

*"For it is good to be children
sometimes, and never better
than at Christmas,
when its mighty Founder
was a child Himself."*

—CHARLES DICKENS



Join us for eucharistic services on Sundays at 10 a.m. You may view the sermon on Facebook if you are not able to attend.

We will be having two services on Christmas Eve at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

The Piper

December 2023



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A Message from Father Martin

Dear Friends,

The Season of Advent is upon us, a time to prepare for Christ's birth – his coming – in our hearts and into this world. It is a season to wait with hope for what is to come, to ponder and watch for what is already coming to be, and to listen for angels and joyful surprises.

Here at St. Andrew's, let us slow down this Advent. Try not to get too caught up in things to do, and to reflect on God's love coming to us in the mystery of Jesus' birth. Take time to pray, to ponder, to watch the changing seasons. This Advent season is a gift for us personally and as a parish community.

In this Piper issue, there are several opportunities for reflection: two Advent poems by the Episcopal writer Madeleine L'Engle, the Franciscan blessing that Bishop Lucinda Ashby offered at our altar and also a passage she referred to on being "prophets of a future not our own". I have ordered an Advent devotional booklet for each of us with a quotation from the writer Henri Nouwen, a reflection and a prayer for each day between now and Christmas. The Diocese is offering an Advent Retreat day in both San Jose (December 2 – let me know if you would like to ride with me) and in Pacific Grove (Dec. 16). It will be a good season.

We had a very good visit with Bishop Lucinda on last month on the 12th for worship and conversation over lunch. Giving Estimates ("pledges") for 2024 are being received – thank you all for your generosity in your pledges and estimates. Every gift is a good gift, and all are needed as we plan for the coming year sharing God's love through Jesus.

Looking ahead to Christmas, December 24 is a Sunday this year. That means we will celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent with worship at 10 am. Then we return at 7:00 pm for a glorious Christmas Eve service at 7:00 pm with a special Christmas Choir. (Choir practice begins Sunday, December 10 at 9 am.)

We will not offer a Christmas Day service this year. I recommend the Christmas Day service at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Scotts Valley at 10 am Christmas morning.

We are also invited to a Lessons and carols service offered by three Scotts Valley churches: St. Philip's, San Agustin Catholic, and Community Covenant Churches. It will be on Tuesday, December 19 at 7 pm at Community Covenant Church, 2700 El Rancho Drive (with the 3 crosses next to the freeway).

Prayer of Archbishop Romero *

It helps now and then to step back and take the long view. The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that should be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the church's mission.

No set goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted,

knowing that they hold the future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further developments.

We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,

and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something,

and do it well.

It may be incomplete,

but it is a beginning,

a step along the way,

an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,

but that is the difference

between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders,

ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future that is not our own.

Amen.

*This prayer was composed by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw, drafted for a homily by Cardinal John Dearden in Nov. 1979 for a celebration of departed priests. As a reflection on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Bishop Romero, Bishop Untener included in a reflection book a passage titled "The mystery of the Romero Prayer". The mystery is that the words of the prayer are attributed to Oscar Romero, but they were never spoken by him.

Diocesan Advent Retreat

The Mysteries of the Season of Advent

Saturday, December 2 @ St. Francis, Willow Glen

Saturday, December 9 @ St. James, Paso Robles

Saturday, December 16 @ St. Mary's, Pacific Grove

All retreats are 10am to 3pm

Diocese of El Camino Real Advent Retreat on December 16th – You are invited to a diocese-wide Advent Retreat and we hope you will join us! On Saturday, December 16th, we will be at St. Mary's, Pacific Grove, and will gather at 10am for worship, Bible study, and reflection. You are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and bring a journal or computer, if you are someone who enjoys writing while reflecting. Lunch will be provided, and there is a \$10 suggested donation to help with the cost of lunch, but this is not a required contribution. The retreat will end by 3pm. The theme of the day is "The Mysteries of the Season of Advent" and the retreat will be led by the diocesan Advent Retreat committee. Questions? Please email Canon Martha at canonmartha@realepiscopal.org.

The link to register, is: <https://forms.gle/JApPuKz8CxFDEcR67>

Advent is a season for patience. Remember with me the words of James 5:7 – "Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains." More is going on in our hearts and lives, our parish and community, than we may be able to see or sense. Let us trust God and wait. As the writer Simone Weil said; "Waiting
"Waiting patiently in expectation is the foundation of the spiritual life."

