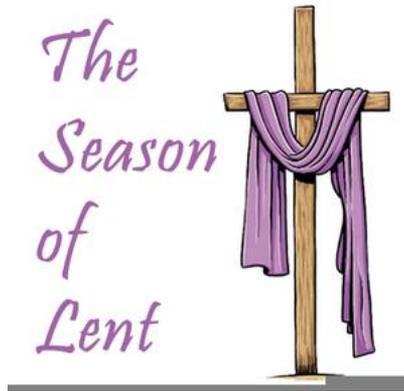


The Piper

February 2026



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A Message from Father Martin

*(Lord) You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts,
and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast;
that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy,
and renewed by your Word and Sacraments,
they may come to the fullness of grace which you have
prepared for those who love you. (Preface for Lent, BCP p.239)*

Dear Friends,

We begin this month **the refreshing and renewing season of Lent**. Lent is not for groveling and guilt. It is to refresh and renew our spiritual lives and prepare to celebrate the great joy of Easter – Christ’s resurrection for us and for this troubled world. It is an opportunity to take time to reflect on our priorities, on what we are anxious about, and to reset or refocus our daily living as needed. And it is a time for learning, to go deeper in faith and in trusting and following Jesus.

To get ready for Lent, we will have our **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** at church on Tuesday, February 17 from 5 to 6:30. (Please sign up in the Parish Hall to help Cathy Newfield with this delicious family event.)

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday** – February 18. We will have two services with Ashes and Holy Communion, at 12 Noon and 7:00 pm.

Our **Lenten Soup Suppers and Discussions** will be on Sundays from 5 to 7 pm in the Parish Hall. This year we will be discussing Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde’s book How We Learn to Be Brave. I have copies in my office or you can order your own on Amazon or your local bookstore. We will meet on Feb. 22; March 1, 8, 15 and 22. Please sign up to bring soup, bread or salad, etc.

Our Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Lucinda Ashby, will make her Annual Visitation on Sunday, March 15 (4th Sunday in Lent). She will preside and preach at our 10 am worship. We will follow the service with a parish potluck and open discussion with our bishop, as we did last year.

If you are interested in **reaffirming your faith** through Confirmation, Reception or Reaffirmation of Baptismal Promises when the Bishop visits, please see me ASAP to talk about this and to prepare. (You can learn more about Confirmation in the BCP pp.413-419 & 860.)

Bible Study continues every Tuesday from 11 am to 12 Noon. Come when you can – no background required and Bibles are provided. Our **Women’s Circle** is meeting twice a month and our new **Men’s Circle** meets once a month.

I also recommend for your Lenten observance the 2026 **Lenten Meditations** written by Sister Monica Clare, an Episcopal nun, author and unlikely TikTok star. They offer an invitation to rediscover—or deepen—holy habits of prayer, worship and engagement with Scripture. These “holy habits” provide a path to a life that is given shape, meaning and direction by being rooted in a deeper relationship with God. You can find them at: <https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/lent/>

Finally, we are beginning the **125th year of our ministry** as St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Ben Lomond. We discussed at our Annual Meeting several ways to observe this anniversary and share what God is doing through St. Andrew’s here in the San Lorenzo Valley. Share your ideas and visions for how we may share God’s love through Jesus with all people – as we are commissioned in the Baptismal Covenant (BCP p.304).

Meanwhile, as we look forward to a renewing Lenten season, continue to welcome our **wonderful visitors and new members** to St. Andrew’s and sign up to share in the activities being announced.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, even in these troubled times and with much to do. Thank one another for the great gift of serving together at St. Andrew’s.

Yours in Christ,
Martin+

St. Andrew’s Vestry Members

Jane Pomeroy, Senior Warden	Sheryl Mello
John Woolliscroft	Brad Moyer
Rochelle Kelly	Ray Rischpater
Joan McVay	<i>(Jr. Warden will be elected in February)</i>

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.



Meatballs in Wine

For meatballs...

2 lbs ground beef

2 eggs

1/2 envelope onion soup mix

15 (about) soda crackers, crushed and soaked in milk

Dash of catsup

Salt, pepper, garlic powder to taste.

For sauce...

2 cups burgundy wine

1-1/3 cups catsup

2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

2 tsp sugar

Salt, pepper, thyme, garlic powder to taste

Mix above ingredients well and form into balls. Broil to brown -- about 5 minutes. Put into roasting pan and pour sauce over them. Cover pan and bake at 350 degrees for about 1-1/2 hours.

HeeHeeHee!!

