDF you can [use this link](#). If you are reading a paper copy point your phone's camera at the QR code below to be taken to the St. Ben's PayPal site.



Tree Planting, Our Christian Heritage

Barry Turner, Earth Care Committee

In 2006, the Benedictine sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania produced a 200-page proposal entitled, *Listening to the Earth: An Environmental Audit for Benedictine Communities*. Benedictine abbess, writer and teacher, Joan Chittister calls for a "Benedictine Consciousness Whose Time Has Come Again" (*Foreword, p. vi*). "There are two moments in history when Benedictinism has been needed in a very special way: the first was in the 6th century; the second is now." She paints the call in broad strokes:

"In the 6th century, Europe was reeling from the loss of civil order and the breakdown of agrarian communities. Farm lands lay in ruin from the movement of foreign invaders across Europe, trade routes were unsafe with the loss of the Roman Legions and the countryside was left overgrown and in ruins. To that sorry state, Benedictinism brought a new system of order, a new pattern of life, a new commitment to the land and to life. Almost 700 years later, Cistercian groups again devoted themselves to the reforestation, the replanting and the reclamation of some of the worst land in Europe.

As a result of those conscious efforts, Europe became a garden again. Life thrived. People organized themselves into productive communities. Agriculture flourished everywhere. Now, in this last century, our own century, after over 100 years of erosion, pollution, and the diminishment of natural resources by most unnatural means, the whole world is becoming alert to the relationship between the gift of creation and sins against creation again." (www.arcworld.org)

The care of Christian communities for the land can be traced throughout many faith communities back to their beginnings. One example that survives today is the Orthodox Church of Ethiopia. Drought conditions in the arid north have been recently magnified by extensive deforestation. Realizing the need for more active conservation measures, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has embarked on extensive reforestation in an effort to reverse the current trend. So far, 21 nursery centers have been established where more than 2.6 million seedlings have been



Kieran Dodds/Panos Pictures

raised. These seedlings are distributed free of charge to rural communities, farming cooperatives and peasant farmer associations.

The Ethiopian Church has also established over 300 small plantations, most of which are near church grounds. These are tended by the clergy. Many priests are trained in development activities and act as teachers, farmers and agricultural laborers as well as local spiritual leaders.

In addition to these new reforestation efforts, the Church continues its centuries-old tradition of planting and maintaining trees around church yards and cemeteries. Trees within these grounds are considered sacred. Many are very old, and include juniper, wild olive, and other indigenous species as well as older imported trees such as cypress and gum. The vegetation of these groves promotes soil and water conservation by trapping rainfall and preventing water run-off and soil erosion. It also provides food, shelter and cover for several species of wildlife such as monkeys, small antelope and rodents, as well as roosting and nesting sites for bird species. All wildlife is given the same status as trees on church grounds, and protected on religious grounds. (*Tim Allen-Rowlandson, [The-Forestry-Example-of-the-Ethiopian-Church.pdf](#)*)

E.O. Wilson, in his book “Half-Earth,” declared the church forests of Ethiopia “one of the best places in the biosphere.” They are proof that when faith and science make common cause on ecological issues, it results in a model that bears repeating. We have the blueprint of life held in these tiny circles of faith, and that’s something to rejoice over and protect and expand with every resource we can muster.

Tree Planting at St. Benedict’s

Acting from the heritage of our parish name-sake, St. Benedict, the Earth Care Committee has been discussing the possibility of new efforts of tree planting on our acreage. In February we met with members of Bear Roots of Los Osos seeking advice and possible help. Their interest were trees planted along Los Osos Valley Rd that would beautify the approach into Los Osos from the East. We also have connections with Greening Los Osos which has expressed interest in a memorial grove. At this time, we are seeking professional advice about which indigenous species would do best on our property along LOVR as well as the road coming onto the church property, Clark Valley Rd. and the island area in the parking lot. When the current lockdown due to Covid19 is eased we will continue efforts to develop a plan, budget and help with local agencies. The committee seeks input from any and all and we welcome whatever contributions may be offered in ideas as well as gifts of funds. Presently, we are in the early stages of this effort and will keep the parish informed as we go forward.

Go Green! Let’s Join Together to Help Our Planet Survive

Don Maruska, Earth Care Committee

While COVID-19 swamps our attention, the planet reminds us that we need to be better stewards of our island home. Fortunately, there are immediate and concrete actions that we can take to make a difference and be an example that encourages improved stewardship by others.

