

The Witness

Volume 29, Issue 3

Welcoming Worshipping Working

March 2025

Special points of interest:

Sunday

8:00 AM Service
10:00 AM Service with coffee hour following the service

Monday

8:30AM Prayers & Pastries at The Bridge Café—1074 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo

Wednesday

12:15 PM Service



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The Absent Wilderness of Lent

By The Rev Ian M Delinger, Rector

Two days after the big storm in mid-February, I made my weekly Saturday pilgrimage to Avila Beach where I often finish my sermons. It was a bright and sunny morning, but unusually deserted. The beach was strewn with large pieces of driftwood, and there were channels in the sand that, if you weren't paying attention while strolling, were deep enough to cause one to fall and probably injure themselves. I strolled the length of the beach while I read my sermon aloud, muted to any passerby by the larger-than-usual crashing waves. It was beautiful, as usual!

Reflecting on that stroll as Lent approaches made me realize that it's hard to get to that desolate place that the season of Lent sometimes conjures up when one's physical surroundings are outstandingly beautiful even during and after a major storm! We're surrounded by everything that Lent calls us *away from*: it's hard to see the need for fasting, almsgiving and prayer living where we do! It's absent the wilderness, far different from where Jesus was led by the Spirit to spend 40 days eating nothing and being tempted by the devil. We live in the middle of the temptations!



Avila Beach driftwood unceaned by the storm.

Spiritual discipline is challenging when one's surroundings do not parallel one's spiritual and cognitive aspirations. But all that glitters is not gold! There are many for whom San Luis Obispo is not the "Happiest City in America" as was touted back in the mid-2010s by several media outlets, including Oprah! So, can our Lenten discipline of fasting, almsgiving and prayer be directed outward toward those within our community who are less likely to be able to enjoy everything this area has to offer?

During the Annual Giving Campaign, we talk about the 3 Ts: Time, Talent and Treasure, and what you can offer to the ministries of St Stephen's. Take a moment to think about those whose Time, Talent and Treasure doesn't enable them to enjoy San Luis Obispo to its fullest.

As your Lenten discipline, maybe you could reach past your comfort zone to make someone else's life less of a wilderness.

Time: Volunteer at 40 Prado when they open the warming shelter. Volunteers

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(Continued from front page)

are always needed there, and at SLO Food Bank.

Talent: Buy from a local artist, musician or an artisan food and drink purveyor, or give an exceptional tip to a worn out waiter who still manages to smile, or donate to a non-profit about whose work you weren't previously fully aware.

Treasure: Gift someone an experience within the beauty and bounty of SLO County who has limited treasure.

Every couple of years, the practice of Lent is *re-think!* *What does prayer, fasting and almsgiving look like in our time?* (Particularly fasting). There are probably many ways that you can "get into the groove" of the invitation you will receive on Ash Wednesday:

the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

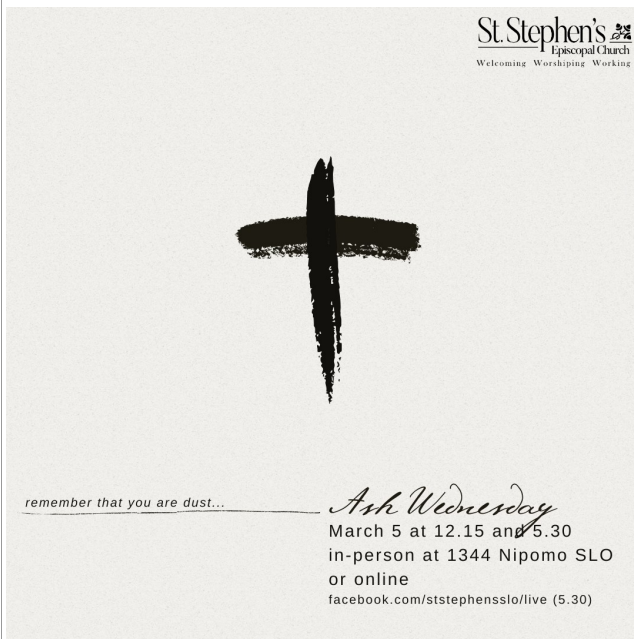
All accomplished in our beautiful surroundings!

I leave you with this prayer by Dick Williams:

As the days lengthen and the earth spends longer in the light of day, grant that I may spend longer in the light of your presence, O Lord, and may those seeds of your Word, which have been long-buried within me, grow, like everything around us, into love for you, and love for people; to become a visible declaration of your Lordship in my life. Grant, Father, that this Lent there may be a springtime for my life in Christ.