A priest was hiking in the woods when suddenly a mountain lion appeared, ready to devour the man whole. The priest quickly falls to his knees, looks up to the heavens and prays, "Dear God, please teach this lion mercy and give him religion." A chorus of angels is heard as a beam of light shines down on the mountain lion. The lion then drops to his knees, looks up to heavens and prays, "Dear God, bless you for this food I'm about to receive."

A Word from Sister Monica Clare on “Holy Habits”, Lent 2026

I live in an Augustinian religious community with eleven other sisters under the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Our community is both active and contemplative, meaning that we lead a life of prayer and contemplation alongside a life of active ministry to the world.

In our formation, we are taught that the life of prayer is our primary work, and that everything else comes from that life of prayer. Five times a day, we gather in the convent chapel to pray the Divine Office, also known as the Sanctification of the Hours. This ancient practice, which comes from traditions that predate Christianity, reminds us that time is not our own. It is a gift from God. We give thanks and praise to God by sanctifying the hours of the day through the chanting of Psalms, the reading of Scripture and the singing of hymns.

In the Anglican tradition, the Divine Office was considered so important that it was included in the Book of Common Prayer, even after the dissolution of the monasteries during the English Reformation. The monasteries were gone, but the Offices remained intact in Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline in the Prayer Book. At the Convent, we refer to Morning Prayer by its ancient name of Lauds and Evening Prayer by the equally ancient name of Vespers.

I have to admit that when I first entered the Convent, the Divine Office was the hardest thing for me to get used to. Chanting the Psalms and listening to Scripture readings at Lauds, Terce and Vespers every day bored me to tears. I didn't know if I'd ever get used to it. I tried hard to focus, but my restless mind would not be still. After a couple of years, I finally realized that I didn't need to try so hard. Our daily prayers had begun to change me just as regular exercise changes people at the gym. The words of Scripture, I realized, were not just words. They were a mystical experience that sank into my bones and became part of my DNA. The holy habit of daily prayer is not easy to get used to at first, but if you persevere, it changes you, and you start to feel that you can't live without it.

For these Lenten meditations, I am providing reflections on the Scripture readings for Vespers during Lent. In doing so, I hope to provide some added appreciation for the Sanctification of the Hours, allowing readers to become familiar with texts that are not typically heard in churches on Sundays, and to encourage holy habits of daily prayer and Scripture engagement. Each day, you'll see the listing for the full Gospel reading and an excerpt that guides the daily meditation.

Our religious community was founded in England in 1852, and generations of Sisters have faithfully continued the Sanctification of the Hours for 174 years.

“As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.”

<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/lent/>

Annual Meeting Report

Here are the draft Minutes of our Annual parish Meeting, which was held on Sunday, January 25. One correction: Fr. Martin made an error in Excell when calculating our Average Sunday Attendance for 2025. We have grown from an ASA of 28 in 2024 to an ASA of 30 in 2025, an increase of 7%. (Not the 14% he announced on Sunday).

(draft) Annual Meeting Minutes - January 25, 2026

Father Yabroff opened the meeting with prayer. He appointed Sharon Fishel as clerk of the meeting and declared that a quorum was present. The minutes from the 2025 meeting were presented in the packet, they had been approved by the 2025 vestry.

Senior Warden's Report: Jane Pomeroy gave us a summary of the year, noting that it has been a busy year. Our attendance has grown even though we have lost several key members. She mentioned that our sermons reach folks who cannot attend via Facebook weekly. Our buildings are used extensively by community groups such as Girl Scouts, Mountain Community Theater and the Long Term Recovery Group. We have a women's circle and a men's group that are meeting regularly. She noted we have met challenges that have come up and thanked all the volunteers who have made this possible.

Junior Warden's Report: John Woolliscroft listed the many projects we have done this year including water leaks and plumbing backups. We have trimmed trees, paved the parking lot, pumped the septic tank, as well as minor repairs. The cost of all this was about \$16,000. Fr. Yabroff noted that we received a grant of \$5,000 from Valley Churches United towards the parking lot repairs and the balancer was met by special donations from church members. The full cost of building and grounds can be found on the budget sheet.

Vestry: The current vestry members include Sheryl Mello, Jane Pomeroy, Ray Rischpater, and John Woolliscroft. Leaving the vestry are Susan Greer, who has moved to Mexico, Steve LaFever who died in December and Sara Hector. Thanksgivings were expressed for their service.

Nominees for vestry are: Rochelle Kelly and Brad Moyer for 3 year terms and Joan McVay for a one year term. They were elected by acclamation.

Delegates: Delegates serve a two year term; serving their last year in 2026 will be Barbara Banke, Rochelle Kelly as Delegates and Sharon Fishel as an alternate. Joan McVay and Janet Parske volunteered to be alternate delegates. It was moved that we close the nominations and they were elected by acclamation.

