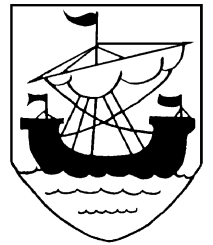


Canterbury Tales



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

February, 2021

From The Rector

Dare we hope?

Many years back, when Kate was a toddler, we added on to our house. We went from a 900 square foot house to a 1,200 square foot house. Having a second bathroom and our first walk-in closet was a big improvement.

Cost was a major factor for us at the time, so we went with the lowest bidder. He was a friend of a friend, who was going through a divorce. It was a tough time in his life. He underbid the work and we knew what we were getting into when we started.

Some days he would show up, some weeks he would not. The work which might have taken another contractor weeks to complete, in the end took a year. At times our back wall was visqueen.

Believe it or not, Liz and I never questioned our decision to hire the contractor. He was a good guy. The whole experience could have been much worse, because from the beginning, we had steeled ourselves for the fact that this was going to take time. It wasn't the Siege of Leningrad, but it was a full year. And in some ways, as the finish of the job approached, it was oddly a harder transition out than it had been in. We kind of knew what to expect going in. But coming out?

Here we are, approaching a year of living under the shadow of Covid. We all know people who have received their first vaccine at this point, some of us have our second scheduled soon.

But we may have gotten used to this 'sheltering in place.' Zoom services aren't so bad, right?

How are we going to look coming out of this? Is it going to be an easy transition?

I have no idea. But I can tell you that for some of us it might not be all that easy. Sure, I know there are those reading this saying, 'It will be for me!'

I have a mental image; I don't know if I got it from a movie or where. It is of people who have long been living in darkness. A great light dawns and beckons them to emerge from the shadows. Covering their eyes they are nearly blinded by the light. They are silent. Words cannot begin to capture the power of the moment, shared by all. They are on equal footing, as children who have been waiting for this moment, not certain it would ever come. And as their eyes adjust to the light, they see each other in a way they have never seen each other before- as equals, as brothers and sisters who have known darkness. And in that knowledge they share as one, the wonder of beholding light.

Dare we hope?

John+

Anselm's Angels

"Extraordinary things are always hiding in places people never think to look."

~ Jodi Picoult

A very big thank you to the following parishioners who continue to help St. Anselm's stay connected and operating during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chris Young for serving as our official cameraman and Zoom expert to make sure we all have access to Sunday services.

Andrew Huddart for adding music to our virtual services.

Sara Nelson for making weekly bank deposits.

Sally Fischer for regularly checking altar supplies .

Our January virtual lectors and Lay Eucharist Ministers: **Wynne Bacon, Anne Brown, Sheila Gorsuch, Peter Grace, Caroline Huddart, Marian Mulkey, Sara-Anne Nelson, Vicki Pappas, Liz Sutton** and **Allen Zhang**. Also, a big thank you to **Judy Peak** for making these arrangements each week.

Welcome to our new class of 2024 Vestry members: **Marty Fischer, Neva Flaherty, Elisabeth Ward & Chris Young** and to **Joan Martin** who is serving a two-year term in the class of 2023. Congratulations to our new Senior Warden, **Eva Woo** and our new Junior Warden, **Joan Martin**.

Congratulations to our new Deanery Delegates: **Neva Flaherty, Sara Nelson, Chris Stone** and **Liz Sutton** and to our new Deanery Alternate: **Gerry Starr**.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

The Super Bowl will be held on Sunday February 7th, and as we have in years past, St. Anselm's will be taking a collection to support the work of The Contra Costa and Solano County Food Bank. While we will not have our youth collecting donations at the doors after church on the 7th, the need is as critical as it ever has been this year. The church will match all donations up to \$1,000 as in years past. To participate, you may send the donation by Venmo, or simply write a check to St. Anselm's with "Souper Bowl Sunday" on the memo line. Our mailing address is 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549.

**VENMO ACCOUNT**

St. Anselm's continues to maintain a Venmo account so you can transfer funds directly to the church via your smart phone.