Lent Begins

Ash Wednesday is March 5, 2025. There will be two services: 12:15 and 5:30pm. They will both be Eucharists with the Imposition of Ashes.



St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church
Welcoming Worshiping Working

remember that you are dust...

Ash Wednesday
March 5 at 12.15 and 5.30
in-person at 1344 Nipomo SLO
or online
facebook.com/ststephensslo/live (5.30)



SHROVE TUESDAY PIZZA SUPPER

MARCH 4 @ 6PM

It's time to "pre-Lent" with pizza!
Join Fr Ian at Woodstock's Pizza.

KINDA LIKE PANGAKES!

Notes From the Choir Loft—March 2025



In a recent staff meeting, Father Ian asked me how I could recognize Women's History Month this March 2025. I replied by saying I could feature women composers and lyricists. Fr. Ian gave me the go ahead and that is exactly what I have done for the month of March.

In researching sacred music written by women composers, I discovered fascinating websites that have been compiled for music written by women. One such site is Women Composers Database. This website is a curated database of sacred music compiling choral music and voluntaries by women composers for the church year, with listings for each Sunday and feast days. There are also sheets with listings for Mass Settings, Evening Canticles, Responses, and Anglican Chant by women composers. This site is a gold mine for church music directors!

Another great source for music written by women is the hymnal, "Voices Found". This hymnal is a unique compilation of contemporary and historical materials that crosses boundaries of geography, time, and culture as it represents the diversity of the gifts of women and seeks to affirm and expand the spirituality of all women and men as they find new voices in the church's song.

The composers I chose for this month include Hildegard von Bingen, Frances Allitsen, Sharon M. Hersey, and Eleanor Daley. Texts for these pieces include the poets Christina Rossetti, Eleanor Plunkett, Lynn Shaw Bailey and Sylvia G. Dunstan.

Women's History Month began as Women's History Week by the Education Task Force of Sonoma County. The concept quickly spread across the nation. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th, 1980 as National Women's History Week. In 1987 Congress passed Public Law 100-9 designating March as "Women's History Month".

In President Carter's message designating Women's History Week, he wrote:

"From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this nation. Too often the women were unsung and sometimes their contribution went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength, and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well." (womenshistory.org)

Thank you President Carter, and thank you to Fr. Ian for encouraging me to delve into this subject. I hope you enjoy the anthems this month!

- Cassandra Tarantino, Director of Music

Hands on Stewardship

Thank you to Adele Butterfield, Kay Lewis and Kathleen Pennington for counting the collection and preparing the deposits during February.

Thank you to Craig & Cheryl McCollum, Skip & Rosey Parks, Lee & Lynn Hollister for hosting coffee hour in February.

Thank you to Ethan Stan and Spud Schroeder for taking the trash cans to the street for pick up each week.

Thank you to Gail Taylor and her 2nd Coat Paint Party Crew: Craig and Cheryl McCollum, Rick Brady, Gus Gibson and Spud Schroeder.

Thank you to Kathleen Pennington, Elizabeth Potter, and Gail Taylor for teaching Sunday School in January.

Thank you to Gail Taylor, Cheryl McCollum, Nancy Deovlet, Elizabeth Potter, and Gail Perry who fold, tape and label The Witness every month.

Thank you to Craig & Cheryl McCollum for preparing the St. Stephen's February People's Kitchen lunch and delivering it to 40 Prado.

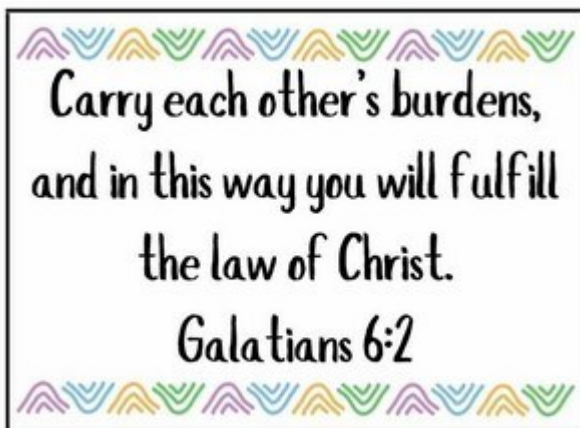
Thank You to Elizabeth Potter for baking over 100 cookies to accompany the lunch

Thank you to Elizabeth Potter for helping with the celebration cards.

Thank you to Clark Lewis, Craig McCollum, and Beau Parks for live streaming the February Services.