Finance Reports: The finance reports are in the meeting packet. Sharon went over the balance sheet and Fr. Yabroff explained the budget for next year. The budget is balanced and in the black.

Lenten Suppers: Lenten Soup suppers will be held again during Lent. We will be studying a book by Bishop Budde. After discussion it was decided to hold the suppers on Sundays from 5 to 7.

Outreach Committee: Joan McVay read a memo from Ray Rischpater explaining all the things we have been able to support this year. The list of these is in the packet. We give 5% of our income each year. It was explained that

this is done quarterly with the recommendation coming from the committee and approved by the vestry. It was discussed how the committee comes to its decisions as to where to give money. Janet Parske will join this committee this year.

Anniversary: St. Andrew's is turning 125 this year. Fr. Yabroff suggested four ideas for events to celebrate this milestone.

- A worship service (not on a Sunday) with the bishop, and other local churches; possibly in August
- A concert or musical event
- A Historical presentation
- A Community block party with food, music, perhaps booths set up by the groups who use our facilities such as LTRG, MCT, Girl Scouts etc. There was excited discussion about all of these ideas; Fr Yabroff asked that people put their names next to the events they would like to help plan.

Events: A list of our regular events was put up; it included Chili Cook Off, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 4 th of July parade, Celtic Sunday, Halloween, Harvest Pot Luck and Christmas Tea. Folks were encouraged to add to the list and put their names down on events they want to help out with. It was noted that if there aren't any names added to a category we won't do that event.

Fr. Yabroff announced that Jane Pomeroy will be the Senior Warden for 2026. Rochelle Kelly thanked Fr Yabroff for all he does for us. The meeting was closed by singing the doxology at 12:08pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Fishel



Ramblings from a Wanderer

As I've been pondering on what I will ramble on about this month, so many things have come to mind ... the changes I've felt in my life over the past year (which I've already written about), the blessings I feel every day (which I've already written about), or the loveliness of this place I'm now living in (which I've already written about), or the community I've found here and am becoming a part of (which I've already written about)... soooo, I've decided to share thought about a book I recently read (and actually finished pretty quickly vs the 3 others I've been taking my time on).

My sister-in-law recently sent me a Christmas box that was received several weeks after Christmas partly because of her delay in sending and partly because of the length of time it takes for packages to be delivered here. In it were 2 books and a jar of tea. In explanation, she wrote a note that said she had read and enjoyed one of the books, a light-hearted mystery, and she was getting ready to read the second book that the bookseller had told her was charming and life changing. So, naturally intrigued, I picked up the second book and started reading. And was not happy when 3 chapters in I had to put it down to take Bella out to do her "business", then actually wanted to stay out and play. And, now, having finished it, I would have to say I agree with the bookseller (and my sister-in-law who has now finished it and says the same thing).

It is a story of an 87 year old man, who originally hails from Portugal, has lived all over the world, has sufficient means to live comfortably and can also be very generous to those around him, and has chosen to visit and live for one year in a small town in Georgia. Throughout the book, it is described how he meets and interacts with a number of the residents of this town; hints are given about his reason for picking this town, but it is only at the end that we are given the final answer to that question.

We watch as he "bestows" the gift of a portrait painted by a local artist upon the subject of the painting; how he learns the story of the person receiving the painting; how in learning their story, that person is then at least partly healed from the hurts and difficulties they have experienced; how their stories impact his life and ultimately their community. With these gifts, a community within a community is built, bringing these people to a greater understanding of themselves and each other.

We also learn bits and pieces of his story, some of which is shared with the other characters, but most often only shared with the reader. We witness his love and observance of nature, of rivers and birds, of his appreciation of music, art and people, his belief in God, Jesus, and heaven. We learn of some of the pains and joys in his life; the deaths of his daughter and wife in a car accident;

regrets of paths taken and not taken; and his ability to discern the concerns, needs, and desires of the people he meets in this small town.

How often, as I've moved through my life have I met people, interacted with them, learned parts of their stories, but didn't really think about (or care about, quite frankly) their needs, dreams, talents, successes and failures. More or less, superficially knowing them (and them knowing me in the same way), sometimes feeling there could be a "connection", but not making that connection for some reason or another.

How much have I lost (or at least not gained) because of not making that connection—for whatever reasons there may have been —no time, no opportunity, no interest—and not caring enough to make the time, make the opportunity or create/develop an interest.

