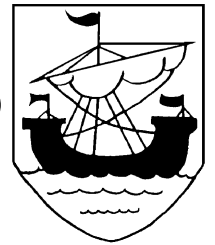


# Canterbury Tales



The Newsletter of St. Anselm's Church, Lafayette, California

April 2024

## From Rev. Will

Dear St. Anselm's,

Alleluia! He is risen! Happy Easter!

Easter is a reminder that a church is not a fortress, or a tomb with a heavy stone in front of the door. We are called to be a community, an incubator, a greenhouse, and a generator of energy for living full lives transformed by the Spirit of a God that rolls away stones and raises the dead. A place and people who capture the world's attention when we proclaim the Good News defiantly and joyfully that Christ is risen, siding again and again with the underdog, the beaten down, the abused and the silenced.

While the world is full of horrific violence and cruelty gathering together each week we affirm that God's love is stronger than death and recommit ourselves to nurturing that love in our daily lives.

When I began serving as your priest in January I wasn't sure how long we'd have together. But I am delighted that we have sojourned these past three months and that our relationship is continuing. I am learning much from you, and looking forward to seeing how this journey unfolds.

Like Jesus' disciples after the resurrection we may find ourselves a bit all over the place. My prayer for St. Anselm's during these 50 days of Eastertide is that we will deepen our appreciation for and trust in the Risen Christ's presence in our common life affirming all that nurtures joy and hope.

See you soon!

Peace,  
Will



Church of The Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem

## *Anselm's Angels*

A big thank you to Rev. Will and the Christian Formation Commission and everyone who planned, led or supported the Sunday speakers' series and Thursday Zoom conversations during the season of Lent. **Marian Mulkey, Anne Brown, Jeff Boero, Judy Peak** and **Chris Stone** helped with speaker planning, session facilitation and/or food. **Katie Taggart, Sally Fischer** and **Peg Matson** provided special coffee hour refreshments. **Chris Young, J.P. Zhang** and **Marty Fischer** provided technical support. **John, Evan** and **Arthur Powers** and **Monica Ball** helped with set-up.

Special thanks to our 5p.m worship musicians **Duane Nelsen** and **Tom Pappas**. And to **Katie Taggart, Al Eames** and **Peg Matson** for helping to provide food for these evening services during Lent.

Many thanks to everyone who helped with Holy Week: Palm cross makers: **Will Scott, Katie Taggart, Joan Martin, Edee Allison** and **Sylvia Williams**; Palm Sunday sanctuary decorators: **Joe Williams** and **Sylvia Williams**; Stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday: **Dharmini Harichandran, Edee Allison, Sylvia Williams, Joan Martin, Sally Fischer** and **Katie Taggart**; Easter sanctuary decorators: **Dharmini Harichandran, Sharon Harichandran, Edee Allison, Sylvia Williams, Mallory Williams, Joan Martin, Sally Fischer, Katie Taggart** and **Marian Mulkey, Julie Rinkenberger, Maggie McCloskey** and **Chris Young**; for our coffee hour hosts for Easter Sunday: **Sylvia Williams, Sally Fischer, Joan Martin, Elisabeth Ida, Peg Matson** and **Julie Starr**; And our Easter Egg Hunt organizers: **Sheila Wiegand** and **Eric T. E. Rabbit**.

*Thank you!*



MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR

## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND VESTRY ELECTION**

As part of the 10 a.m. Sunday service on April 14, a brief congregational meeting will be held to elect a new class of Vestry members. A slate of nominees and background information will be circulated in advance. Please plan to participate in person or via Zoom.

### **WELCOME DAWN KING**

Dawn King started as our bookkeeper in March. Dawn is an experienced Accountant who operates Dawn King Bookkeeping Services to serve small businesses and nonprofits in our area. She also teaches sewing classes at Studio Dawnatella in Walnut Creek. She lives in Concord with her two teen-aged boys, golden retriever and ragdoll cat.