If you would like instructions on how to do so, please email Cathy Witkay at cathy.w@stanselms.ws. Alternatively, you can always donate by sending a check to the church. The mailing address is: 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549
Thank you!

LENTEN SOCK DRIVE FOR FOLKS AT TRINITY CENTER

Dear Family of St. Anselm's

As we are still not together in the church, I would like for those of you who would like to contribute to the Deacon's Socks project to write a check for the amount you would be buying the socks for and send your check to the church. For those of you who are new to St. Anselm's, for the last 10 years parishioners have brought new warm white athletic socks to church and I have taken them to Trinity Center during Lent, and they have distributed the socks to those in need. Folks have been very appreciative of your kindness and great generosity.



With deepest thanks,
Deacon Naomi

WEEKLY LIVE-STREAM SERVICE LINK

For your convenience the Meeting ID and passcode for our weekly live-stream services are highlighted below. Should you wish to invite friends to the service, feel free. If your friends would like to become regular participants, send their email and contact info to Cathy Witkay at cathy.w@stanselms.ws. Also, after the service we will continue to provide a link to the service for later viewing via email and on the church's website. Please also note that individuals who use gmail may find that weekly invitations have been sent to "junk" or "spam" folders.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88290737384?pwd=M1o3c2oyVFJxTENnMVNVSHhRK0Zldz09>

Meeting ID: 882 9073 7384



Canterbury Tales is the monthly newsletter of

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, CA
Phone: (925) 284-7420

e-mail: cathy.w@stanselms.ws
web site: www.stanselms.ws

Editor: Cathy S. Witkay

Virtual Sunday Service:
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

St. Anselm's Staff
The Rev. John Sutton, Rector
The Rev. Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, Deacon
Cathy Witkay, Office Manager

The Senior Warden

Hello all you wonderful folks, have I told you how good you look today? No? Well you look fantastic!

This is how I greet you on Sundays when it's my turn for the announcements. And I'm not just saying this, you all do look fantastic! This has been an incredibly hard year on so many different levels and you all have weathered the storm with such grace and dignity, I feel honored to be counted among you.

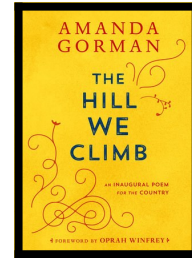
As many of you know, this year has been incredibly trying in my work life, not to mention personal life. I have been called upon to go above and beyond what I thought my job would be. There have been times that I've worked 13 days in a row, worked late into the night and before the sun has risen. I have missed countless services for being called to work. To say it's been stressful would be an understatement. But through it all, the support and love I have received as your fellow parishioner and friend has been a balm to my tired spirit. With the support from my incredible family and all of you, this year that had the potential to beat me down has only made me stronger and surer than ever that I am on the right path.

I am humbled to have served as your Senior Warden during one of the most trying times in recent history. As a vestry, we have had to make some tough calls over the last year. The folks I have worked with have shown such strength, unity and compassion and I am grateful for the time spent having discussions and making decisions with these incredible folks. I feel confident as I leave my position as Senior Warden and member of the vestry, those who remain and who are joining will continue to take St. Anselm's higher and higher. They will continue the work that moves us forward spiritually, guiding our parish into a bright future, full of light and joy.

This is why I want to leave you with words from Amanda Gorman's poem "The Hill We Climb." These words speak to moving forward in the light and I truly believe that St. Anselm's is that light.

*"When day comes we step out of the shade,
aflame and unafraid
The new dawn blooms as we free it
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it
If only we're brave enough to be it"*

Shanda Young



Winter Nights and Us

For me, one of the saddest consequences of Covid this year was that we couldn't host Winter Nights. Every year I look forward to connecting with those families, but also with other members of our congregation, sometimes getting to know each other or really becoming friends for the first time, as we serve together - and - let's not forget the annual wonton-making lesson by Eva's mom and the delicious soup that results!

St. Anselm's is going to have our turn to serve from Feb. 27 through March 5, though it will look very different. Because of Covid, Contra Costa County has said that only 4 families can be hosted at once and that they need to be there for a month. Only paid staff can interact with them. Dinner meals can only be prepared in commercial, licensed kitchens and delivered. Winter Nights has been able to find 8 churches willing and able to host for a month each, starting the beginning of November and ending mid-June. Other churches have been assigned as cohosts, for a week each, to buy supplies and hot meals.

