

The Witness

Volume 29, Issue 4

Welcoming Worshipping Working

April 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



**Hello & Happy
Easter!**

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Who Are You on That Easter Morn?

By The Rev Ian M Delinger, Rector

Occasionally in a sermon I'll ask you who you are in the Gospel reading, with whom do you most identify, which character is doing and saying what you would most likely say and do. We've had that conversation at Prayers & Pastries, too. While on my Silent Retreat in mid-March, I took along with me a book that I consulted on that is on that very subject: *Hero Lover Daughter Queen: Finding yourself in the Bible*. The book was

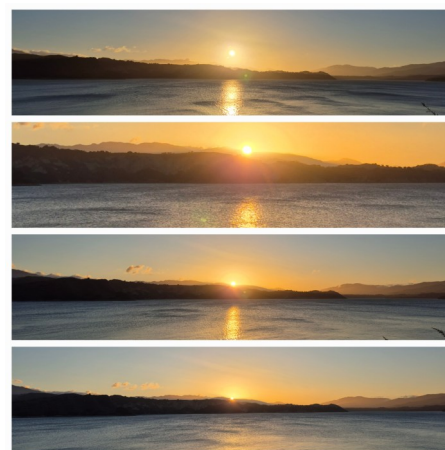
written specifically for the unchurched to engage them with the Bible as one would any other piece of literature. And it's that element of being drawn into the story that makes reading so engaging for many people.

On Easter Morning, the Gospel will be John 20:1-18. The account is just enough different than the other option of Luke 24:1-12. *(The Resurrection stories in Matthew and Mark are shorter and have less drama, so I'm guessing that's why they aren't options for Easter Day. [As many of you know, I have a complicated relationship with the Revised Common*

Lectionary!]) The great element of John's version is that there are a few more characters. There's Mary Magdalene, front and center – this is where she gets the appellation the Apostle to the Apostles. There is Peter, ever so eager to check out the tomb, and with him the disciple whom Jesus loved (whom we presume to be John, the writer). There are the 2 angels. Then then there's "the gardener", whom I will include just to give more options. And of course, there's Jesus. "The Father" is mentioned in third person, so you could probably include Him, as well.

All of these characters shape how we understand the event of The Resurrection and how the story gets contextualized for today through the preaching of a bezzillion Easter Day preachers. So, I pose to you: Who are you on that Easter Morn? With whom do you most identify? Have you been different characters at different times in your life? Or are you an observer from above... is this a story that you're completely detached from?

Placing yourself in the story makes it come more alive! You pay attention to parts that you may have not given due attention in the past. It helps you discover aspects of your



The stages of sunrise before, during and after Morning Prayer facing the rising sun while on my retreat...just because I like sunrises and sunsets and want to share!

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relationship with Jesus that you previously haven't considered or known!

As you journey through Holy Week (particularly Palm Sunday) and Easter (and even beyond!), find where and who you are in the stories. Reflect on how it shapes your faith, spiritual practice and relationship with Jesus. Our faith is a living faith, not an exercise in nostalgia. We are to learn from these ancient scriptures, make sense of them for our day. These big celebrations are the perfect opportunities for you to dive right in and then emerge on the exciting new step on your spiritual journey!



St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church
Welcoming · Worshiping · Working

HOLY WEEK APRIL 2025

- APRIL 13** Palm Sunday
8 & 10am
- APRIL 17** Maundy Thursday
5.30pm
- APRIL 18** Good Friday
12.15 - 3.00pm
- APRIL 19** Easter Vigil @ St Ben's
7.45pm
- APRIL 20** Easter Day
8 & 10am

in-person at 1344 Nipomo St, SLO
online at youtube.com/@ststephensslo

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@ststephensslo.org

Contribution of articles is encouraged. Please e-mail submissions to witness@ststephensslo.org
The deadline for emailed submission of articles is the third Friday of the month. Email any questions to witness@ststephensslo.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



Eastertide Morning Prayer on Thursdays

Beginning on April 24, Morning Prayer will be said every Thursday at 8.30am during the Season of Easter. This will be on Zoom, so you can join from home! It will involve three parishes: St Stephen's, St Benedict's Los Osos and St Luke's Atascadero. You can use your BCP from home or visit www.venite.app on your computer or phone to follow along.

