

Canterbury Tales



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

January 2026

From Rev. Will

Dear St. Anselm's.

Happy New Year! Last Sunday, we celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany, remembering the Magi's visit with the Holy Family and the threat this baby represents to the powers that be. This Sunday, we'll read about Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River and welcome a new young person into the household of God through the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

2025 was an epic year for St. Anselm's. At our Annual Meeting on February 1, we'll have time to celebrate the blessings of the past year. Between our White Elephant Gift Exchange last January to our Christmas Pageant last month so much happened: we launched our endowment, hosted an Art & Music Festival, removed bees from our belltower, resurfaced the parking lot, reconnected with our sibling church on Cape Cod, celebrated our anniversary, began an All Ages service, welcomed a new partnership with Soli Deo Gloria, grew our choir, and collected tons of food and other goods for those in need.

I am excited to see all that 2026 brings our way and to seek and serve Christ with you at St. Anselm's.

See you soon!
Will

The Rev. Will Scott
Rector



Anselm's Angels

Special thanks to the members of the Christian Formation for providing programming for Advent - **Marian Mulkey, Julia Starr, Jeff Borero** and **Peg Matson**.

A great big thank you to the Christmas Pageant organizers and participants - **Sarah, Teddy & Cordelia Vickers-Webb, Marty Fischer, Marian Mulkey, Pamela & Willie Green, Katie Taggart, Keith Pearce, Laura Fischer, Caleb & Annabell McInerney, Sage Balducci, Holly & Alex Wehrley, Alex Xu, Abigail Lundin, Taylor Litchenstein** and **Peg Matson**.

Many thanks to the members of the Altar Guild - **Sylvia Williams, Joan Martin, Dharmini Harichandran, Mallory Williams, Katie Taggart, Sally Fischer, Joni Pearce** and **Jon Martin** for preparing the sanctuary. Our special services ushers - **Bob Eddy, Al Swimmer** and **Matt Chayt**. And to our Audio/Visual Tech Assistants - **David Rowe, Henry Rosenberg** and **Chris Young**.

And lastly to the members of the Vestry for their service this year - Sr. Warden **Peg Matson**, Jr Warden **Katie Taggart**, Clerk **Joni Pearce, Bob Eddy, David Rowe, Hank Gatlin, Dharmini Harichandran, Iris Hillman, Pam Green, Sheila Riedy, Maggie McCloskey** and **Julia Starr**.



SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting
Sunday, February 1st
following the 10 a.m. service
in the sanctuary

From The Senior Warden

As we close the door on 2025, my heart is extraordinarily full. Serving as your Senior Warden these last ten and a half months, I have discovered that the role was a bit different than I expected. I've found that this year has been less about "managing" our parish and more about working beside an amazing group of people—witnessing the growth, the community, and the quiet, persistent movement of the Spirit through all that we do here at St. Anselm's every day.

I am deeply grateful for:

- **Our Shared Worship:** Whether through the familiar beauty of our liturgy and music or the moments of silence as we pray in the pews, thank you for showing up. Your presence each Sunday enriches our worship experience and serves as the collective heartbeat of our community.
- **The Gift of Lay Leadership:** To the Vestry and our tireless committees—thank you for your grit and your grace. We navigated a few challenges this year not with anxiety, but with a shared commitment to our community and our goals.
- **Our Clergy and Staff:** We are so blessed Will+ joined us full-time this year. He has brought boundless energy, enthusiasm, wonderful ideas and a wide world of community connections that have guided our spiritual growth and challenged us to look beyond our walls to serve the wider community. The gift of Deacon Naomi who brings her faithful leadership and gentle heart to our weekly Bible Study Group, Grief Support Group and weekly clergy support role. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Margaret, who expertly handles a range of complex office duties to keep us organized and informed, and to Steve, who has proven to be an invaluable asset as our bookkeeper, serving us with such patience and wisdom.
- **The Smallest Moments:** I am most thankful for the "church between the pews"—the coffee hour conversations and laughter, the devoted and unflappable work of the Altar Guild, the care taken by the Property Commission with problems big and small, the events that brought the greater community to our doors, the spiritual and educational guidance of our Christian Formation Commission and the way everyone consistently looks out for one another when the world feels heavy.

Looking ahead to 2026, I am reminded that we are not just a "little brown church on the hill," but a living testament to God's love. Thank you for the honor of serving you.

With deep peace and gratitude,

Peg Matson
Senior Warden

Michael Lane Preschool



Hope you had a Merry Christmas!