Starting on Feb. 22, the families will be at Walnut Creek Friends Church, 1950 First Ave. St. Anselm's will be the co-host for their second week there. Our job is to buy and deliver breakfast and lunch supplies. The staff will give us a list of what they need and want. We will also order take-out dinners from restaurants that will be delivered or we will drop off trays of packaged food from Costco, Safeway, etc.

Please let Eva Woo (eva94549@gmail.com or 925-876-9435) or me (annechalfantbrown@gmail.com or 925-788-0664) know if and how you are willing to serve. Would you be willing to buy and deliver breakfast and lunch supplies? Would you be willing to order hot meals for dinner? Would you be able/willing to make a donation? Because of the need to order dinners, the cost will be higher than usual for us, although Winter Nights is willing to help out from their funds.

Thank you so much!
Anne Brown

Lenten Series : Restorative Justice In and Around Us

“Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?” The Baptismal Covenant calls us to uphold justice, peace and dignity for all. But when division and isolation are so apparent in political discourse and local news, living up to that call may feel particularly challenging. Punishing or exacting retribution from those who have caused hurt or harm may feel necessary but often does little to restore trust and rebuild community.

The practice of Restorative Justice begins with truth-telling and leads to restitution and reconciliation that respects the needs of those harmed, yet upholds the humanity of those who have caused harm. In both educational settings and in the criminal justice context, Restorative Justice practices can transform the trajectories of individuals and communities.

This year’s Lenten Series will feature speakers whose experiences and stories will illustrate how restorative justice practices can make a positive difference for individuals and communities. The series will be held in a Zoom format, Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on February 23, March 2, 9 and 16.

We anticipate that the series may move participants to support local efforts, to volunteer or engage with community organizations in new ways, or to re-examine individual or community needs for truth and reconciliation. While we hope that many participants will be able to attend all four sessions, there is no obligation to join us for more than one.

Speakers and session themes are as follows:

- **February 23:** Jodie Geddes, Healing Services Manager at Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY), will describe how restorative approaches in schools can be an effective means of early intervention, repairing harm and preventing re-offending.
- **March 2:** Leonard Rubio, Executive Director of Insight Prison Project, will describe his organization’s Victim Offender Education Groups in which inmates engage in intensive small group processes to examine before one another and outside facilitators the impact of their crimes on their victim, their victim’s family and themselves. Leonard’s message will be grounded in his own story as a formerly incarcerated man.
- **March 9:** Deacon John Storm, director of Restorative Justice Ministries for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Santa Rosa. Deacon Storm provides pastoral care to all those harmed by crime in his community: victims and their families, offenders and their families, first responders and law enforcement personnel, and the public. Earlier in his career Deacon Storm served as a parole officer and in other law enforcement roles.
- **March 16:** Speaker panel/ facilitated small group discussions (details forthcoming)

To be invited, email Cathy Witkay at cathy.w@stanselms.ws . For more information, contact Marian Mulkey, marianmulkey@comcast.net or Anne Brown, annechalfantbrown@gmail.com of the Christian Formation Commission.

Dear Family of St. Anselm's,

I would like to start a running article for Canterbury Tales full of terrific ideas that I have probably not thought of this past year but I would appreciate knowing, especially since I live alone. One that I would like to share with you.....

About a year ago my son Jim installed an Alexa for me. Last June, I was not paying attention to what I was doing and didn't plant my foot securely on the step from my kitchen to my dining room and fell. The pain in my left leg was excruciating and I was afraid that I had re- broken my left hip. My home phone and cell phone were in the kitchen with me on the floor in the dining room. Luckily I remembered the Alexa and that Jim had programmed his cell number and my youngest son Matthew's cell number and Emergency 911 into Alexa. I called out to Alexa to call Jim and it did. Jim and Kim came right away and called for an ambulance. For someone living alone, Alexa was a life saver for me. I invite you to share your tips with all of us. And, of course, remember not to be clumsy like me.

