

Canterbury Tales

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



December 2025

From Rev. Will

Dear St. Anselm's,

Blessed Advent to you and yours!

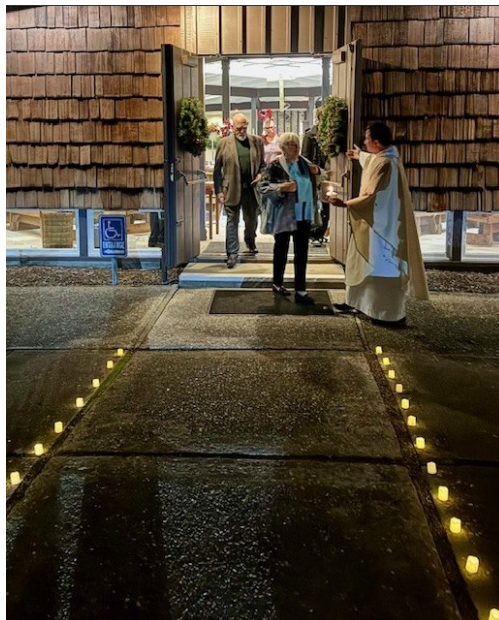
Here's some of what I shared in last Sunday's sermon:

A couple I know sends each other emails throughout the day. Most of the emails are forwarded news articles, they think their partner would like to know about—Senator Blabla has said such and such isn't that wonderful, or Congresswoman So & So has said blabla isn't that terrible. Occasionally, amid the deluge of news stories, one member of the couple will send the other an email with a subject line like "Important Urgent Announcement" or "Earth-shattering news story." Within the message, he will write "I love you." This loving gesture came to mind as I considered this week's texts and thought of Advent. The season of preparation, of awaiting the day of the Lord's coming—at Christmas, in our daily lives, and in the fullness of all time...

Advent, like that couple's email --- comes at us in the midst of our broken world, in a nation seemingly fueled more by the pursuit of power than the pursuit of love. Advent comes to us, with the subject line "Important Urgent Announcement" or "Earth-shattering news story." God loves you, and hope is on the way.

Advent at St. Anselm's this year will offer people of all ages time to reflect, deepen in our faith, and seek out light in the darkness. Whether it's decorating a wreath, attending a special concert with Soli Deo Gloria, enjoying a visit from St. Nicholas, participating in a midweek eucharist, or donning a costume at our Christmas Pageant. On December 24th at 5 p.m., we'll gather around the altar for our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service, featuring traditional carols and Holy Communion. What a gift to seek the light of Christ in the darkness of our world with you at St. Anselm's.

See you soon!
The Rev. Will Scott
Rector



Anselm's Angels

Thank you to **Joni Pearce** and St. Anselm's Outreach Commission for helping us fill two bins for the Contra Costa Food Bank and for coordinating our holiday support for OTTP.

Thank you to **Sylvia Williams** and St. Anselm's Altar Guild for all their support for Colleen Hoffman's Celebration of Life on November 29th. Thank you also to the Altar Guild for all their work preparing the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas.

Many thanks to our Christian Formation Commission for supporting our parish's Advent offerings.

Thank you to everyone supporting St. Anselm's new partnership with Soli Deo Gloria, especially **Peg Matson, Alan Swimmer, Joni Pearce, Sylvia Williams**, and others.

Thank you to those who answered the Stewardship Commission's request for increased support for our 2026 budget.

Thanks to everyone helping St. Anselm's prepare for the celebration at Christmas, including those assisting with our pageant on Sunday, December 21st, and Christmas Eve Candlelight on December 24th.

From The Senior Warden

Counting Our Blessings and Sharing Our Gratitude

As we approach the Advent season with hearts centered in peace and gratitude, I hope you will take time to pause and remember the many ways God's grace continues to unfold in our lives. In a world that can so often feel harsh and hurried, giving thanks becomes a sacred act—an intentional moment to breathe, to notice, and to recognize the blessings, both large and small, that surround us each day. Gratitude is not merely a feeling but a conscious practice—a way of living that shapes our hearts, our relationships, and our community.

Here at St. Anselm's, we see God's goodness reflected in our Sunday worship, the kindness of our parishioners, the dedication of our volunteers, the quiet prayers shared between friends, and the faithful work of our vestry and ministries that serve both our congregation and our neighbors.

As we continue in a spirit of peace and generosity, working together to strengthen our church community, may we deepen our awareness of God's abundant blessings and be inspired to live ever more fully into our Mission Statement:

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church is a nurturing community for people of all ages who seek to know God, grow, and serve.