### **APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

Amy & Andrew Orear

Shanda Young  
Julie Rinkenberger  
Sharon Harichandran  
Sheila Riedy  
Eva Woo  
Keith Pearce  
Anne Brown  
Naomi Chamberlain-Harris  
Norah Fong  
Sally Fischer  
Andrew Orear



### **SERVICE TIMES**

Thank you to everyone who supported the 5 p.m. evening worship services during Lent. We will be taking a break for a few months.

If you are interested in the return of the 8 a.m. service, or have ideas about other worship times, please email Rev. Will: [rector@stanselms.us](mailto:rector@stanselms.us)

### **PRAYER CHAIN**

St. Anselm's Prayer Chain is a list of our parishioners and loved ones for whom prayers have been requested. Prayer is voluntary and on your own whenever you wish to pray. If you would like to receive the Prayer Chain or if there is someone you would like to add to the Prayer Chain, please email Vicki at: [vrpappas@gmail.com](mailto:vrpappas@gmail.com).

Canterbury Tales  
is the monthly newsletter of

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church  
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, CA  
Phone: (925) 284-7420  
web site: [www.stanselms.us](http://www.stanselms.us)

Editor: Margaret Wolfe  
e-mail: [margaret.w@stanselms.us](mailto:margaret.w@stanselms.us)

In-Person & Virtual Sunday Service:  
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**St. Anselm's Staff**  
The Rev. Will Scott, Guest Priest  
The Rev. Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, Deacon  
Margaret Wolfe, Office Manager  
Dawn King, Bookkeeper

To schedule an in person  
conversation with Rev. Will,  
email [rector@stanselms.us](mailto:rector@stanselms.us)

**The church office will be closed  
from April 1st to 5th**

## *From The Senior Warden*

Dear St. Anselm's Family,

This will be my final Canterbury Tales message to you in my role as Sr. Warden, before that honor passes to another to guide St. Anselm's forward in the year ahead. I can only pray that they have a far less controversial experience than my brief attempt to provide hope in the face of upheaval. It has been an unprecedented challenge and one that I pray no one else will ever have to experience in a volunteer capacity. I'm deeply appreciative for the support and understanding so many of you have provided over the last several months.

There is no doubt, that we are now in a better place, than in November of 2023. A great amount of appreciation is owed to Stephen+ for his identification of numerous operational practices in need of change. These were either operating the way they had been for 20+ years and/or due to various procedural shortcuts taken during Covid restrictions. I'm happy to say that most of these now have been updated to "best practices" though a few remain to be resolved by the next Vestry and Wardens.

I thank the Vestry for its trust and support and for Peg Matson, our Jr. Warden, who has done a great deal to help move us forward. We have been blessed by Margaret Wolfe who became our new Office Administrator and recently by Dawn King who joined as Bookkeeper. In addition, we have identified a very good candidate as Choir Director and Organist. We hope we are nearing the final stages of that search.

Most important of all, we got to know Rev. Will Scott in a matter of weeks after Stephen's resignation. Joining us in early January, Rev. Will has continued as our long-term supply priest. His concern, love and spiritual guidance have been truly exceptional as we have worked our way through the last three months. I personally have great admiration for his many skills, intellect and Christian love. He has had significant impact on our St. Anselm's family and rapidly became a trusted friend and spiritual leader. There will be good news regarding Rev. Will's leadership going forward that will be shared on Easter Sunday!

As my responsibilities conclude, memories go back to a young couple from New York in 1972, starting to raise a family and looking for a spiritual home. Our family and friends lived on the East Coast and we found that warm and welcoming extended family we sought at St. Anselm's. It was a vibrant church, though still a mission, back then. It offered a very diverse membership of young and older families. We felt accepted almost immediately and made many friendships. Most of our extended family from back then have now moved or departed to a better place. We marvel at how fast 52 years passes and how many dear friends have come and gone. Sally and I are grateful for the acceptance, support and true Christian love we have received and for our opportunities to serve the greater good. While we have shrunk as a congregation, what bound us as a family has also changed.

