

The Benediction

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

The Rev. Jen Crompton

Trailblazer

The Parish Council

Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden
Sandy Fisher, People's Warden
Cathy Gildea, Clerk
Lisa Gonzalez, Treasurer
Esta Kandarian, Abundance Shop
Pamela Bleisch
Sarah Chesebro
Berkeley Johnson
Michael Lucas
Brian Spolarich

Benediction Publisher

Maureen Titus, Presiding Warden

Benediction Editor

Cathy Gildea, cathy@gildea.com

Sunday Services

8:00 am (2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday each month) - Eucharist, live at church and available on Zoom (paused for summer).

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

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

Message from our Presiding Warden, Maureen Titus

We are beginning our summer season in beautiful Los Osos and something to consider, July 11th is St. Benedict's Day. That led me to ponder how did our church become St. Benedict's. I have asked many people and looked for historical journals in the upstairs office.



It seems Rev. Thomas Doyle wanted to have a Benedictine Retreat Center in Los Osos and even named his home Benedict House. At the same time, a group of parishioners from St. Peter's in Morro Bay wanted to form an Episcopal Church in Los Osos. Rev. Doyle was appointed as the Priest by Bishop Mallory, the first Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real. Rev. Doyle named the church St. Benedict's in the Valley. Then that led me to consider how the Rules of St. Benedict's, written in the 6th century, can be applicable for today's

society and the various issues we face during this time.

I read multiple articles from various people who have studied these Rules and what stood out for me is that the Benedictine heart, either inside or outside a monastery, reaches out to God and to the wider world. The qualities of humility, patience, simplicity, solitude, caring for others and living in a community are as relevant today as they were in that century. This led me to think about two important celebrations in June when we recognize the wider LGBTQI+ community with Pride Month and Juneteenth.

How do those events relate to the Rules? Both have come about as a result of war, abuse, lack of understanding, not caring for others, not accepting God's love for all people regardless of their skin color, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. I consider the declaration on June 19, 1865 granting former slaves their freedom as an interpretation of the Rules. Accepting people who may look or think differently than you do is what God is asking us to do. Following the heart of St. Benedict can be challenging yet that is exactly what I invite each of us to do over the next month and beyond; embrace our Benedictine roots and the spirit of celebration as we stand in solidarity with our neighbors. You will see invitations in our weekly newsletter for opportunities to participate at St. Ben's as well as outside the community and I encourage you to take full advantage as we follow the heart of St. Benedict, reaching out to God and the wider community.

Peace and Love,

Maureen Titus

1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

An Update from Your Search Committee

Brian Spolarich, Chair

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

We have received applications from multiple candidates and are in the process of reviewing the applications and interviewing the candidates. The work is proceeding well, and the search committee remains optimistic about our ability to fulfill our charge, which is to present a slate of at least two candidates to the Vestry for their consideration. We are working as quickly as we can to accomplish this goal.

Given the need for confidentiality in the process, especially during this time when we are reviewing application materials and meeting with candidates, I am unable to share more specifics. The Search Committee and Parish Council ask for your patience and trust as we do the work you have entrusted us to do: trust the people, trust the process, and above all trust the Spirit who we know is guiding us and leading us in everything we do.

In terms of the process, we are currently in the interviewing stage. This includes reviewing all application materials, viewing recorded sermons, and conducting first and second round Zoom interviews with candidates. The Search Committee also performs reference checks for candidates at this stage.

The Search Committee will then present those candidates we recommend as finalists to the Vestry for its consideration. The Vestry will conduct Zoom interviews as well and may choose to invite one or more candidates for an in-person interview. The Search Committee and Vestry would then conduct the in-person interview, which typically happens over a two-day period and includes a home eucharist and sermon, a formal interview with the Vestry, a meeting with the treasurer and wardens, a tour of the building and grounds, and a meeting with the bishop. Based on the outcome of these meetings, the Vestry would decide to move forward with an offer and would negotiate a Letter of Agreement in consultation with the diocese and in negotiation with the candidate.

Once, and only if, a signed Letter of Agreement is in place, would the new Priest-in-Charge and Presiding Warden determine the start date and introduce this person to the congregation.

Transition Prayer

O Lord,
You are the light that illumines our path.
You are the map that gives us direction.
You are the peace that makes us strong.
You are the guide whom we faithfully follow.
May your light illuminate our entire lives.
And your guidance bring direction to our work.
May we find inspiration in your Word,
And peace in our hearts as we follow you. Amen.

-- Author Unknown

Everyone who is involved in the process—from the search committee, to the Vestry, to the candidates, to every member of our parish and beyond—needs your continued prayers. Prayers for strength, for wisdom, for discernment, for patience, and for trust. The Search Committee has felt extraordinary support throughout this entire process. Thank you!