With faithfulness and gratitude,

Peg Matson

Senior Warden



Vestry Update

Vestry Meeting held November 16th:

The Minutes from the October 19th meeting were approved and posted in the Parish Hall Conference Room

The vestry had an interactive discussion:

Katie Taggart provided a Stewardship Wrap-Up

Marian Mulkey provided a 2026 Draft Budget Presentation, and the vestry approved the Budget for 2026 based on pledges received to date and expenses incurred in 2025. The vestry is committed to sticking to the budget and working to do better than the projected \$12,000 deficit.

Katie Taggart and Julia Starr collaborated to create a process to evaluate large events to determine their "value" in relation to "effort and expense".

We have a new website domain name – stanselmslafayette.org which will be replacing the old domain name in the near future.

Action Items:

The 2026 clergy Housing Exemption was presented, discussed and approved.

It was approved that Undesignated Memorial Gifts will automatically be transferred to the Endowment Fund. We will continue to honor specifically designated bequests.


The vestry approved accepting Installment Payments for the purchase of niches in the Columbarium.

Updates:

Outreach – November & December we will purchase gifts for the clients of OTTP – Occupational Therapy Training Program and collect food for the Contra Costa Food Bank.

Deacon Report – Naomi is going to pilot a program on the 1st Sundays of the month by attending services online and offering a virtual coffee hour to connect with the online community.

Next Vestry Meeting

 **Sunday, December 21st at 11:30 a.m. in Will's Office**

Service/Outreach

Join us on Sunday, December 14 in Jackson Hall after church to write cards to send to homebound members. We will provide cards and addresses, you supply messages to our friends! If you have any extra Christmas cards at home that you want to donate, we'd gladly take them to use. This will be a fun time for everyone!

This holiday season we are also supporting our friends at OTTP - Occupational Therapy Teaching Program by purchasing gifts for their clients. Bring (or ship directly to OTTP) the unwrapped item WITH the tag so they can give it to the correct client by December 7. The gifts have been selected by the youth to help support their healing journey. Many of the gifts they request have a therapeutic purpose, helping them express emotions, build confidence, and find calm amid life's heaviness. Your support creates moments of healing and hope that last well beyond the holidays. You can also give a check, made out to OTTP, and place it in the offering plate, or hand to Joni Pearce directly.

Joni Pearce

Service /Outreach Commission Chair



Celebrate The Work of Trinity Center This Holiday Season!

Each Holiday season since 2014, St. Anselm's has provided support to Trinity Center and their lifeline to the working poor and homeless. Through these annual "Harvest Festival" Holiday campaigns St. Anselm's has raised over \$500k to provide shelter, meals, hope and a "Doorway to opportunity" for the poorest and most vulnerable in our community.

2025 has been a breakout year for Trinity Center's growth and progress at helping those in need within our community. TC impacts lives and provides a way forward for the many who shelter each weekday, socialize, wash clothes, take showers, eat meals and get help finding jobs, housing, medical services and counseling. Here are some successes:

Housing Placements



126% vs 2024

Job Placements



110% vs 2024

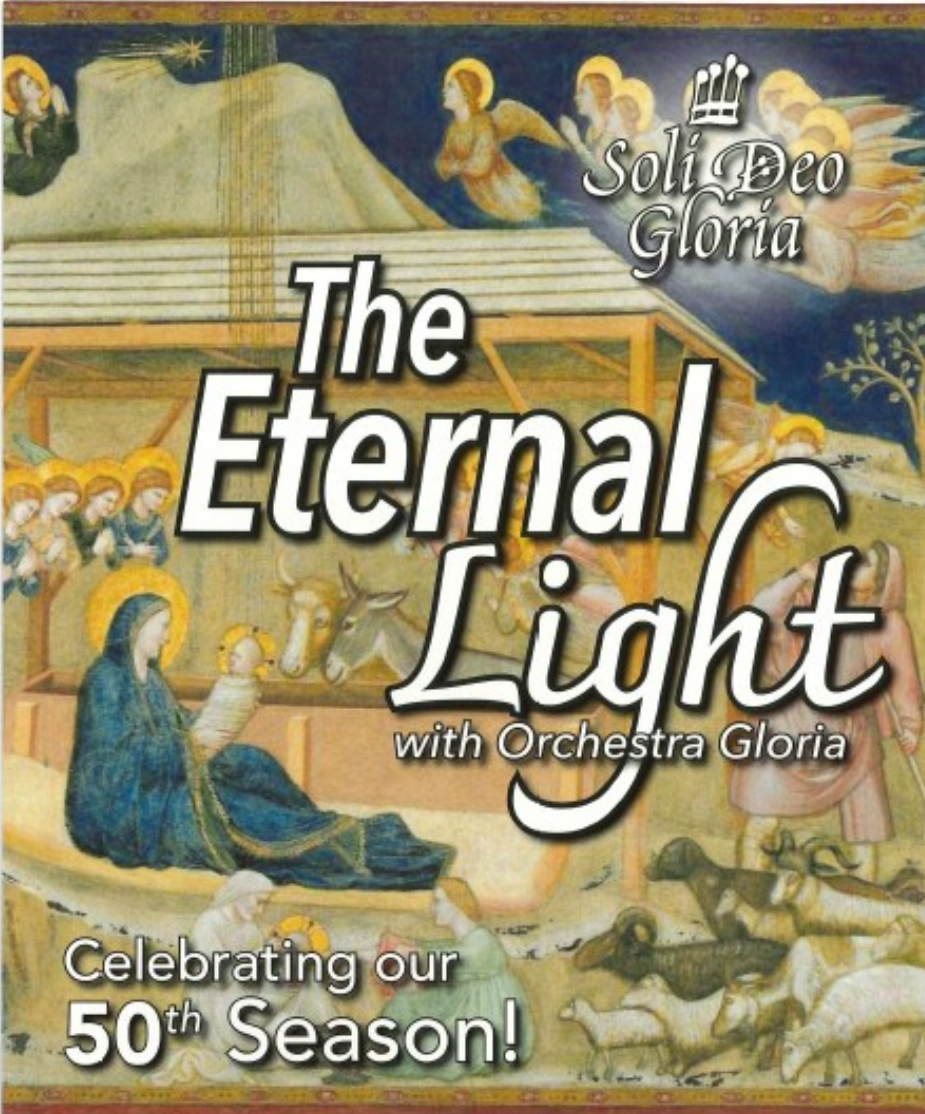
Each week TC provides **daytime shelter for 382** clients, serves **462 hot meals** and provides **480 articles of clothing**. During the rainy, cold months TC & the City of Walnut Creek sponsor a winter-long shelter from cold and rainy weather at the Walnut Creek Armory. This program reduces exposure from sleeping outside during cold, inclement weather and saves lives.

As we enter the Holiday season, please consider how you can help TC continue this progress in the fight against those suffering from poverty and homelessness. Our generosity and volunteerism will make a difference. You can help by visiting the [TC website](#) to learn how TC impacts our community and how you can provide financial support, volunteer, donate clothing and much needed support.

Thank you for all your past support and for any help you can provide.

We wish you and your family a Peaceful, Joyous Holiday Season.

Marty Fischer & Pam McGrath



Soli Deo Gloria


The Eternal Light

with Orchestra Gloria

Celebrating our
50th Season!

Saturday, December 6, 3:30 p.m.
St. Anselm's Episcopal Church, Lafayette

Sunday, December 7, 3:30 p.m.
St. Joseph Basilica, Alameda


Season Tickets:

\$60 General; \$50 Student/Senior
Grades K-8 are free at all concerts.

Order by Phone: (510) 522-1702

Order Online: www.sdgloria.org

 facebook.com/sdgloria

The Eternal Light

Embark on a musical journey through light and celebration with Soli Deo Gloria as we begin our 50th anniversary season. Derek Tam will conduct a concert of choral masterpieces that explore the spectrum of divine and human light. From the jubilant grandeur of J.S. Bach's majestic *Magnificat* to the radiant peace and profound beauty of Morten Lauridsen's transcendent *Lux Aeterna*, welcome your holiday season with music that glories in eternal hope and joy.



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. ANSELM'S

Advent is the first season of the church calendar, a season of preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth, and a time to cultivate hope. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, "*Hope is being able to see there is light despite of all of the darkness.*"

Advent Wreath Decorating

Sunday, November 30 at 11:15 a.m.

Advent Contemplative Eucharist

Wednesdays, December 3, 10, & 17 Noon to 1 p.m.

Bring your own lunch & walk our labyrinth in the parish hall after a simple service in the sanctuary.

Exploring the Gospel of Matthew

Thursdays, December 4, 11, & 18 at 7 p.m.

Thursday Zoom Bible Study will begin reading the Gospel of Matthew

First Sunday All Ages Service & Feast of St. Nicholas

Sunday, December 7 at 10 a.m.

Gratitude & Generosity: Advent Reflection

Sunday, December 14 at 11:15 a.m.

Drop-in Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 21 at 3 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 24 at 5 p.m.