We had a wonderful three weeks of play this December at Michael Lane Preschool, where we embraced the theme of giving. We made presents for our families, wrote cards to friends and had our first Pajama Jam party where the children sang for their families. We sang "This Little Light of Mine" while holding battery operated votive candles, "Jingle Bells," and "The More We Get Together." A nice new tradition to celebrate this special season.

We have been cooking regularly with the children - making latkes for a Hanukkah snack and rolling out gingerbread cookie dough to make cut out cookies for Christmas. We also enjoyed acting out The Gingerbread Boy play and rolling out gingerbread scented play dough!

Wishing you and your family a joyful happy new year!

Fondly,
Holly Higgins
Preschool Director



Drive –of-the-month: Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition

Our January Outreach will be to help our friends at Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition. We will collect new towels and blankets (any size). They provide essential household items and food assistance to individuals and families facing challenges such as homelessness, domestic violence, disability, and poverty. Their mission is to improve living conditions and quality of life, bringing hope and light to those navigating adversity. Please consider purchasing some towels or blankets to donate through February 8.

CCIC <https://ccinterfaithcoalition.org/>

Sunday, January 11th, there will be a meeting right after church for anyone interested in helping with Outreach. Join us to discuss ideas for upcoming drives. The meeting is in person in Jackson Hall from 11:15-11:45.

Service/Outreach

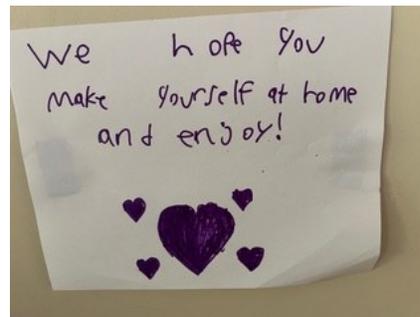
As I take time to reflect on 2025, the first thing that comes to mind is the generosity of St. Anselm's. Rev Will and I had a lofty goal of having a different outreach ask for every month of the year! It wasn't difficult to find areas of need. Members of St Anselm's stepped in and helped with every ask that I had. It is awe inspiring to list them, so I will.

Grateful Gatherings - new sets of sheets
 Deacon's Sock Drive - socks for Trinity Center
 Lamorinda Care Collective (LCC) - personal care items
 10,000 Lunches - decorating bags and filling with lunch items
 LCC - back pack drive - 23 backpacks
 Food Bank of CCC - filled 2 large containers twice
 Cards From Home - writing cards for Veterans for Veterans Day (47 cards sent)
 Laundry Love - quarters for laundry (over \$250 collected)
 Winter Nights - safe space for 2 weeks, meals for 1 week
 Occupational Therapy Training Program (OTTP) - 25 gifts for their clients
 Christmas cards for homebound parishioners

I look forward to finding ways we can contribute to our community in 2026! Thank you all for your generosity!

Joni Pearce

Service /Outreach Commission Chair



Vestry Updates



Vestry Meeting held December 21st:

The Minutes from the November 16th meeting were approved and posted in the Parish Hall Conference Room

The vestry had an interactive discussion:

The February 1, 2026 Annual Meeting plans are underway. All Commission and Committee heads are being asked to submit a summary of the 2025 year events including photos.

The vestry had a lengthy discussion about the size of the vestry and ultimately voted to reduce the overall size of the vestry from 12 to 9 members over the next 3 years and establish a new policy for counting.

Changing check signing procedures was considered. After much discussion the item was tabled until the next meeting on January 18, 2026

Katie and Julie shared more information for Event Evaluation

Action Items:

The Rev. Audrey Miskelley will become a clergy support person affiliated with St. Anselm's starting January 1, 2026.

Bob Eddy resigned from his preschool board position and Peg Matson was reinstated as Chair of the Board of Michael Lane Preschool.

Updates:

- Outreach – Joni thanked the vestry for their support this year. She has not identified a January outreach project yet. Hank Gatlin expressed his interest in being the vestry person liaison to the Outreach Committee next year.
- Christian Formation – Julie remarked that we had great Advent activities and that planning for the upcoming Lenten Series is underway.

Deacon Report – Naomi shared that she attended the December 7th First Sunday All Ages service online and hosted an after service “Coffee Hour” for Zoom attendees that was well attended and she intends to continue doing this on the first Sunday of every month.

Next Vestry Meeting

 **Sunday, January 18th at 11:30 a.m. in the Conference Room. Everyone is welcome.**



Stephen Ministers

Following in the footsteps of other of our church Commissions, January is the month in which we recognize and publicize the work of our Stephen Ministry.