We still feel the love and welcoming nature of the remaining St. Anselm's family in spite of the doubts and criticisms leveled against this congregation. Our hope is that new leadership can build upon our connection to one another, our rich heritage, Christian spirituality, generous outreach and find solutions to our desperate need for growth. I doubt that young couple back in 1972 would connect with who we are today and that frightens me about our future. We need to find solutions to growth if we are to survive the onslaught of societal and demographic change. Our focus needs to shift from internal criticism and self-doubts. It's time to reach out to the community to draw them to us, our mission and to the love and teachings of Christ.

At Easter we celebrate our Savior's triumph over false accusations and death on the cross by his rising again... and so must we.

May the Lord bless and guide you all, now and for evermore,

Marty Fischer

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**COFFEE HOUR HOSTS**

Help provide refreshments following the service. To Sign up contact Sylvia Williams at 925-586-0730 or [sw94565@yahoo.com](mailto:sw94565@yahoo.com).

**COUNTERS**

Assist a Vestry member with the responsibility for counting and recording cash and checks on a written counter form and securing the deposit. If interested in volunteering as a counter, please contact Marty Fischer or Peg Matson.

**ALTAR FLOWERS**

The 2024 Altar Flower donation chart is now available in the church, on the wall by the east entrance. By making a donation you can have altar flowers dedicated to the memory of a loved one, in honor of a family member or simply to the glory of God. Please sign-up for your selected date(s) and complete a dedication card from the stack next to the chart. You may also email [parish@stanselms.us](mailto:parish@stanselms.us) with your selected date(s) and dedication.

**Bishop-Elect Austin Keith Rios  
Ordination and Consecration Service  
May 4th at 11 a.m.  
at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco**



Register by midnight on 4/12 to reserve a spot at: <https://diocalbishopsearch.org/registration/>

If you need help getting there contact Rev. Will

***TRINITY CENTER'S  
SPRING FUNDRAISER***

Our friends at Trinity Center are holding their annual spring dinner and auction starting at 6pm on May 9<sup>th</sup> at The Ruth Bancroft Gardens. A group of us attended last year and had a wonderful time. You can [buy tickets](#) or [donate](#) on line. Please consider joining this wonderful event. If you have interest in attending contact Marty Fischer (925 247-4192) who will be putting together a St. Anselm's table if there is sufficient interest. Come and enjoy as all proceeds go to support the many needs at Trinity Center in supporting the least fortunate in our community.



**FLOWER POWER**

Michael Lane Preschool  
Spring Parent Party

May 11th ~ from 4-6 pm ~ Jackson Hall

Raffle tickets and more information coming soon

***REACHING OUT TO THOSE  
WHO LOVE TO READ***

For those of you who find great pleasure in reading, Sharyn Barrington-Carlson and I would like to invite you to our new Book Club at St. Anselm's. We will have our first get together on Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup> from 2 - 3 p.m. in the Conference Room in Jackson Hall. We would love to have you join us. Sharon and I will bring some of our favorite books for you to look at. We want to hear from you what day and time works best for all. Our thinking is to try to read a book a month and to discuss the book at our meeting time and to select a new book introduced by our members. Coffee, tea and cookies will be served. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or thoughts.

Blessings,  
Naomi

[orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com)  
925.395.1395





## *Vestry Update*

The vestry met on March 11 to receive updates on Rev. Audrey Miskelley's work to support our healing process and to discuss implications and next steps. Those matters are described at length in another article. The Vestry held its regular monthly business meeting on March 18. Discussion topics and decisions included:

- Updates on Rev. Will's role with us, including an extension of his current role as long-term supply priest through May and an exploration of steps that would allow him to join us as Priest-in-Charge after that time
- Report from the vestry nominating committee, discussion of criteria and process for finalizing a slate of nominees, and a decision to hold a congregational meeting to elect the incoming class on April 14
- Updates on plans for an April 26-28 vestry retreat at San Damiano Retreat Center and approval of related costs
- Updates on remaining transition projects related to operations and financial oversight
- Review and approval of Michael Lane Preschool's summer budget
- Status reports on several property repair or improvement projects

For more information, contact any member of the vestry. Vestry meeting minutes and financial reports are available on request. Vestry minutes from the previous month's meeting are posted in the Jackson Hall conference room.