To join on Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/MPonThursdays>

Master Class with Sophie Shao

Saturday, April 5 at 9:30AM

At St. Stephen's Episcopal Church



Festival Mozaic's Artist-in-Residence, cellist Sophie Shao, leads a free master class for cellists from San Luis Obispo. Master classes are great opportunities for young performers. Each student will play a selection for Ms. Shao, after which she will work with the students for 20-30 minutes offering constructive feedback: suggestions on musical ideas, practice techniques, and more. These classes are always very interesting and informative for musicians and non-musicians alike! The class will last approximately 1.5-2 hours. This event is free and open to the public, but advance reservations are required.

<https://www.festivalmozaic.org/show-details/master-class-with-sophie-shao>

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 March 9, 2025:

- * The Vestry will use some Re-Fresh St Stephen's funds to add a function to the sound system to enable the audio to go directly into people's hearing aids, and to add a new mic jack in the parish hall for the occasions we worship in Ramsden Hall.
- * The Vestry reviewed a procedure for interacting with State and Federal agents, in particular, immigration agents. (see article on the subject)
- * The Vestry approved the Job Description and Letter of Agreement to offer Spud Schroeder the position of Sexton.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2025, unless the business of that meeting is accomplished at the Vestry Retreat on March 29. 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.

Loving and Protecting Our Neighbors

By Fr Ian

To my knowledge, we've never had an agent from any State or Federal agency come onto St Stephen's property for any official reason. We have had SLO Police Officers onsite, both by invitation and casually. But the possibility exists that agents may come onsite – identifiable or not – and start to ask questions. In particular, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

ICE has the mission to protect the USA from cross-border crime and illegal immigration. Under the new administration, ICE has orders to deport many more people. Our neighbors who came here to escape violence and find work now live in fear that their families will be separated by deportations. These include those who arrived here with proper documentation and those who have not. Even some US Citizens are now living in fear. They need our help. They have legal rights.

The way that we at St Stephen's can help is to be equipped with knowledge, particularly around the rights which are afforded to every person residing in the United States regardless of citizenship or immigration status.

Firstly, out of respect for any person, we do not ever need to discuss the immigration status of any person, present or absent, parishioner or friend, neighbor or passerby. It's not pertinent to the life of St Stephen's – no contribution to our Welcoming – Worshiping – Working. Also, there may be agents overhearing conversations. So, since there is no reason to discuss anyone's immigration status, let's simply not do that at St Stephen's.

Secondly, every person has the right to NOT answer questions. If a person approaches you and begins asking questions about particular persons or where a group of people might be, you have the right to refuse to answer.

Direct them to the Rector or the Wardens during office hours, which are Monday through Thursday, 9am to 1pm. Unless the agent has a warrant for your detention, you do NOT have to answer questions. To any awkward question, respond: "I do not wish to answer any questions. Am I free to leave?"

Thirdly, all indoor spaces at St Stephen's are considered private, except the entryway of the church (Narthex). If the agent produces a warrant to enter the private spaces, it *must* be a *Judicial* warrant signed by a *judge*. Judicial warrants have the name of the *Federal* Court that it was issued from at the top of the page: United States District Court. Warrants from ICE do not grant permission to enter private spaces. In either case, refer them to the Rector and Wardens during office hours, which are Monday through Thursday, 9am to 1pm.