Blessings,
Deacon Naomi

Stephen Ministers

Stephen Ministers provide one-to-one care to those who may be suffering from crises such as illness, loss of a loved one, divorce, family issues, a spiritual crisis or a financial setback. Now, during the pandemic there is even greater need to walk beside those who are suffering from isolation, anxiety, and pandemic fatigue. Yes, it is wonderful that we have our own priest, Father John, who is an incredible pastoral minister to our parishioners, so why would we need Stephen Ministers to give care? The answer is that our Stephen Ministers can give long term one-to-one Christ-centered care for about an hour a week to a hurting person. Our Stephen Ministers have undergone many hours of training to learn to listen and pray with people undergoing a difficult time while maintaining confidentiality.



Why would anyone want to be a Stephen Minister? Stephen Ministry service puts the Bible's words into action. The Bible tells us in Galatians 6:2, "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." By becoming a Stephen Minister people can learn to listen, pray, help to process feelings, learn to maintain boundaries, share scripture and remain process-oriented in a caring Stephen Ministry relationship.

One of the most amazing discoveries for Stephen Ministers is how God has worked in our caring relationships. We learn in Stephen Ministry to rely on God, not on ourselves. We are not there to fix a problem. We learn early in our training that we are the Care Givers, but God is the Cure Giver. This knowledge takes pressure off of everyone involved to achieve results. Instead, we rely on God to help guide us and to help the Care Receiver grow and change as we meet each week. The Stephen Ministry relationship is centered on Christ's love.

During the Pandemic we can still provide care through safe social distancing practices such as phone or video chat. If you would like to know more about Stephen Ministry please contact me or Father John. If you or someone you care about is interested in having a Stephen Minister let me know. The person does not have to be a member of St. Anselm's Episcopal Church. See the Stephen Ministries website for wonderful testimonials from both those who have received and given care: <https://www.stephenministries.org/>

Vicki Pappas, Stephen Leader
vrpappas@gmail.com; (925) 818-7051

There are more than 600,000 Stephen Ministers trained in over 13,000 congregations worldwide.

Michael Lane Preschool

Happy 2021!

We have been back at preschool since January 5th, and are very grateful for it! As Kim and Peg pointed out to me, the children all seemed to mature over the winter break and are in the rhythm of school and our routines.

We now have 14 children in our Tuesday/Thursday class, 12 children in our Monday/Wednesday/Friday class and a wait list for the program. I am so happy that our school seems to grow and shine during this strange time.

This month we are learning about snow, winter clothes, winter animals, and continue to clap out the syllables of our classmates' names, rhyme, and become more familiar with letters and their sounds. Both classes loved having Pajama Day this month, where we served hot chocolate and whipped cream with our snack and did cozy activities all day.