Faithfully yours,
Martin+

The Risk of Birth by Madeleine L. Engle

This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed by war & hate
And a comet slashing the sky to warn
That time runs out & the sun burns late.
That was no time for a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honor & truth were trampled to scorn—
Yet here did the Savior make His home.
When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn—



Garden of



Cranberry Lemon Bars



INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CRANBERRY LAYER

- ◆ 1(12-ounce) bag fresh or frozen cranberries
- ◆ ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ◆ 2 to 3 large lemons

FOR THE CRUST

- ◆ Nonstick cooking spray
- ◆ 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ◆ ⅓ cup granulated sugar
- ◆ 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ ¾ cup unsalted butter (1½ sticks), melted and cooled

FOR THE LEMON LAYER

- ◆ 1 cup/200 grams granulated sugar
- ◆ ¼ cup/30 grams all-purpose flour
- ◆ ⅓ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ◆ 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- ◆ Confectioners' sugar (optional)

PREPARATION

Step 1

Start preparing the cranberry layer: Combine the cranberries, sugar and 3 tablespoons water in a medium saucepan. Zest 2 of the lemons directly into the saucepan; reserve the lemons. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Continue boiling, stirring occasionally, until the berries burst and the mixture is jammy, 7 to 9 minutes. Remove from the heat and reserve.

Step 2

Make the crust: Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom and sides of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with one large sheet of heavy aluminum foil, making sure there are no gaps or holes, then generously coat with cooking spray.

Step 3

Whisk the flour, sugar and salt in a medium bowl. Whisk the vanilla into the butter, then pour over the flour mixture. Stir until the dough comes together in a mass. Press into an even layer in the prepared pan. Bake until golden brown around the edges and dry and golden on top, 17 to 20 minutes.

Step 4

While the crust bakes, begin preparing the lemon layer: Squeeze the juice from the 2 reserved zested lemons. You should have ½ cup. Squeeze the juice from another lemon, if needed.

Step 5

Whisk the sugar, flour and salt in a medium bowl. Add the eggs and whisk gently just until incorporated. Add the lemon juice and stir gently with the whisk just until smooth.

Step 6

Let the crust cool for 5 minutes, then spread the cranberry mixture evenly over the crust. Carefully and slowly pour the lemon mixture on top to create two distinct layers.

Step 7

Return the pan to the oven and bake until the filling is set, 18 to 22 minutes. Cool completely in the pan on a wire rack, then refrigerate until cold and firm, at least 2 hours. Using the foil, slide the bars out of the pan and onto a cutting board. Cut into 24 squares, wiping your knife between cuts for clean slices. If desired, sift confectioners' sugar over the tops just before serving.

First Coming by Madeleine L'Engle



He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.

He did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!



St. Andrew's Birthdays

December Birthdays

- 1 Jeannie Henry
- 7 Bob Wolfe
- 12 Madison LeRoux

January Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 5 Nicki Kearns | 15 Larry Laufenberg |
| 6 Christopher Mello | 17 Sari Mitchell |
| 6 Sara Hector | 19 Beth Leslie |
| 10 Kim Rooks | 28 Malachi Erdman |
| 12 Sandra Cadell | 30 Viria Erdman |



Coffee Hour Organizers

- December 3 — Susan Greer
- December 10 — Barbara Banke
- December 17 — Eve Yabroff
- December 24 — Ellen Terry
- December 31 — Janet Parske

HeeHeeHee!!!

The temporary Sunday School teacher was struggling to open a combination lock on the supply cabinet. She had been told the combination, but couldn't quite remember it. She went to the pastor's study and asked for help. The pastor came into the room and began to turn the dial. After the first two numbers he paused and stared blankly for a moment. Finally he looked serenely heavenward and his lips moved silently. Then he looked back at the lock, and quickly turned to the final number, and opened the lock. The teacher was amazed. "I'm in awe at your faith, pastor," she said. "It's really nothing," he answered. "The number is on a piece of tape on the ceiling."

Cover image: freepix.com

ON THE SCHEDULE

Join us at 10 am on Sundays

Watch the sermon on the St. Andrew's Facebook page.