To read our full policy, go here: <https://tinyurl.com/StSt-Interact>

The Diocese of El Camino Real has created a fund to provide legal assistance to those in need in our Diocese. To donate online: <https://tinyurl.com/ECR-LoveNeighbor>. Also, checks may be sent to the diocese payable to the

Interacting with State & Federal Agents

		
DO NOT DISCUSS IMMIGRATION STATUS	KNOW YOUR RIGHTS STAY SILENT	FEDERAL WARRANT TO ENTER PRIVATE AREAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not pertinent to the life of St Stephen's • Someone may be listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not required to answer questions • Defer to Rector and Wardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Warrant signed by judge • All areas are private except Narthex

Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real with Love Our Neighbor Fund on the memo line. Bishop Lucinda will get these funds to where they are needed most in our Diocese.

God our Creator: We ask for Your loving presence and for Your peace to be with refugees and immigrants in our local communities and around the world. Be with all who are in fear. Be with those whose lives and livelihoods are under threat, and whose religious freedoms are being compromised. Be with us as we strive to enact Your will in our welcome and support of refugees. Be with those in positions of leadership, that their decisions may bend toward peace and not division, and that they might realize the power they hold to do justice. Give us all strength and courage. Equip and empower us to be witnesses to Your love – as advocates and as servants, as ministers of welcome and bearers of hope, especially for those seeking refuge. In Your Holy name we pray. Amen.

*Shared by the Refugee Community Center at the Episcopal Church of the Mediator (Allentown),
Diocese of Bethlehem*

Spring Renewal

Spring Renewal is a time for everyone in our diocese to gather for fellowship, formation, and fun.

Each year, we combine worship, ministry tables, presenters, and food (YUM!) to center around a particular theme. This year, our theme is **“Believing, Belonging, Beloved.”** Registration will be opening soon with early bird pricing through April 18th.

On the evening of Friday, May 16th, it will be the Bishop’s pleasure to gather us at a banquet to honor Joanna Shreve, who is the recipient of the 2025 Pilgrim’s Path award. We will also honor two of our long-time leaders, Jerry Drino and George Lockwood, who are recipients of this year’s Bishop’s Award. The banquet will end with a brief talk by our presenters and a service of Compline.

Our presenters for the 2025 Spring Renewal are the Rt. Rev. Barry Beisner, Bishop Provisional of the Missionary Diocese of Navajoland, and Canon Cornelia Eaton, a Navajo priest who serves as Canon to the Ordinary for that diocese. On Saturday May 17th, they will share presentations about their ministry together in Navajoland, the challenges and joys of the work they share, and the unique experience of meeting Navajo spirituality and the spiritual tradition of The Episcopal Church, which they both embody in their respective roles. Our presenters are candid, thoughtful, and deeply committed to the calling they will share with us.

Additionally, our Truth Telling Taskforce will give a brief presentation introducing an educational tool that is the product of many hours of thoughtful work. This is a website that highlights indigenous peoples in our area and in the state of California. This is a fine piece of work that will be available to share in our congregations and our schools.

The two-day event will be interspersed with liturgies and the musical genius of Juneau Rowe of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Corral de Tierra. As always, our Spring Renewal will close with a joyful Eucharist.

Please join us to welcome Bishop Barry and Canon Cornelia to the Diocese of El Camino Real and connect with your fellow diocesan parishioners from all around the diocese!

Blessings in Every Bite: Easter Eggs, Fudge, and Community Joy!



As of this writing—just about a week before our March 30th order deadline—we're thrilled to share that parishioners, friends, and community members

have already ordered 142 of our delicious chocolate Easter eggs! Plus, 120 eggs have been requested by the wonderful organizations we donate to: Family Care Network, Lumina Alliance, and CAPSLO/40Prado. We're still waiting to hear from Transitions Mental Health Association, but we have a feeling they'll want some sweet treats too!

With only two workdays so far, our amazing volunteers have already made 22 trays of rich, no-nut fudge—what a fantastic start! We haven't snapped any new photos yet, since by the time most of you read this, the March 30th deadline will likely have passed. But rest assured, lots of love (and chocolate!) is going into every batch. Thank you for being part of this joyful tradition!