Thank you to you for reading The Witness and watching the services at home.

Thank you to Clark Lewis and Cheryl & Craig McCollum for picking up the no cook bags to distribute to those in need.



Thank you!

You may have noticed the new paint job in the Boydston Room, hallway and the Gritter Library/ Chapel. I would like to thank Spud Schroeder, Rick Brady, Gus Gibson, Cheryl & Craig McCollum for giving up their Sunday afternoon to lend us their painting skills. And a special thanks to Gail Taylor for organizing it.

- Lee Hollister, Sexton

General Information

The **Witness** is a monthly newsletter published by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, San Luis Obispo, CA to provide information about the parish to the congregation. Subscriptions are free to anyone. Send request along with your name and mailing address to the church office. Donations to help offset distribution costs are appreciated.

Make checks payable to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Church's e-mail address is: office@ststephenslo.org

Contribution of articles is encouraged. Please e-mail submissions to witness@ststephenslo.org
The deadline for emailed submission of articles is the third Friday of the month. Email any questions to witness@ststephenslo.org © Copyright 2025 by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. All rights reserved.

POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1344 Nipomo Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3935

A New Way To Give

There is a new way to give electronically. Scan this QR code or go to <https://tithe.ly.com> and search for St Stephen's San Luis Obispo. To designate your contribution, use the dropdown box to choose the purpose of your donation. Of course, you can still give by cash or check.



Lent Word Search



See if you can find these lenten words in the puzzle

Lent

fast

crown

prayer

cross

sacrifice

ashes

forty days

thorns

Celebrations for March

Birthdays

Name	Date
"Henry" Kimball	6-Mar
Kathy Garner	10-Mar
Sandi Crewe	11-Mar
Nancy Deovlet	12-Mar
Sari Dworkin	18-Mar



Anniversaries

Name	Date
Jon & Cassan- Tarantino	4-Mar
Dennis & Nancy Deovlet	25-Mar

If you would like us to help you celebrate your special day, please reach out to the office to have you and your family members added to the list.



The little red church
with the big heart

GENTLE YOGA ~ AT THE ALTAR

Where: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

When: Sunday, March 9, 2025

Arrive at 5:00 p.m. to settle in

Practice from 5:15-6:15 p.m.

Bible Selections for March

	2-Mar-25 Last Epiphany	5-Mar-25 Ash Wednesday	9-Mar-25 Lent 1C
1st Reading	Exodus 34.29-35	Joel 2.1-2,12-17	Deuteronomy 26.1-22
Psalm	Psalm 99	Psalm 103.8-14	Psalm 91.1-2,9-16
2nd Reading	2 Corinthians 3.12-4.2	2 Corinthians 5.20b-6.10	Romans 10.8b-13
Gospel	Luke 9.28-36	Matthew 6.1-6,16-21	Luke 4.1-3
	16-Mar-25 Lent 2C	23-Mar-25 Lent 3C	3/30/2025. Lent 4C
1st Reading	Genesis 15.1-12,17-18	Exodus 3.1-15	Joshua 5.9-12
Psalm	Psalm 27	Psalm 63.1-8	Psalm 32
2nd Reading	Philippians 3.17-4.1	1 Corinthians 10.1-13	2 Corinthians 5.16-21
Gospel	Luke 13.31-35	Luke 13.1-9	Luke 15.1-3,11b-32

Hospice SLO County is looking for In-Home Volunteers

In-home volunteers offer respite care to relieve the primary care person and provide a consistent supportive presence. Volunteers offer emotional and practical support through companionship, life review and reminiscence, errands, light housekeeping tasks, light meal preparation and practical support for in-home animals through our Pet Peace of Mind program.

Hospice SLO County offers a comprehensive 18-hour in-home volunteer training throughout the year. This training explores personal attitudes about dying and death, boundaries, communication skills, dementia care and compassion fatigue, anticipatory grief and bereavement, and the spiritual, practical, and emotional support needs of clients and families including family dynamics.



No prior experience is necessary. Hospice SLO County welcomes individuals from all walks of life committed to making a meaningful difference in their community. Dedication, compassion, and a willingness to learn are the most essential qualifications.

Upon successful completion of the training program, volunteers are matched with individuals and families facing life-limiting illnesses, providing companionship, respite care, and support in the comfort of their own homes. Volunteers can tailor their involvement to fit their schedules and interests, up to four hours per week.

2025 Training Dates

Each training course is on Wednesdays for six weeks from 2:00-5:00 PM at the Hospice SLO County office located at 1304 Pacific Street in San Luis Obispo.