Michael Lane Preschool



Happy Thanksgiving!

As we close out the month of November, I'm very grateful for all of the beautiful trees on the St. Anselm's campus which provide a beautiful backdrop for learning. I attached a photo of Will+ assisting us in raking up leaves in the parking lot! It reminds me of a scene from "It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown"! A sensory rich experience for the kids, and a joy to watch. We brought our collected leaves back to the school and threw them, raked them, and jumped in them for the rest of the week.

This month we read turkey stories to learn about the different ways families celebrate this special holiday, sang songs about Thanksgiving dinner ingredients running away, decorated our school with fall colors, and on Election Day voted on our snack. Blueberry muffins won the vote! We hope you are enjoying this wonderful time of year!

Fondly,
Holly Higgins
Preschool Director



REMEMBER A LOVED ONE IN ST. ANSELM'S MEMORIAL GARDEN

You may have noticed several plaques inside St. Anselm's Memorial Garden with the names of beloved deceased members, friends, and relatives inscribed. Thanks to the support of Peg Matson, Margaret Wolfe, and Christopher Johnson, we plan to update the plaques this month after many years.

If you would like the name of a friend, family member, or St. Anselm's parishioner who has died inscribed, please email Margaret Wolfe at margaret.w@stanselms.us by December 15th.

We plan to update the plaques annually each autumn ahead of All Saints Day. We kindly request a \$25 donation per name to cover the cost of the inscriptions. Please ensure checks written for this purpose or other gifts are so noted. If you have any questions please be in touch with Margaret Wolfe in the parish office.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Help provide refreshments following the service. To sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D45A5AF22A64-58747416-stanselms> or contact Sylvia Williams at 925-586-0730.



THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY



Exploring the Gospel of Matthew

**Thursdays
at 7:00 p.m.**

Meeting I.D. 815 0705 2148
Passcode 442879

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

Editor: Margaret Wolfe
email: margaret.w@stanselms.us

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

CELEBRATING...



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Janice Carrigan
Thomas Young
Katie Taggart
Julie Hullverson
Linda Carlson
Vicki Pappas
Maddy Chamberlain

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Diane & Tim Brown
Dharmini & Hema Harichandran



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 Pappas: vrpappas@gmail.com.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

All are invited to donate poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary during the Christmas season. You can make a donation in memory of a loved one, in honor of someone, or in thanksgiving for our many blessings.

Please submit a donation form and your payment to the church office with the desired dedication no later than Monday, December 15th. The forms are available in the weekly bulletin and in the December issue of Canterbury Tales.

The donation request is \$15.00 per plant. Checks can be made payable to "St. Anselm's Episcopal Church" indicating "Altar Guild" on the memo line. Thank you!

ST. ANSELM'S STAFF

The Rev. Will Scott, Rector
The Rev. Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, Deacon
Chris Kula, Director of Music
Margaret Wolfe, Office Manager
Steve Zimmerman, Bookkeeper
Holly Higgins, Michael Lane Preschool Director

To schedule an in person conversation with Rev. Will,
email: rector@stanselms.us



St. Anselm's Poinsettia Donation

Name _____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

In thanksgiving for: _____

The donation request is \$15.00 per plant. Checks can be made payable to "St. Anselm's Episcopal Church" indicating "Altar Guild" on the memo line. Please submit your form and check to the church office by December 15. Thank you!

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
 682 Michael Lane
 Lafayette, CA 94549
 (925) 284-7420
www.stanselms.us

Celebrating 65 Years



“... a nurturing community for people of all ages who seek to know God, grow, and serve.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

November's Ministry of the Month: Vestry

Tuesday, December 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th — Morning Prayer will be led by Deacon Naomi via Zoom at 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, December 2nd — Grief Support Group will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon.

Tuesday, December 2nd — Property Commission will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 3rd/10th/17th — Advent Contemplative Eucharist from Noon – 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Thursday, December 4th/11th/18th — Evening Bible Study will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

Friday, December 5th/12th/19th/26th — Lamorinda Village Strength & Balance class from 11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m. in Parish Hall

Saturday, December 6th — Soli Deo Glorai Concert at 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 7th — First Sunday All Ages Service & Feast of St. Nicholas at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 7th — Altar Guild at 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 14th — Gratitude & Generosity: Advent Reflection at 11:15 a.m.

Sunday, December 14th — Cancer Support Group will meet in the conference room and via Zoom at 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, December 17th — Stephen Ministers will meet at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 21st — Drop-in Christmas Pageant at 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 21st — Vestry Meeting will meet in the conference room at 11:15 a.m. All are welcome to attend.