Stephen Ministry at St Anselm's was founded in 2001 and has cared for members and non-members continuously since that time! With headquarters in St Louis, it is an international organization, a collection of a variety of denominations throughout the world. It publishes the continuously updated workbooks and videos from which members are trained to serve as Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders, as well as a number of helpful books for public distribution. To be a Stephen Minister, we commit to training for 50 hours over a period of months before we are commissioned to serve in our church community.

We are equipped to walk beside you during a difficult period of your life, for example, experiencing grief after the loss of a loved one, divorce, loss of a job, a terminal illness. It is completely confidential.

Please contact Vicki Pappas or Reverend Will+.





What we do:

- Stephen Ministers are lay ministers who provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care for those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, and other struggles. Stephen Ministers share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need.

Key activities:

- Stephen Ministers receive 50 hours of training to learn to listen, care for, and walk with those experiencing a crisis. We do our trainings in a consortium with several other churches, led by LOPC (Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church.)
- Our church's Stephen Leaders participate in teaching the classes and supporting the Stephen Ministry trainees.
- The Stephen Leader interviews and assesses a potential Care Receiver to determine whether Stephen Ministry is appropriate for the person who is going through a crisis, then assigns a Stephen Minister to care for the person, choosing the person who best matches the hurting person's needs. People are assigned a Care Giver of the same sex. Sometimes we may serve a Stephen Minister from one of the other churches in our consortium, or we may refer one of parishioners to their Stephen Ministry.
- After being matched, the Stephen Minister meets with that person weekly to listen, care for, encourage and provide emotional and spiritual support for as long as needed, usually for about a year.

How we work together:

- We have monthly Supervision Group meetings, usually on Zoom, to support the Stephen Minister in caring for a hurting person. No specific details are shared, so that confidentiality is maintained. This way, we make sure that the care that the person receives is appropriate and helpful. We also care for each other.
- We participate in Continuing Education on many topics related to caring for hurting people.

Helpful traits of potential Stephen Ministers:

- A warm and compassionate heart for bringing Christ's love to hurting people
- Ability to listen and maintain confidentiality.
- Willingness to participate in a 50-hour training course that will equip the person to provide one-to-one Christian care and serve for at least two years as a Stephen Minister.

For more information contact:

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

Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, orchidsnrch@yahoo.com (925) 395-1395

Julie Rinkenberger, jripmaggie@hotmail.com (925) 451-0820

BOOK CLUB

Wednesday, January 21st
at 2:00 p.m.
in the Library



For questions, please contact Sharyn Barrington Carlson at 847.337.0875 or Deacon Naomi at 925.395.1395.

COUNTERS NEEDED

Each week there is a team of two people, one Vestry member and one congregation member who will take responsibility for counting and recording cash and checks and preparing the deposit. Please contact Peg Matson for more information and/or to volunteer 925-381-1074 or plmatson@comcast.net.



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.

**THURSDAY EVENING
BIBLE STUDY**



Exploring the Gospel of Matthew

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

Meeting I.D. 815 0705 2148
Passcode 442879



CELEBRATING...

**JANUARY
BIRTHDAYS**

- Tom Henry*
- Gary Bacon*
- Teddy Vickers-Webb*
- Jan White*
- Al Eames*
- Mary Stewart*
- Jeff Boero*
- Edee Allison*
- John Weaver*
- Marcia Ellicott*

**JANUARY
ANNIVERSARIES**

- Tom & Vicki Pappas*
- Betty & Tom Frangolis*
- Bob & Pam Green*
- Dick & Jan White*
- Marty & Sally Fischer*

**ORDINATION
ANNIVERSARY**

Rev. Joan Gardener

ALTAR FLOWERS



Each week the altar is graced with a beautiful flower arrangement that is donated by our generous parishioners.

Altar flower donations can be dedicated to the memory of a loved one, in honor of a family member or simply to the glory of God. The requested donation is \$50 per date. Please sign-up for your selected date and complete a green dedication card. The flower chart and dedication cards can be found next to the east entrance to the church.

Please make your check payable to "St. Anselm's" and indicate "Altar Guild" on the memo line. You can submit the check and dedication card to the church office or put them in the collection plate. Thank you for your support!

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

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.