## *STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. ANSELM'S*

Will+ has illuminated our church history in various sermons since his arrival. It has been interesting, particularly for us "old timers", to be reminded of that history. Stephen Ministry has quite a remarkable history at St Anselm's, remarkable because it is likely the oldest and most enduring of any in the churches in our area. Mary Jane (MJ) Young took the initiative to train as a Stephen Leader and then train four new Stephen Ministers who were commissioned in 2000. In 2001 seven more Ministers were commissioned; Gene Bozorth and myself were two of the seven. When MJ moved away the following year, I was tapped to be Stephen Leader.

In subsequent years we teamed up with a consortium of neighboring churches led by Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church. LOPC organized training sessions with the help of all of us who contributed members to be trained as Stephen Ministers. Training consists of 60 hours of a caring curriculum designed by the national office of Stephen Ministry in St Louis, taking place over a period of several months. It is a prayerful commitment made by each Stephen Minister. Stephen Leaders take an additional training course. In addition to the founding leader, there have been four Stephen Leaders, myself, Raji Watawala, and Naomi Chamberlin-Harris along with Vicki Pappas.

Stephen Ministry has proven valuable to both church and community members and most satisfying for those who provide care. Loving care while walking beside a person who is grieving the loss of a spouse or loved one, divorce, a job, an illness, or a significant change in life, is what we offer. We listen and support, generally meeting weekly or by mutual agreement, for as long as needed. The identity of the individual and his/her loss is confidential.

If you feel that you or someone you know would like to talk about one of the above life situations, please contact Vicki Pappas or Will Scott+.

- Judy Peak

## ***SUPPORT ST. ANSELM'S MICHAEL LANE LANDSCAPE PROJECT***

Pamela Green, a professional landscape designer and longtime member of St. Anselm's has completed a design plan for the front portion of the parish's property facing Michael Lane. A budget estimate for the entire project which includes planting and irrigation is \$12,500. If you would like to contribute to the effort please send a check to the parish office and include on the memo line "Landscape Project."

If you would like to sponsor a particular plant (tree or shrub) here's a list of the plantings, please indicate on the memo line which plant or plants your gift is intended to cover.

### **Trees = \$200, \$400, & 800 each**

Quantity/Size Latin Name Common Name

5-24" Arbutus 'Marina' (multi-trunk) 'Marina'

3-24" Arbutus unedo (multi-trunk) Strawberry tree

5-15 Aesculus Californica (multi-trunk) California buckeye

2-15 Cercis occidentalis (multi-trunk) Western redbud

### **Shrubs = \$200 each**

7-5 Arctostaphylos 'Howard McMinn' 'Howard McMinn' manzanita

3-5 Arctostaphylos 'Wayside' 'Wayside' manzanita

2-5 Arctostaphylos Dr. Hurd Dr. Hurd manzanita

6-5 Heteromeles arbutifolia Toyon

Please reach out to Pamela Green ([simondsdesign@comcast.net](mailto:simondsdesign@comcast.net)) or to Rev. Will if you have any questions.



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## ***UPDATE ON HEALING AND RECONCILIATION***

Rev. Audrey Miskelley, working in close collaboration with Rev. Will, has completed a set of listening sessions and has recommended next steps that will help St. Anselm's continue down its path to healing and reconciliation.

