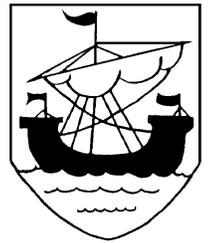


# Canterbury Tales



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

May 2020

## *From The Rector*

### Stop Children, What's That Sound?

Are you getting cabin fever? We Californians are probably not as accustomed to the sheltering in place because we haven't trained for it. We are accustomed to being able to go out any time of year.

I grew up in the Bay Area. So when I moved to New England when I was younger it was an adjustment for me. Yes, people go out in the cold of winter all over the place, but it can go for months being cold back there so I missed that part of California weather a lot.

But even writing about that right now seems silly and reflective of a perspective of privilege within the first world. Because there are people in medical centers all over the world who are not really wanting to go out right now and are doing so at their own peril because they need to care for people who are dying.

There are people dropping off loved ones at these medical centers and if they don't know to cover the contingency of saying goodbye, will never get the chance because their loved ones will die in isolation.

There are people striving to hold onto their employees even though there is no revenue coming in. And there are employees with families to feed being let go by the thousands.

There are lawmakers struggling to make the right choices when balancing the threat to employment and the threat to life.

And there is an entire world wondering when is this going to end, and where is God in all of this.

This is affecting some of us more than others. Some of us feel powerless while others are feeling vulnerable, and still others are wondering if they will have a job next month. But one thing we share- we are all in new territory, even if it is in that place we call home.

Powerlessness, vulnerability, insecurity: Is that our call to prayer?

John+

## *Anselm's Angels*

*"On the other side of a storm  
is the strength that comes  
from having navigated  
through it. Raise your sail  
and begin."*

*~ Gregory S. Williams*

A very big thank you to the following parishioners who are helping St. Anselm's stay connected and operating during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Chris Young** for serving as our official cameraman and Zoom expert to make sure we all have access to Sunday services.

**Andrew Huddart** for adding music to our virtual services.

**Sylvia Williams** for providing altar guild support to Father John.

**Sara Nelson** for making weekly bank deposits.

**Marian Mulkey** for coordinating calls to the homebound among us and her dedicated calling team:  
**Naomi, Chamberlain-Harris, Cindy Eisenberg, Vicky Pappas, Judy Peak, Abby Perry and Gerry Starr.**

And a huge thank you to all the parishioners who responded so quickly to your **Office Manager's** request for photos so Father John has a full church every Sunday. And if you haven't yet submitted a photo, it's not too late!

## ST. ANSELM'S HAS A VENMO ACCOUNT

We have had some requests to establish a St. Anselm's Venmo account so that folks who might want to support the church can do so without writing and mailing a check. If you already have the app installed on your mobile phone, you will find us either by **name (Saint Anselms)** or **@username (@st-anselms)**. If you do not have the app, the following instructions will assist you in getting set up:

- Download a Venmo mobile app: iOS & Android (Venmo does not have a Windows app)
- Open the Venmo app.
- Choose your sign-up method and create a secure password (between 8 and 32 characters long).
- Verify your phone number and email address.
- Add and verify a U.S. bank account, credit card, or debit card to make a payment.

Once the app is installed, click on the icon with pencil and square with a dollar sign. You will use the above name or @username to find Saint Anselms (you should recognize our profile photo of our lovely sanctuary). You will then go to the "Pay or Request" page where you type in an amount in the right corner. Below the name of the church you may designate the gift if you want. Toward the bottom of the screen you will click the blue box to "pay."

## LENTEN SERIES TO RESUME

Our 2020 Lenten Series, *One Body: Respecting Neighbors of Every Race and Ethnicity*, was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. After an initial presentation by author Cara Meredith, we postponed plans for remaining speakers due to the shutdown.

On Tuesday May 12 at 7 PM., one of our planned speakers, Gabe Slavitt, will provide a virtual presentation on issues of race and ethnicity from his perspective as a leader within Acalanes High School's "Integrating all nationalities and helping others" student club. After we hear from Gabe, a facilitated conversation will allow us to explore ways to understand and empathize with people who navigate issues of race and ethnicity in ways we have not experienced.

Then on Tuesday, May 26th at 7 PM St. Anselm's parishioner, Leta Seletzky, will share her virtual presentation. And it just so happens that Leta's essay for *The Atlantic* has recently been published, so if you'd like a bit of a preview of her presentation, here's a link: <https://tinyurl.com/yc26qeaq>.

The format will be a Zoom meeting and we expect to learn a lot from the experience. We hope many of you will participate and provide feedback. Input from this session will inform future Christian Formation Commission plans.