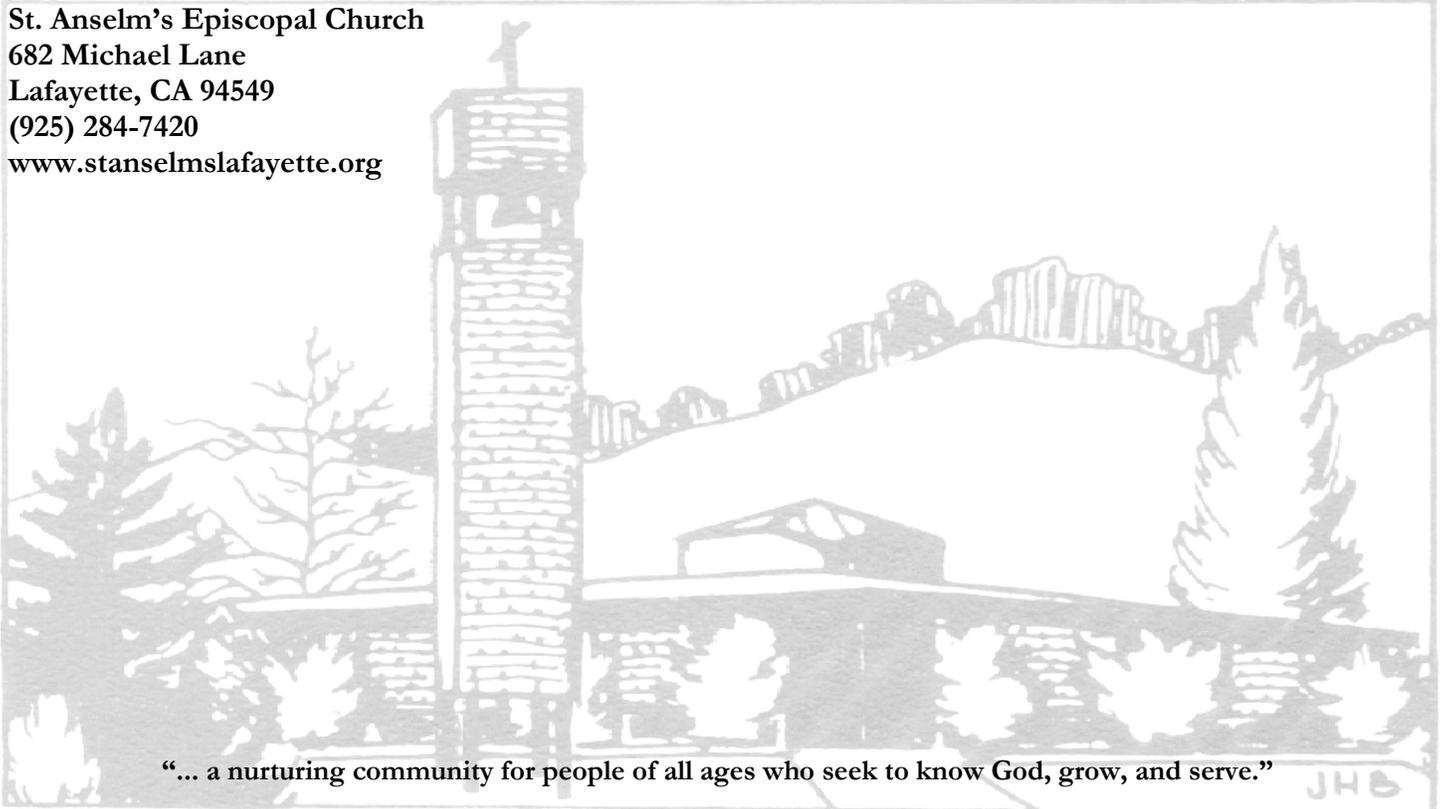
CANTERBURY TALES

is the monthly newsletter of
St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
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In-Person & Virtual Sunday Service:
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

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www.stanselmslafayette.org



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

January's Ministry of the Month: [Stephen Ministers](#)

Friday, January 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th — Lamorinda Village Strength & Balance class from 11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m. in Parish Hall

Sunday, January 4th — First Sunday All Ages Service & Epiphany at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, January 4th — Altar Guild at 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 6th/13th/20th/27th — Morning Prayer will be led by Deacon Naomi via Zoom at 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 6th — Grief Support Group will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon.

Tuesday, January 6th — Property Commission will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 8th/15th/22nd/29th — Evening Bible Study will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

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

Sunday, January 11th — Outreach Commission will meet in the library at 11:15 a.m.

Sunday, January 18th — Vestry Meeting will meet in the conference room at 11:15 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

Wednesday, January 21st — Book Club in the Library at 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 21st — Stephen Ministers will meet at 7:00 p.m.