Celebrating Pride

Rev. Jen Crompton

St. Benedict's showed up with the love at this year's Central Coast Pride celebrations! Trans Pride was held in Meadow Park on May 11th and we were at both Pride in the Plaza Saturday June 1st and Pride in the Park on Sunday June 2nd.

On Sunday June 9th, we held a Pride Eucharist to celebrate and to reaffirm our commitment that all are truly welcome here at St. Benedict's in this specific way. Our gospel reading from Mark invited us to embrace a deep spiritual change, one that requires us to fully acknowledge our own inner cultural definitions that keep us divided from one another. This sense of who is "in" and who is "out" creates a unique call for inclusion. We know that the will of God is to love our neighbor as ourselves and love God with all our hearts. To love ourselves as God loves us is very much a part of this process.



Thank you to all who participated in this important ministry of affirmation and for helping us live into our statement of welcome and inclusivity!



Celebrating Juneteenth

Cathy Gildea

What is Juneteenth, and what does it have to do with our worship and spirituality?

Juneteenth National Independence Day is a federal holiday established in 2021. The name elides the words "June" and "nineteenth," the date in 1865 when the last vestiges of formal legal slavery in the United States ended. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation, but during the Civil War southern states did not honor it. Not until Union troops led by General Gordon Granger ordered its final enforcement in Galveston, Texas, did slavery finally end in Texas, the last holdout state in the country.

The original Juneteenth was marked by celebrations in African American churches. Especially since creation of the national holiday, other churches have begun celebrating the day. The Bible is full of stories of God's liberation: the people of Israel freed from bondage in Egypt, their enslaved captivity in Babylon, the freedom messages of the prophets, Jesus' proclamation that he has come to proclaim release to the captives (Lk 4:16-19), and St. Paul's letter insisting that in Christian communities "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female...." (Gal 3:28) In 2020, the Episcopal Diocese of California approved a resolution in diocesan convention making Juneteenth an official church feast day there.

Canon Martha Korienek of our Diocese of El Camino Real will be the celebrant of Juneteenth at St. Benedict's on June 26. Join us!

Spiritual Conversation Group

Roz Malone

People often ask about our Tuesday morning “book group”. We do most often read a book, but we have watched videos and used Advent and Lenten Guides from Living Compass. The readings act as a stimulus and help focus our sharing. Our experience of the group lives up to our label as a Spiritual Discussion Group. We share deeply from our lived experience, from our spiritual journeys over the years, from our prayer life and spiritual practices, from our dreams, from our aspirations, from the ups and downs of life. Often, we comment on the gifts the Spirit offers in our moments together.

Since March of 2020 we have been meeting on Zoom as necessitated by COVID. It turns out to have been a gift because we don't have to drive to share time together. We had a member who moved to England and was able to Zoom with us for a time.

One highlight for us was an opportunity to be together for a book signing and discussion with the author of a book we read. We had to wait for the publication date to buy the book. The author is Fr. Cyprian Consiglio who at the time was the Prior of New Camoldoli Hermitage in Big Sur. Fr. Cyprian is the author of several books and writes and performs hymns. His latest book that we shared is *Rediscovering the Divine: New Ways to Understand, Experience and Express God*. Our session was held at Monastery of the Risen Christ on O'Connor Way. After Father Cyprian's presentation we were able to share our comments about the book. All of that was wonderful, but in many ways being together in person was truly special.

In our announcements in the Benediction weekly we stress you don't have to read the book or be current in reading it to be a part of the discussion. One of our faithful members often monitors the discussion from her mobile phone while driving.

Over the last four plus years we have woven a tapestry of our times together stitched with the spirit of acceptance, respect, and mutual love. It has been a high point in my religious and spiritual life after being part of many groups over the years this experience with these precious people has been a true blessing.



Spiritual Conversation Group (con't)

I've been so blessed by these wonderful venues of prayer on zoom and our Tuesday Book Study group which follows directly. All are welcome. No pressure to turn your camera on for those introverts, nor do you have to purchase the book if funds don't allow, or your just not ready to "read one more book" in an already book heavy home.

The discussions are real, so honest and rich in details, they review ideas that were shared in the book the week before, and I always come away with new ideas to consider and perhaps add to my life.

Show up, listen to thoughtful reflection on the scripture and the current book read, see what awakens in your Spirit as to how the word speaks to you, this group is an intellectual and interesting community of prayerful companions on the way. Not all from the same denomination, or faith oriented, many seekers, nor of the same persuasion in many matters but they respectfully listen to one another.

I look forward to these times together each week. All are welcome.

As Jesus said, "Come and See."