The listening sessions were conducted as pastoral conversations under conditions of confidentiality. Rev. Audrey did not disclose to the St. Anselm's vestry the names of listening session participants, nor will we receive details about specific incidents or individuals. Instead, Rev. Audrey identified themes and issues that led to a failed match between St. Anselm's and Rev. Stephen Siproth, who served as our Rector between July and November, 2023.

Through her listening sessions, Rev. Audrey identified the following themes: trust, communication, entrenchment, confusion, anger, sorrow and fear. The conditions of mistrust and lack of communication fed on one another, and all of the issues are inter-related. "Entrenchment" describes some members' expectation that particular individuals play certain roles and that things are done a certain way, often accompanied by a lack of openness to new ideas, approaches or participants in church activities or decisions. Rev. Audrey also heard reports of people acting out in anger and in unacceptable ways. While different people might mean different things when they use the term "systemic" to describe some or all of these issues, Rev. Audrey's analysis was that the St. Anselm's community had formed habits and tolerated behavior that isolated some members and interfered with constructive problem-solving and spirit-filled collaboration.

Rev. Audrey feels two steps are essential for our congregation to move forward as a healthy, vibrant community, as well as to gain approval from the Diocese to call a future Rector. First, she recommends that we hold a vestry retreat to build trust and alignment. We have therefore moved forward with plans to hold a two-day retreat on April 26-28. Participants will include the outgoing class of vestry members, as well as the incoming class and those whose terms are ongoing. Rev. Will and Rev. Audrey will co-facilitate. The second step that Rev. Audrey identified is for St. Anselm's to accept responsibility for the actions and omissions that led to our failed Rector search/ call. It is our hope and expectation that the retreat and other actions taken soon thereafter will help us to reach that acceptance and prepare us to move forward with greater wisdom and alignment throughout the entire community.

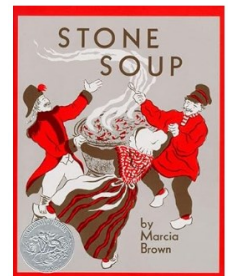
We recognize that all members of the congregation play crucial roles in healing and reconciliation, and that they want and deserve frequent updates from the vestry about the path we are on and the decisions we are making. The vestry will share updates soon after the retreat and will continue to offer opportunities for involvement and input from members. We ask you to hold the vestry in prayer as we seek to carry out, with God's help, our responsibilities as the leadership and governing body of this congregation.

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### ***Michael Lane Preschool Update***

Hello From Michael Lane Preschool!

This month, we enjoyed reading many versions of the book "Stone Soup" and acted out the story. As a grand finale, we each brought a vegetable from home and made the soup together for our snack. I brought the stone! Our school tree was just adorned with buds made of tissue paper, as we welcome in Spring!



Acceptance letters for the 2024-2025 school year have been sent out, and we are enjoying our last few months of preschool while also looking ahead towards an exciting new year of learning.

Spring Break comes this first week of April and then we'll be back for our final stretch of the school year. The time is flying by.

Happy Spring!  
Warmly,  
Holly Higgins

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St. Anselm's Episcopal Church  
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**Next *Canterbury Tales* deadline is April 21st**

## ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

**Tuesday April 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th — Morning Prayer** will be led by Deacon Naomi via Zoom at 9:00 a.m. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**Tuesday April 2nd — Grief Support Group** will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**Tuesday April 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th — Evening Bible Study** will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**Thursday April 11th — Book Club** will be led by Sharyn Barrington-Carlson and Deacon Naomi 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the conference room. For more details email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**Sunday April 14th — Cancer Support Group** will meet in the conference room and via Zoom at 11:30 a.m. To be invited, email Julie Rinkenberger at [jrijpmaggie@hotmail.com](mailto:jrijpmaggie@hotmail.com).

**Monday April 15th — Vestry** will meet in the conference room and via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. Vestry members will receive an email from Chris Young with the meeting link.

**Wednesday April 17th — Stephen Ministers** will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. Stephen Ministers will receive a link from Vicki Pappas.