Did you know that the Episcopal Church has launched a major initiative for all dioceses, parishes, and parishioners to take specific climate actions and track the results? You can find it at www.sustainislandhome.org. There you will find that St. Benedict’s has some parishioners already participating. What we need now are more members of St. Ben’s (hopefully everyone) to participate and to do more.

The Earthcare Committee has identified a menu of actions that you can take. Some of you will be able to do all of them. Others may only find one or two actions that they can take at this time. The Earth needs each of us to do our best and thanks you for whatever you can do.

On the next page is the St. Benedict’s “Green Card for Stewardship of Our Island Home.” Please indicate as many actions as you’ve already taken, those you pledge to do, and others for which you’d like a knowledgeable member of the parish to help you do. Kindly bring your completed Green Card to church (if we are meeting in person) or send to office@stbenslosos.org.

Together we can boost our stewardship of the planet and celebrate our successes together.

Green Card for Stewardship of Our Island Home

If each us did a few things (or a few more things), we could make a real difference for our earth. We'd also be leading by example to encourage communities elsewhere to do likewise.

Please check off as many actions that you've already taken and more that you pledge to undertake. Also, let us know any help you'd like to support your success.

<i>Key actions for climate health</i>	<i>Already taken</i>	<i>Pledge to do</i>	<i>Want help?</i>
Join St. Benedict's team to share and track our results at www.sustainislandhome.org			
Take the bus, bike or walk more often for less carbon emissions (and good exercise)			
Eat lower down the carbon chain (less red meat, more fish, chicken, & plants)			
Replace standard light bulbs with LED energy saving (and long-term cost-saving) bulbs			
Exercise your Solar Choice with PG&E to get carbon-free energy			
Purchase carbon offsets for air travel to support healthy forests			
Buy or lease an electric vehicle to reduce CO2 pollution			
Install solar panels to save money and reduce emissions			

Name: _____ date: _____



Wait!...has our web cam been ON for the entire service?!

BEATITUDES

FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO STAY INDOORS



FOR THEY HAVE PROTECTED OTHERS

BLESSED ARE THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE SELF-EMPLOYED



FOR THEIR NEED OF GOD IS GREAT

BLESSED ARE THE CORNER SHOPKEEPERS



FOR THEY ARE THE PURVEYORS OF SCARCE THINGS

BLESSED ARE THE DELIVERY DRIVERS AND THE POSTAL WORKERS



FOR THEY ARE THE BRINGERS OF ESSENTIAL THINGS

BLESSED ARE THE HOSPITAL WORKERS; THE AMBULANCE CREWS, THE DOCTORS, THE NURSES, THE CARE ASSISTANTS, AND THE CLEANERS



FOR THEY STAND BETWEEN US AND THE GRAVE, AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS SURELY THEIRS

BLESSED ARE THE CHECKOUT WORKERS



FOR THEY HAVE PATIENCE AND FORTITUDE IN THE FACE OF OVERWORK AND FRUSTRATION

BLESSED ARE THE REFUSE COLLECTORS



FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD DESPITE THE MOUNTAINS OF WASTE

BLESSED ARE THE TEACHERS



FOR THEY REMAIN STEADFAST AND CONSTANT IN DISTURBING TIMES

BLESSED ARE THE CHURCH WORKERS; THE DEACONS, PRIESTS AND BISHOPS



FOR THEY ARE A COMFORTING PRESENCE IN A HURTING WORLD AS THEY CONTINUE TO SIGNPOST TOWARDS GOD

BLESSED ARE THE SINGLE PARENTS,



FOR THEY ARE COPING ALONE WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THERE IS NO RESPIRE

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ALONE.



FOR THEY ARE CHILDREN OF GOD AND WITH HIM THEY WILL NEVER BE LONELY

BLESSED ARE THE BEREAVED.



FOR WHOM THE WORST HAS ALREADY HAPPENED, THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ISOLATED WITH THEIR ABUSERS



FOR ONE DAY - WE PRAY - THEY WILL KNOW SAFETY

BLESSED ARE ALL DURING THIS TIME WHO HAVE PURE HEARTS; ALL WHO STILL HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE; ALL WHO WORK FOR PEACE AND WHO MODEL MERCY



MAY YOU KNOW COMFORT. MAY YOU KNOW CALM. AND MAY THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BE WITH US ALL. AMEN

TEXT: JAYNE MANFREDI

CartoonChurch.com



The Benediction

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

2220 Snowy Egret Lane

Los Osos, CA 93412