-- Danielle Blanchard

My decision to become an Episcopalian was started when I was invited to join the weekly Spiritual Conversation. Although book reading and sharing is the stimulus for our discussions, the group moves into areas of life that bring love and understanding. Not all members attend St. Benedicts. Because we use Zoom there is a wider scope of those who meet every Tuesday. My life changing move to the Episcopal faith came because of the diversity and kindness of those who follow the principles of the Church.

-- Letty Cotta

Urge Congress to Pass a Faithful Farm Bill

Don Maruska

Once every five years, Congress reauthorizes the Farm Bill. It's a big program that covers many aspects of agriculture and food. Now is a critical time to ensure that the reauthorization includes nutrition assistance for those in need (over 40 million Americans) as well as conservation and climate smart policies so agriculture cuts its greenhouse gas emissions (which account for over 10% of all emissions in the U.S.).



You can make a difference by urging your legislators to restore key elements that the House Agriculture Committee watered down. Interfaith Power and Light (over 22,000 congregations, including St. Ben's, addressing climate change by stewarding Creation) has sent out an easy-to use action alert to help us reach our elected officials. I've used it, and it just takes a couple of minutes. Here are the details.

Tell Congress to Pass a Faithful Farm Bill

Jun 5, 2024 | Action Alert

People of faith believe in the moral call to uplift human dignity, love our neighbors, and protect our Sacred Earth. A Farm Bill for both people and the environment could ensure a future where all people have reliable access to healthy food, while prioritizing sustainable farming practices, and dignified treatment for those who work the land.

Contact your Members of Congress to prioritize a faithful Farm Bill that protects people and planet.

Help Elect Candidates Who Support the Environment

Don Maruska

Are you frustrated that Congress isn't doing more to address climate change and secure a healthy future? Did you know that 13 million environmentalists didn't vote in the 2022 elections? If we want real progress, we need to get those people to the polls. How can we do that when the key districts and states are elsewhere?



I've learned that the Environmental Voter (www.environmentalvoter.org) featured on NPR, New York Times, and The Guardian has a track record of success in targeting and getting out people who otherwise wouldn't vote (over 1.8 million thus far). They do this with phone calls, postcard writing, and other steps. Since we know that many elections turn on razor

thin margins, taking part in these programs have felt worth my efforts. I hope you will check out Environmental Voter and decide if you'd like to participate. For me, it beats watching the talking heads on TV and wringing my hands in frustration.

Walk the Via Dolorosa – The Way of Tears

Sarah Chesebro, Provincial Representative of Province VIII* Altar Guild

Earlier this year our beautiful and moving Stations of the Cross were presented at a Province VIII Altar Guild Seminar by The Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall. The seminar was attended by 53 members of the Province VIII Altar Guild. Nine of our eighteen Diocese were represented. Participants were invited to follow the story of Jesus' journey to the cross and beyond along the Via Dolorosa, a processional route in the Old City of Jerusalem, as depicted through the art of ceramicist Cloe White.



The Eighth Station – The Weeping Women

Following is a couple of the responses from the attendees:

"The Stations of the Cross "lecture" and actual Stations themselves were very, very moving."

Fiona Andrews

Altar Guild Directress (even though I'm still learning things)

Church of the Epiphany, Flagstaff, AZ

"I wish to thank you for an excellent Province VIII meeting. Truly well done and what a wonderful gift, the commission to Chloe White, for Saint Benedict in Los Osos, CA."

Bertita Graebner

St. Bede' Episcopal Church, Menlo Park, CA

Here at St. Benedict's several members of our congregation have requested that the Stations of the Cross be left up year-round. The Liturgy Committee recommended to the Vestry (Parish Council) that they be on display only during Lent for the following reasons:

- While we meditate on the crucifixion during Lent and Holy Week, we emphasize the theology of the resurrection year-round.
- They are fragile and a year-round display puts them at greater risk of being damaged.
- A year-round display could cause congregants to become "blind" to them.

The Vestry concurred with the recommendation from the Liturgy Committee. While Lent is not a celebratory season of the Church, I do look forward to seeing these beautiful pieces of art every year gifted to us by the Hirahara Family.

*About Province VIII

Province VIII, the most demographically diverse province, is comprised of the Episcopal dioceses of Alaska, Arizona, California, Eastern Oregon, El Camino Real, Hawaii, Idaho, Los Angeles, Micronesia, Navajoland, Nevada, Northern California, Olympia, San Diego, San Joaquin, Spokane, Taiwan, Utah, and Western Oregon.

The Benediction

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

2220 Snowy Egret Lane

Los Osos, CA 93412

St. Ben's Events

June

June 1 *Pride in the Plaza*
June 2 *Pride in the Park / Meadow Park*
June 22 *Worship Leader Workshop*
June 23 *Juneteenth with Canon Martha*
June 30 *Vestry / Council Meeting*

July

July 11 *St. Benedict's Day*