- ◇ April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and May 7
- ◇ July 9, 16, 23, 30, and August 6, 13
- ◇ October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and November 5

Registration is required to participate. Visit <https://hospiceslo.org/volunteer>

Storied Pilgrimage with Race

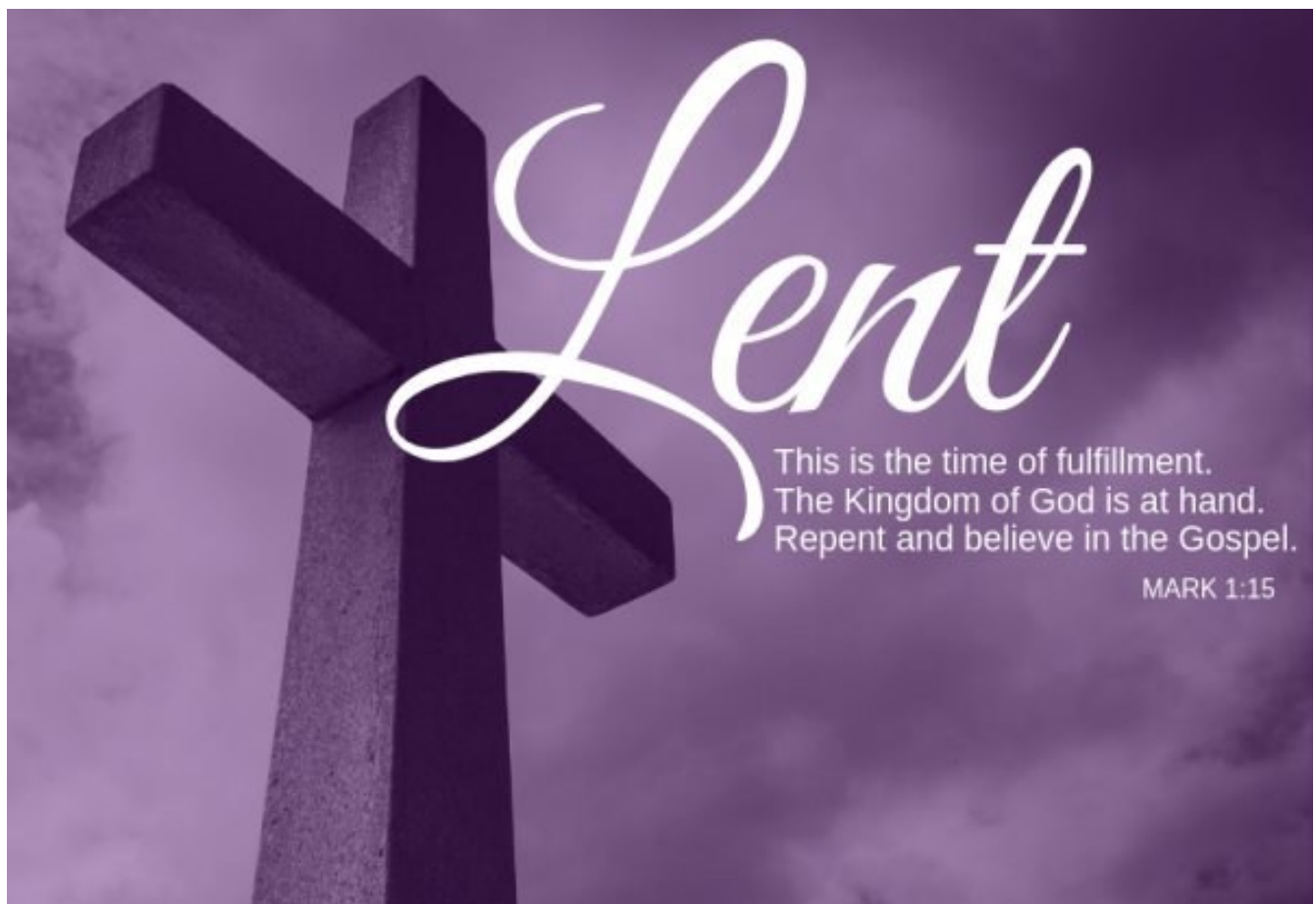
A new cohort starts March 26! "A Storied Pilgrimage with Race" is a unique curriculum and approach to exploring issues of race in our diocese. It is a holy offering of video interviews, education materials, action items, and room for reflection. You are invited, and we hope feel compelled, to engage in the twelve stages of this curriculum. Completion of this pilgrimage fulfills the requirement for anti-racism training in the Diocese of El Camino Real. If you are leading a ministry that needs this requirement, or intend to in the near future, you may want to join this cohort. Register here: www.realepiscopal.org/storied-pilgrimage-with-race-registration/