And, as I have thought about it more, how much better would all of our lives have been or would be, if only we were all to take more time, opportunity and interest in each other. And, most relevantly to me today, I've realized that in my travel here to San Miguel I am taking more time, more opportunities, and more interest, and, just maybe, that is at least part of the reason my life feels so much better.

Looking back, it was during times when I was part of a community that took time and interest in knowing each other, and I was taking time and opportunity to get to know them, I was the happiest, most settled, and most content with my life. Those times have not been many, and it seems now that so much of my life was spent searching for something, but not really knowing what; now thinking that it was a community, a connection, a deeper knowing of those around me. And now I do make time, pursue opportunities, and have interest, so the wandering I've been doing has resulted in having a purpose that is being fulfilled. Soooo --- life changing — possibly. Or at least making me aware of the possibility.

By the way, I HIGHLY recommend this book — entitled *Theo of Golden*, by Allen Levi. It is wonderful. Happy reading!!!

Susan Greer

St. Andrew's Ministries



The Women's Circle

Dear Friends,

Women's Circle will meet on Thursday, February 5 at 6:30 pm at the home of Eve Yabroff, 172 View Circle, Felton. Eve will bring our reflection.

The Women's Circle will also meet on Wednesday, February 18 at 10:30 am at the Parish Hall.

Ann Moyer, 619-321-8596

Men's Circle

The Men's Group will meet Thursday, February 5 at 6:30 pm at Tedd Parske's home at 16100 Hwy 9, Boulder Creek. Questions? Call Brad Moyer 619-321-7316 or Christian Kjaergaard 650-862-4404.

LOSS (WINGS) Associated with Suicide Prevention Services of the Central Coast, it is a support (not therapy) group for anyone who has lost someone to suicide, years ago or recently. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 pm (please note this is a change in time) in the Parish Hall. The Facilitator is Dr. Joan McVay of St. Andrew's. For more information, contact Julie Cory at 831-246-8750.

Prayer Team

We have an active prayer team at St. Andrew's led by Sue Roe. When a prayer concern is made known to Sue, she sends it out to the group so they can be praying for you. Please contact Sue if you would like some prayers.

Also, if you would like to be one of the pray-ers, let Sue know and she will be happy to add you to the group.

Please contact Sue at Phone 562-243-4080, or by email suemhr@aol.com

Outreach Committee

If you know of or support a non-profit organization and would like it to be considered for a grant from St. Andrew's, please provide information on its programs to the Outreach Committee. The members of the committee are Joan McVay, Janet Parske and Ray Rischpater. We are looking for additional committee members, so if you are interested, please contact Joan, Janet or Ray. The committee generally meets after Bible Study, on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

ACA (Adult Children of Alcoholic and Dysfunctional Families) meets every Wednesday evening upstairs.

COFFEE HOUR PROVIDERS

THANK YOU FOR ALL THE YUMMY THINGS YOU BRING US

If you are unable to bring coffee hour please call someone else on the list and also, please let the office know so we can put the correct provider in the bulletin. To let the office know please email staoffice@sbcglobal.net or call or text Sharon. I type bulletins, etc. at home so don't always see the updates in the parish hall.

Sharon Fishel Office: 831-247-5572

Eve Yabroff	(253) 225-8683	February 1
Emily Kjaergaard	(408) 221-3830	February 8
Janet Parske		February 15
Jennifer Kennedy	251-1471	February 22

How We Learn To Be Brave, by Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde

Our 2026 Lenten Study book

Here is the beginning of the Introduction:

We all want to be brave when it counts—to be the one who steps up, leans in, and does the right thing when it matters most. We want to bring our best selves when we're called upon, to speak with clarity and conviction in a pivotal situation.

This book is about those decisive moments when we are called to act with courage and, much to our own amazement, we do.

Although the more dramatic moments seem to catch us by surprise, looking through the wider lens of our lives, we can see that the acts of bravery that astonish even us are not isolated events. In this book I examine life through that wider lens in hope that you, reader, will realize that you have all the raw material you need to live with courage and purpose in your decisive moments, and all the moments that precede and follow them.

Decisive moments are marking events. They stand out in our memory and are what others often remember about us. We feel a rush of adrenaline, making us acutely aware of what's happening. We feel alive—so much so that the rest of our lives can feel dull and uninspired by comparison. Yet decisive moments are almost always preceded by seasons of preparation, and they are followed by an equally important season of alignment, in which we learn to live according to what the decisive moments revealed, clarified, or set in motion. How we prepare for decisive moments determines our ability to step up to them when they come, and how we live in light of our decisive moments is, in the end, what determines their significance.



Join us for Worship Services on Sundays at 10 a.m. and the social hour after. The sermon may be watched on St. Andrew's Facebook page, if you are not able to attend in person.