Kirking of the Tartans

Our Vestry has decided that the Kirking of the Tartans event will not be held this year because it was not organized nor were arrangements completed in a timely manner. The Vestry plans on working early next year on a year-long parish calendar for all our planned events and with coordinators and leadership identified well in advance. We look forward to some creative planning for an event or weekend exploring Celtic and Scottish history and culture, reaching out to our local community, and sharing the Celtic Christian roots of St. Andrew's and the Episcopal Church.



Holiday Artisan Fair

Purchase handmade Guatemalan jewelry and scarves at the parish hall in support of Limitless Horizons Ixil's work in Chajul, Guatemala.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
101 Riverside Ave.
Ben Lomond, CA 95005

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023
11:00 AM

The poster features a woman in traditional Guatemalan attire spinning yarn on a loom. The background is dark red with decorative elements like a sun and stars. The text is in white and yellow.

SAVE THE DATE! We will be having an all day paper crafts day to work on scrap books, greeting cards, or whatever you want to make on Saturday, January 27, 9 AM to 9 PM, in the parish hall. More details soon -- but save the date! Contact Sue Roe at 562-243-4080 (cell) or 831-609-6737 (home) or suemhr@aol.com if you have any questions in the meantime.

St. Andrew's Vestry Members

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Rochelle Kelly, Senior Warden | Cindy Garay |
| John Woolliscroft, Junior Warden | Sara Hector |
| Susan Greer, Clerk | Sue Roe |
| Steve Lefever | |

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, please forward them to any of the Vestry members. Vestry meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 1 pm in the Parish Hall.

Thoughts from Steve Lafever



It was Sunday several years ago, I was at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Massachusetts. My good friend Barbara Thrall was preaching. Like this past Sunday at St. Andrew's, the scripture was about Jesus asking his disciples why they did not feed him or give him drink or clothe him. Their collective puzzled response denied they had done this. And then His message was clear. Whatever you fail to do to others, you fail to do to Him. That is such a difficult task for many of us to understand or follow. It was snowing outside as I left the church. I brushed off the snow from my car windows and looked across the road where I saw a woman bundled up pushing a cart. There weren't many homeless in the area so this was an oddity. I got in my car, turned on the heat. I started to drive off. I can't explain it, but somewhere in my mind, the words of the day's scripture rattled through my cold head. I felt ashamed that this woman was struggling in the snow and I had done nothing. She had disappeared down the street. I drove around for a while until I spotted her again. I got out and talked to her. She told me she had a shelter but was hungry so I gave her sufficient money to buy some food. She said, "God bless you." I don't know why but I did feel blessed. I drove home and that experience and those feelings stayed with me for a long time. Feed my sheep are three words said by Jesus but are perhaps the most important three words of our religion and devotion to God and all the world. Feed My Sheep!

My family chastises me all the time because I seem ignorant of the world for not watching the news. As a person who majored in history in college, I don't really need to watch the news.

It's merely a repeat of the past. We aren't doing any things history hasn't recorded before. The news merely gives us a 21st Century look at how much more efficiently we are at doing it.

Mark Twain wrote a book titled, A Pen Warmed Up in Hell. I am reminded of this book. He talks about the Church. He talks about how the world eventually came to the conclusion that there were no such things as witches, so no need to burn any more. The world came to the conclusion that slavery was not right, so the church finally agreed, but kept the scriptures about slavery which caused quite a stir during the Civil War (talk about oxymorons). The Spanish Inquisition found many ways to make someone to confess to just about anything and then execute them. After church Sunday, people talked about how the church executed so many indigenous people in California for failure to convert to Christianity, Mark Twain says that man eventually figures it out and then the church follows. "If man continues in this direction of enlightenment, his religious practice may, in the end, attain some semblance of human decency."

So, I turned on the news today. There was a story about two Israeli young men that were executed and their bodies displayed in the town square. One was hanging upside down. People came to see and take pictures and the crowd chanted. "Allahu Akbar." God is great.

So the world is full of contradictions and repetition. On one hand we have killing, war, atrocities and fighting over land. On the other we have Jesus telling us to feed his sheep. Sometimes it makes me very sad to feel so powerless and not understanding why God's love and His word is lost in a sea of hate.

Praise God for the Episcopal Church. It may take a while, we may argue and debate, but eventually we end up loving one another. Bishop Curry will be a hard act to follow, but his quote, "*If it's not about love, it's not about Jesus,*" will guide this denomination for a long time to come! **Alleluia!**

A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen . . .

Sr Ruth Fox
OSB - 1986