From the Vestry

The Vestry meets on the 2nd Sunday of the Month (usually) to discuss the business affairs of the parish. Here are some highlights of the meeting on February 9, 2025:

- ◆ The Vestry discussed moving forward to form a committee for the pilot project with Smart Share Housing Solutions to put a tiny home on wheels (THOW) that is off-grid onto the slab in the parking lot. A formal decision will be made at next month's meeting.
- ◆ Gail Taylor was elected Junior Warden and Kay Lewis was approved as Treasurer. Fr Ian asked Jamie Hess to remain as Senior Warden and Brenda Enney to remain as Clerk, and they both accepted.
- ◆ The Vestry will develop a policy for Interacting with Federal & State Agencies, addressing in particular what any person should do if agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) comes on campus.

The next meeting is March 9, 2025. If you have an issue that you think should be addressed by the Vestry, please submit your request no less than 2 weeks before the next Vestry Meeting to the Rector or Wardens. All Vestry Meetings are open to members of the parish. Requests to speak can be made, approved on an individual basis. Executive Sessions are closed to Vestry members only, including the Clerk, Treasurer and Rector.



Chocolate Factory Opening in Ramsden Hall After St. Patrick's Day

Chocolate Factory sign up sheets will be on the bulletin board in Ramsden Hall early in March, and we'll start cooking the week after St. Patrick's Day. This delicious and fun outreach fundraiser will take over the Parish Hall for awhile between St. Patrick's Day and Palm Sunday. Both experienced and inexperienced workers are needed. It's as much fun to make chocolate covered fudge Easter eggs as to eat them, so consider signing up to help.



Once again, this year we'll be offering two sizes: 1/2# and 1/4#. Priority in filling orders will be given to Chocolate Factory workers and remaining orders will be filled by date received. If you haven't been one of our "Chocolatiers" before, don't hesitate to sign up for a shift or two. No experience is required and on-the-job-training is cheerfully provided. If you've worked in "the chocolate factory" before, you know the task schedule may not be adhered to precisely, but whatever we happen to be doing each day you'll be in the company of friends and the place will have that wonderful smell of chocolate. Questions? See, call or email Kathleen (805-546-0880, kapennington@netscape.net)

Thank You for Donating to St. Stephen's Souper Bowl of Caring



St. Stephen's kids have been collecting non-perishable food for the Souper Bowl of Caring since 2009. This year we gathered 496 pounds of food and \$50 to donate to the Salvation Army for their food pantry.

Palm-Cross Making Party! Sunday, April 6 coffee hour

Do come and bring children and grandkids to the Parish-wide Palm-cross Making Party. Palm-cross making expert, Diane Levison, will lead us in this creative project. Palms provided.

Crosses will be gathered and then distributed the following Sunday, April 13, Palm Sunday.



Order Beautiful Chocolate Easter Eggs by March 30th!

The price for our amazing Easter treats is still only \$11 for half a pound of beautifully decorated, handmade chocolate, or \$6 for a quarter pound. Order for yourself, your friends and family or sponsor an egg for a child in need. Proceeds from the sale of these eggs go toward outreach programs that care for children in need in our community. Eggs will be ready to pick up after services on Palm Sunday, April 13th. We'll be making the "no nut" eggs first, so if you'll need yours early, choose "no nut" and you can pick them up the Sunday before Palm Sunday (April 6). Order forms are in this issue of The Witness. Pick up more at the back of the church, on the bulletin board in Ramsden Hall or see, call or email Kathleen (805-546-0880, kapennington@netscape.net)



St. Stephen's

Episcopal Church

Welcoming Worshiping Working

1344 Nipomo Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3935

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Office Hours: Mon-Thurs. 9am-1pm

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Permit No. 57

Electronic Service Requested

REMINDER:

Daylight Savings Time starts March 9



Easter Flowers



Each year the Altar Guild decorates our church with beautiful greenery and vibrant flowers for the Easter Season. If you would like to donate toward the Easter Decorations, please fill out this form with a check made payable to:

St Stephen's

Please note on the memo line: **Easter Flowers**
Feel free to drop it in the offering plate or mail it into the office:

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
1344 Nipomo Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

If you would also like to have a dedication mentioned in the Service Bulletin, please turn this form in with your donation to the office by **April 16th**.

Name of Donor:

Memorial or thanksgiving to be noted in the bulletin:
