



New Year... New Beginnings

A good friend sent me a tongue-in-cheek New Year's card that reads "2021: We don't want any trouble from you. Just come in, sit down, don't touch anything and keep your mouth shut! Let's try this again, shall we?"

After the year we've all had, we're looking for 2021 to be a better one: to finally turn the corner on the pandemic... to be able to come together in person again... and to welcome our new rector, the Rev. Daniel Spors. Here at St. Bede's, a number of church programs are under way for the new year, including SoulWork sessions on Sunday mornings, Bede's Book Club on the first Wednesday of each month, and a linens drive for LifeMoves families. You'll find details about all of these in this edition of *Bede's Journal*.

As the new year unfolds, I invite you to join us for three upcoming events:

- **Sunday, January 24** is Martha Korienek's last Sunday with us. Please join us for Morning Prayer and virtual coffee hour where we'll express our thanks for her presence with us.
- **Sunday, January 31** is our annual parish meeting, to be held immediately after Morning Prayer. We will recap our accomplishments over the past year, commissioning our incoming Vestry members, and look to new beginnings in 2021.
- **Sunday, February 7** is Dan Spors's first Sunday with us; please plan to join us in the Zoom Chapel that Sunday to welcome him!

In faith and peace,

– Anne Vitullo, Senior Warden

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A Letter from Rev. Martha

Dear People of St. Bede's,

The hardest part of interim ministry is that just as soon as you have fallen in love with a community of people, it's time to leave. And yet, there is some solace in knowing that love never dies; so please know that as I prepare to leave you, my love for you remains strong.

Thank you for your warm welcome, and for being a model of perseverance in the midst of this past, unprecedented, year. You have navigated the ways of virtual worship: transitioned to Morning Prayer, to meeting on Zoom, to preparing music without ever getting to be in the same room. And you have done it all to the glory of God, and have been blessed to witness it. You have maintained a dedication to serving the wider community through dinners for LifeMoves, diaper and food collections, and stuffing Christmas stockings; you have not let a pesky little thing like a pandemic stop you from serving Christ in your midst. And you have cared for one another in a way that assures me that the Spirit is alive and well and your community. Please know that if I have ever lifted your spirits, or helped you to grow in your faith, you have done the same to me, tenfold.

This journey we've had together, though, has always had an endpoint: the successful call of your new rector. Your Vestry has worked diligently and prayerfully, and you have called someone whom I'm sure will be a great leader and a fellow lover of this community. And so, it is time for me to take my leave. **My last Sunday at St. Bede's will be Sunday, January 24.**

After that, I will carry you in my heart and keep you in my prayers as you bring onboard your new pastor, and follow the Spirit's call into the next chapter of your communal life. May this next chapter be one of wonder, joy, and abundant blessing.

Again, thank you for everything. And God bless you.

Much love,
Martha+

Vestry View

This periodic report on the Vestry's actions and decisions is part of our commitment to serving the St. Bede's community. Following is a brief recap of key issues discussed and actions taken at December's Vestry meeting.

We had a "full house" at December's Vestry meeting with all regular members present, plus Treasurer Julie Backlund and three incoming Vestry members: Susan Chan Egan, Laura Gable and Sue Sartor. Susan, Laura and Sue attended as part of their orientation. We look forward to their becoming full Vestry members at the Annual Parish Meeting on January 31.

Review of Finances and 2021 Budget

Treasurer Julie Backlund explained that St. Bede's income statements show a budget surplus of \$37,000 in November due to an early payment of school use fees by Trinity School. Additional pledges for 2021 have been noted which will help to reduce a projected budget deficit for 2021. Julie presented the final operating budget for 2021 for Vestry approval. Stewardship contributions for 2021 – a significant part of our funding – are based on pledges from 43 parish households. Worship and hospitality expenses will be reduced for 2021 based on an assumption of no on-site worship for the first part of 2021. Funding for musicians and choir section leaders will be reduced for 2021 and the weekly budgeted hours for the Children's and Youth Ministry will be reduced, assuming that children's programs will not begin again until mid-2021 or later. Even with these approved budget reductions, St. Bede's operations will face an anticipated budget deficit of \$34,000 in 2021, which will be funded from our reserves. The 2021 budget was approved by Vestry.

Julie also presented, on behalf of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, the committee's five-year plan for capital projects. Three capital projects were proposed and approved by Vestry for 2021: landscape irrigation and planting, infrastructure security and signage, and replace of the flooring in Lehman Hall. These three projects are estimated to cost approximately \$88,000 and will require detailed cost proposals for Vestry consideration before commencing any project.

Personnel Committee Report

Anne Vitullo outlined for Vestry the work accomplished by the Personnel Committee over the past several months: an updated personnel policy document for church leaders, a new employee handbook to be distributed to employees in the new year, and job descriptions for each of our paid staff members. Changes in California state employment laws have left many churches and small nonprofit organizations struggling to create the necessary structure and procedures for up-to-date employment practices. Our Vestry was unanimous in its praise for this important work and the volunteers who accomplished it.

Anne walked through the details of one job description, for the parish administrator, to highlight the structure and main points important for personnel policy implementation early in 2021. She requested Vestry feedback on the documents presented and has compiled edits to produce final versions of all personnel documents.

Interim Rector's Report

Martha Korienek provided proposed revisions to the church's *Use of Space Policy for St. Bede's Buildings and Grounds*. In general, outside organizations wishing to rent space at St. Bede's must show that they are a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status as designated by the IRS. Organizations without 501(c)(3) status that are not operating for profit or private gain may still be eligible to use meeting space at St. Bede's if the organization's activities further the mission and ministry of St. Bede's and use is no more frequent than once per week. Examples of this include the *Stewart Highlanders*, who have offered solemn bagpipe music for St. Bede's funerals and the *Sarum Seminar*, which allows our parishioners the opportunity to share their Spirit-given gifts with the wider community. Organizations can appeal to Vestry for space usage at St. Bede's if they can show their activity falls under the mission and ministry of St. Bede's.

Martha reminded us that the staff have provided remarkable, "beyond the call" efforts to serve St. Bede's in 2020. Following discussion, it was agreed that gift cards for See's Candies would be provided as a seasonal gesture of goodwill to all staff; these were funded by voluntary contributions from Vestry members.

Senior Warden's Report

Anne wrapped up our end-of-year Vestry meeting with two resolutions which received unanimous Vestry approval:

- The 2021 housing resolution for the Rev. Martha Korienek designated \$6,000 of her compensation from St. Bede's as housing allowance as allowed by the IRS.
- The Community Outreach Steering Committee recommended two grants from the Seccombe Outreach Fund to be paid to local nonprofits by the end of December 2020: \$1,000 to Los Ayudantes for their after-school reading program and \$2,000 to LifeMoves, which provides interim support for homeless individuals and families.

– *Deb Blackmore, Junior Warden*

Staff Transitions: Brendan Deocariza-Nee

Brendan Deocariza-Nee, our Minister for Children and Youth, will be departing from this position on Friday, February 5, with his last Sunday being January 31. Brendan has been a faithful leader in this ministry, and kept it going throughout a pandemic, which is no small task! And he has done it with grace and kindness. He has introduced the *Infinite* newsletter to improve communications with families, and has found creative ways for families to grow in their faith while staying at home. And who can forget the wonderful (and hysterical!) Christmas pageant that he put together for Christmas Eve? We will really miss Brendan, but are so grateful for all that he's done for St. Bede's.

If you would like to reach out to Brendan to wish him well, you can email at brendan@stbedesmenopark.org.

Community Outreach Updates

December's Diaper Drive: An Outpouring of Generosity!

It took two cars to deliver the results of our diaper drive to LifeMoves' First Step for Families shelter. The total count: 4,073 diapers for children, four packs of wipes and 97 adult diapers. At First Steps, staff was amazed as the cartons just kept on coming from the cars and the packages were loaded onto their carts for safe transit into the buildings. Your remarkable generosity will keep 20 toddlers dry and comfortable for two months. Thank you to everyone who helped us pile up the joy this season!

Sue and Vicki with the bounty in Sue Sartor's garage on delivery day:





A Valentine's Gift of Comfort for LifeMoves Families

LifeMoves supplies its families with sheets and towels they can use on site and later take with them when they find housing. As a result of the pandemic, LifeMoves cannot accept "gently used" donations and their supplies of bed linens and bath towels are running low.

Because providing meals is too difficult with the current COVID-19 restrictions, St. Bede's next outreach project will be to organize a linens drive. New twin and queen sheet sets, blankets, towel sets, and extra hand towels are the most requested items. All donations must be in their original wrapping, with their tags, or in delivery packaging.

The Sartors will collect drop-off donations at their home, 3 Sunset Lane in Menlo Park, **February 7 through 12**, or you can have donations sent to arrive at the Sartors **any time before February 12**. Community Outreach Steering Committee members will count and deliver your generous donations to LifeMoves in time for Valentine's Day! Please call Vicki Blayney at (734) 709-8703 if you have any questions.

– Vicki Blayney

Looking Ahead: Key Dates on Our January and February Calendars

January 18: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; *Parish Office Closed*

January 19: Vestry meeting, 7 p.m.

January 22: Copy deadline for February *Bede's Journal*

January 24: Martha's last Sunday at St. Bede's

January 31: Annual Parish meeting, 10:30 a.m. after Zoom Chapel

February 3: Bede's Book Club, 9:30 a.m.; Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting, noon

February 7: Dan's first Sunday at St. Bede's

February 9: Finance Committee meeting, 4 p.m.

February 15: President's Day; *Parish Office Closed*

February 16: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Trivia Quiz, 7 p.m. on Zoom

February 23: Vestry meeting, 7 p.m.

Bach: Give Us a Peaceful Year!

A few years ago I wrote an article for the January *Bede's Journal* about Bach's Cantata 41, written in late 1724 for a debut on New Year's Day 1725. This year my ear and my spirit are drawn to Cantata 28, *Gottlob! nun geht das Jahr zu Ende* (God be praised! The year draws to an end), written a year later for the second Sunday of Christmas, which fell on December 30 in 1725.

Although the title resonates in our 21st century ears primarily as a statement of relief – *thank God THAT's over!* – Bach's texts for this sprightly, short cantata are full of joy and gratitude for both the year just passing and the one about to begin. It's a reminder from a composer of great faith that blessings flow in abundance from our Creator, at all times and in all places.

The text is below; here are a few suggestions for listening on YouTube:

1. The Netherlands Bach Collegium directed by Pieter Jan Leusink:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gGSPafdYJc>
2. The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Choir directed by Ton Koopman, at 58' 25" in:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNWHHef0_bs
3. The Monteverdi Choir and The English Baroque Soloists directed by John Eliot Gardiner
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSmeWvMtDVg>

Singers, if you'd like to sing along with the final chorale, this site provides the choral score along with a lovely recording of the last movement: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeVUFkXDKX8>

Movement 1: soprano aria

Praise God! Now the year is coming to a close, the new one already approaches.
Think upon this, my soul, how much good God's hands have done for you in the old year!
Sound a happy song of thanks to him, so he will continue to think of you
and send you even more for the new year.

Movement 2: Chorus

Now praise my soul, the Lord, whatever is in me, praise his name!
He increases his good works continually, do not forget it, o my heart!
He has forgiven you your sins and healed your great weakness,
Rescued your meager life, and taken you to his bosom.
He has protected you with lavish comfort and rejuvenated, like the eagle.
The King makes things right and protects those who suffer in his kingdom.

Movement 3: bass arioso

Thus speaks the Lord: it shall be joy to me to do them good,
and I will plant them in this land faithfully, with my whole heart and my entire soul.

Movement 4: tenor recitative

God is a fount, from which pure goodness flows; God is a light from which pure grace beams; God is a treasure, that signifies pure blessing; God is a Lord that acts lovingly and faithfully. Who loves him in faith honors him in childlike love, hears his word in his heart, and turns from evil paths, to him God gives himself with all gifts. Whoever has God must have everything.

Movement 5: Alto/tenor duet

God has blessed us in the current years, so that prosperity and health meet each other. We praise him heartily and pray therefore, that he will give us also a happy new year. We hope for his anticipated goodness and praise it in advance with thankful consciences

Movement 6: chorale

We praise all these your goodnesses, Father on throne of heaven, that you reveal yourself to us through Christ, your son, and we ask further off you: give us a peaceful year, protect us from all sorrow, and nourish us gently.

– *Katherine McKee, Music Director*



Children's & Youth Ministry: Christmas Recap

In true 2020 fashion, Children's & Youth Ministry premiered a virtual Christmas pageant during St. Bede's Christmas Eve service. A big thank you to our cast who made this experiment successful! The script was adapted from Illustrated Ministry's *Do Not Be Afraid: A Virtual Christmas Pageant* by Godly Play teacher Claire Lawrence. It emphasizes themes of resilience and hope in an uncertain world.

A recording of the Christmas pageant (with closed captions) is privately available on YouTube; email Brendan Deocariza-Nee at brendan@stbedesmenlopark.org for the link! Out of consideration for the privacy of our actors, we're not sharing the video publicly.

– *Brendan Deocariza-Nee, Children's and Youth Minister*

Upcoming SoulWork Sessions

Sundays at 8:30 a.m. • Find the Zoom links in the weekly eNews

This season of Epiphany, we will be using our SoulWork sessions to hear from authors in our community. You are invited to these SoulWork sessions, whether you have had the chance to read their book, or not. Either way, this will be a time of enjoying the gifts of the people in our community, and seeing how their light shines.

Sunday, January 17: Mystics, Icons... and more!

Because Catherine Clover's *The Maid of Gascony Series* is set in the Middle Ages, Catherine's research focuses considerably on mystics, relics, icons, pilgrimage, monastic and ecclesiastic architecture and chant. Join us for this SoulWork session, where she will share about the history and significance of many of these topics to her series.

Sunday, January 24: The Meaningful Psalms

Another significant theme of Medieval Spirituality is that of pilgrimage, and the importance of reciting Psalms while traveling and at the destination. Join us for this SoulWork session, where we will get to share what the Psalms mean to us. You can prepare in advance for this class by choosing a favorite Psalm and creating your own inspirational devotions, whether that be in the form of a meaningful memory, a poem, creating a work of art, or another form of personal introspection. You will be invited to share personal reflections on the Psalms during this session, or listen as others share theirs.

Sunday, January 31: Introduction to How God Becomes Real

Parishioner Tanya Lurhmann has recently published *How God Becomes Real* and will be speaking to us about her new work. Join us for this SoulWork session, when we will hear from Tanya about the research and self-reflection that went into this wonderful book.

February's Book Club Selection

On February 3, we will discuss *How to be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi. This book has been a #1 *New York Times* bestseller and is described by the *Times* as "the most courageous book to date on the problem of race in the Western mind." Bede's Book Club meets at 9:30 a.m. on Zoom. Email Laura Gable at lwgable@hotmail.com for the Zoom link.

— Laura Gable, Book Club Coordinator

Celebrations: January Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

- 5 Dora Ho
- 6 Sally Norman
- 7 Anne Vitullo
- 8 Michael Skey
- 15 Miranda Pinckert
- 17 Van Jepson
- 17 Michael Pellegrin
- 24 Rose Flegel
- 26 Elizabeth Taft
- 28 Elizabeth Flegel
- 28 Michelle Swenson
- 29 Claire Lawrence

Anniversaries:

Please let the parish office know if you are celebrating a birthday or anniversary this month!

St. Bede's Episcopal Church

2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, CA. 94025 • (650) 854-6555 • www.stbedesmenlopark.com

Sunday Services: Morning Prayer, 9:30 a.m. on Zoom

Vestry

Deb Blackmore, Junior Warden
Vicki Blayney
Carol Brink
Van Jepson
Irene Lawrence
Nancy Stork
Anne Vitullo, Senior Warden
Dick Zeren

Staff

Rev. Martha Korienek, Interim Rector
Brendan Deocariza-Nee, Children's
and Youth Minister
Katherine McKee, Music Director
Rani Fischer, Organist
Siri Huntoon, Parish Administrator
Angela Sherry, Bookkeeper

Committee Chairs and Volunteer Leaders

Altar Guild: Deb Blackmore, Elaine Kriegh, Sue Sartor, Anne Vitullo

Buildings and Grounds: Jon Backlund, Chair

Community Outreach: Deb Blackmore, Vicki Blayney, John Hickson, Sue Sartor, Angela Sherry and Becky Zeren

Finance: Julie Backlund, Treasurer; Michelle Swenson, Assistant Treasurer

Hospitality: Laura Gable, Helen Greenwood and Kathy Thompson, Captains

Deanery delegates: Michael Graebner and Irene Lawrence

Trinity School Board representatives:

Ann Latta, Jon Poe and Michelle Swenson