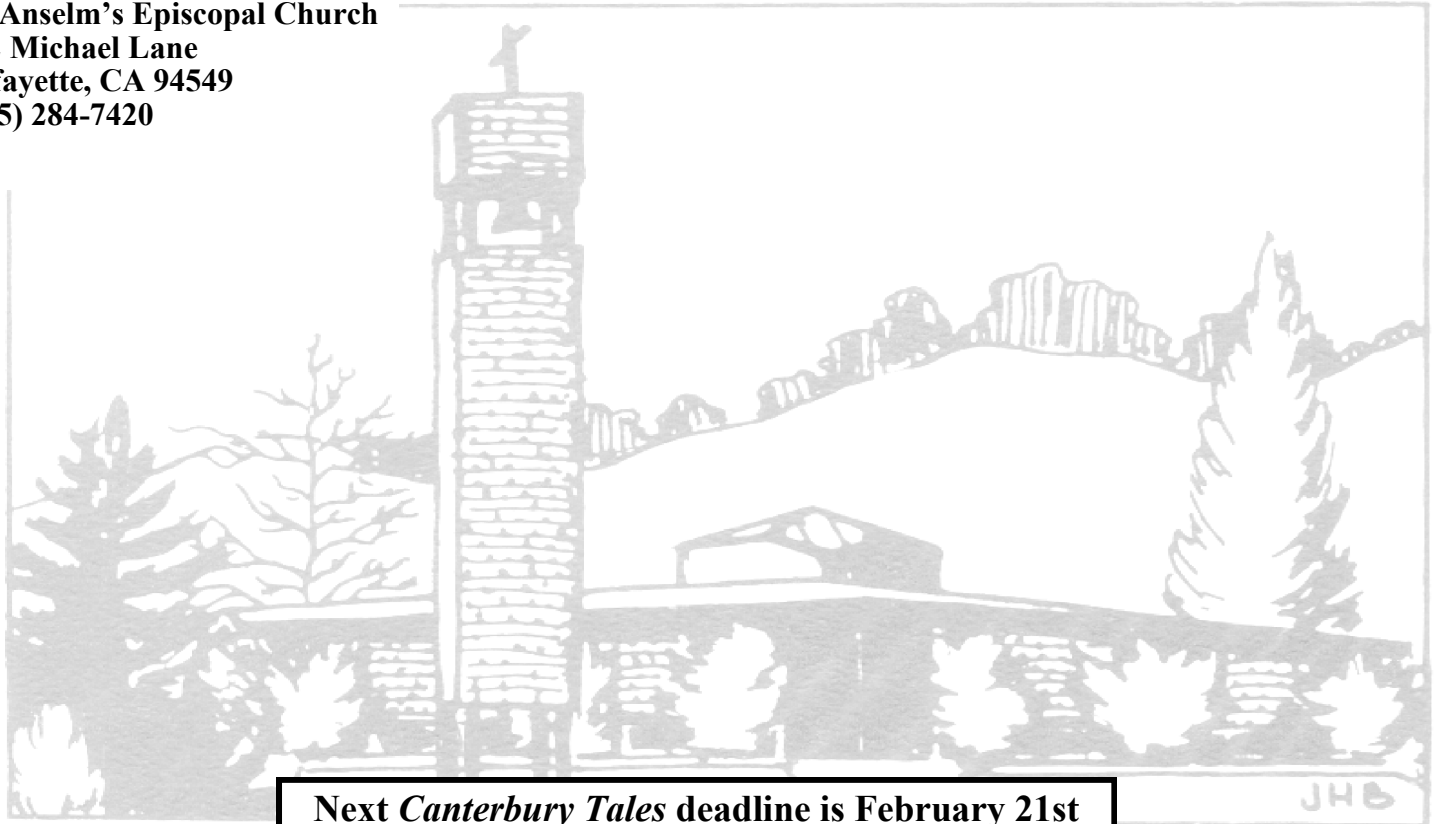
Here's to more growth and success ahead!

Holly Higgins
 Director, Michael Lane Preschool



ue

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



Next *Canterbury Tales* deadline is February 21st

SCHEDULE OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS

February 2nd, Grief Support Group will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon. To be invited, email Father John at suttonj@comcast.net.

February 3rd and each Wednesday in February, Morning Prayer will be held via Zoom at 9:00 AM. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at orchidsnrch@yahoo.com.

February 3rd and each Wednesday in February, Evening Bible Study will meet via Zoom at 7:00. To be invited, email Cathy Witkay at cathy.w@stanselms.ws.

February 7th, Cancer Support Group will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon. To be invited, email Julie Rinkenberger at jrjpmaggie@hotmail.com.

February 8th, Vestry will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM. Vestry members will receive an email from Father John with the meeting link..

February 17th, Ash Wednesday Service via Zoom at 5:00 PM. Invitation will be emailed in advance. However, if you do not see an invitation by January 29th, please email Cathy Witkay at cathy.w@stanselms.ws.

February 23, Lenten Series will be held via Zoom at 7:00 PM. To be invited, email Cathy Witkay at cathy.w@stanselms.ws .

February 27th to March 5th, Winter Nights at Walnut Creek Friends Church. To help out contact Eva Woo at eva94549@gmail.com or 925-876-9435; or Anne Brown, at annechalfantbrown@gmail.com or 925-788-0664