HOP on Over for an Egg-citing Easter Egg Hunt!

Join us **after Sunday services on April 20** for a joyful Easter Egg Hunt filled with fun, laughter, and plenty of sweet surprises!

Kids (and kids at heart!) are invited to bring their baskets and get ready to search high and low for colorful eggs hidden all around. There will be **treats, smiles, and the joy of Easter** all around!

Come celebrate this beautiful day with us—we can't wait to see you there!



Bible Selections for April

	6-Apr-25 Lent 5C	13-Apr-25 Palm Sunday	17-Apr-25 Maundy Thursday
Palm Sunday Lit of Palms		Luke 19.28-40 Psalm 118.1-2,19-29	
1st Reading	Isaiah 43.16-21	Isaiah 50.4-9a	Exodus 12.1-14
Psalm	Psalm 126	Psalm 31.9-16	Psalm 116.1,10-17
2nd Reading	Philippians 3.4b-14	Philippians 2.5-11	1 Corinthians 11.23-26
Gospel	John 12.1-8	Luke 22.14-23.44 at end: Luke 23.45-56	John 13.1-7,31b-35
	18-Apr-25 Good Friday	20-Apr-25 Easter Day	27-Apr-25 Eucharistic Brunch
1st Reading	Isaiah 52.13-53.12	Acts 10.34-43	Acts 9.1-6
Psalm	Psalm 22	Psalm 118.1-2,14-24	Psalm 30
2nd Reading		1 Corinthians 15.19-26	Revelation 5.11-14
Gospel	John 18.1-19.42	John 20.1-18	John 21.1-19

Hands on Stewardship

Thank you to everyone who ordered Chocolate Easter Eggs in March (deadline for orders was March 30), and everyone who worked to make those special Easter treats in March or will help get them ready for customers to pick on Palm Sunday, April 13.

Thank you to Adele Butterfield, Lynn Hollister, Kay Lewis, Kathleen Pennington and Elizabeth Potter for counting and preparing the deposits during March.

Thank you to Cassie Tarantino, Craig & Cheryl McCollum, Jamie Hess and the Coffee Committee for hosting Coffee Hour in March.

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

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

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 Clark & Kay Lewis for preparing the St. Stephen's March 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 March 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.



Celebrations for April



Birthdays

First Name	Last Name	Day
Robert	McCorkle	3-Apr
George	Brown	12-Apr
Judy	Tyner	17-Apr
Andria	Gibson	25-Apr
Lawrence	Pennington	29-Apr

Anniversaries

First Name	Last Name	Day
Gabe & Alicia	Bisselle	22-Apr
Mark & Stephanie	Olsen	30-Apr

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.

Email: office@StStephensSLO.org, Phone: 805-543-7212,
or 1344 Nipomo Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Welcoming Worshiping Working

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805-543-7212
office@ststephensslo.org
www.ststephensslo.org
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs. 9am-1pm

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Permit No. 57

Electronic Service Requested

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.



Holy Week and Easter: April 13-20, 2025

Live the Passion and Resurrection through our worship during Holy Week and Easter!

April 13 @ 8am & 10am – Palm Sunday

The Procession of Palms starts on the Patio (8am) and in Ramsden Hall (10am)

April 17 @ 5.30pm – Maundy Thursday

Holy Communion, Foot washing and Stripping of the Altar

If you would like to have your feet washed, please let Fr Ian know

April 18 @ 12.15-3pm – Good Friday Liturgy

Followed by self-guided Stations of the Cross

April 19 @ 7.45pm – Easter Vigil

We will join with the Good People of St Benedict's in Los Osos Please let Fr Ian know of your interest so we can arrange carpooling

April 20 @ 8am & 10am – Easter Day!

Hail thee, Festival Day! Join our Celebration of the Resurrection!