To participate, please email Cathy Witkay at [cathy.w@stanselms.ws](mailto:cathy.w@stanselms.ws) so that we can issue you an invitation a few days in advance. For more information please contact Marian Mulkey, at [marianmulkey@comcast.net](mailto:marianmulkey@comcast.net) or (510) 393-5997.

## ZOOM FACILITATORS WANTED

We would like to create some small groups after our Zoom service. The hope is that after we greet each other following the church service, and get an update from Shanda on what is going on with the County Health folks as they battle the Coronavirus, we move over to smaller groups where it is easier to chat.

Folks seemed open to the idea, but we have yet to recruit any volunteers to host the meetings. Are you interested? All that would be involved would be to schedule the meeting, then folks go there from the church service to the WiFi Coffee Hour, as easy as walking from the church to Jackson Hall.

If you are interested in facilitating, please let either Cathy or Father John know.

*Canterbury Tales* is the  
monthly newsletter of  
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Editor: Cathy S. Witkay

Virtual Sunday Service:  
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

St. Anselm's Staff

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## *The Senior Warden*

Hello all of my wonderful St. Anselm's folks! I know it's time for more words from you Senior Warden, but I have to be honest, I'm exhausted. The last month has been incredibly busy and time has flown by faster than a speeding bullet. As I tried to think of what to write, I remembered the words the director of Contra Costa Health Services Anna Roth recently wrote that gave me both comfort and hope.

I hope you all find the same comfort and hope in her words that I did.

~ Shanda Young

“For all of us caught in the midst of this unprecedented pandemic, life has changed fundamentally. How we socialize, learn, exercise, dine and work has been reshaped entirely in the course of just a few weeks. That level of change, combined with the inherent health concerns related to COVID-19, has created levels of stress and anxiety typical of war zones. Combine all that with the frustration of not knowing when this might end, how we will all be impacted and what a post-COVID-19 world will look like and you might expect fractures in our community.

But we're not breaking apart. In fact, as I look around, I see a community that is pulling together in many different and powerful ways. Yes, we're all under immense stress, but Contra Costa County has risen to the challenge, showing a level of respect, cooperation and involvement that is simply remarkable. It's too early to predict the future, but one thing I do foresee is Contra Costa County emerging from all this with pride for modeling a remarkable level of civility and leadership.

It's these increased acts of community participation that make it possible for Contra Costa County Health Services to respond in a coordinated, science-based and thoughtful manner to this crisis. The health department's purpose is to protect and preserve life. We prepare and practice for mass emergencies on a regular basis—earthquakes, fires, disease outbreaks and other disasters. It is our obligation to be prepared even for a once-in-a-century pandemic. And now, with COVID-19, our purpose inspires and drives us to balance the need for extreme caution with a respect for your need to live as normal a life as possible in the face of this crisis.

As one of the first states to see COVID-19 cases, California could well have faced the same catastrophic impacts that other states are now experiencing. However, because of the courage and foresight of health and government officials in Contra Costa County and the entire Bay Area, we took strong and immediate action. Issuing one of the nation's first region-wide shelter in place orders, the Bay Area slowed the spread of this unprecedented threat to prevent the crushing demand on hospital resources, which prevented illness and death. None of this is possible without the understanding and cooperation of all of you. Your willingness to alter your lives in ways we know are disruptive is vital for the health and well-being of the entire community as well as the safety of our essential workers.

Part of what's made our response effective thus far has been the cooperation and coordination of the entire county government apparatus. From our Board of Supervisors and County Administration to the multiple different county departments, we are seeing an unprecedented level of alignment and action. Separate departments are sharing resources, staff expertise and contacts to make sure that the county's response is as comprehensive and coordinated as possible. By the same respect, the county's 19 cities are partnering closely with all of these efforts to magnify our reach, impact and efficiency. This has been a true example of a whole government response to support and protect the people of Contra Costa County.

Rightly so, there has been a lot of focus on the amazing individuals on the front lines of this epidemic – our healthcare workers, medics, police, fire and many more. As the county's health director, I have never been more inspired in my entire career than to work with doctors, nurses, clinicians, lab workers, disease investigators, community health workers, registration, administration and custodial staff and countless other essential workers who have never once questioned their responsibility. Instead, they come to work every day dedicated to protecting and preserving lives in our county. It is humbling to witness this level of commitment to others. And for every worker that is responding on the multiple front lines of this pandemic, there's a team of support staff working to make sure they have the materials, protection, data, information, and expertise they need so they can focus their attention on the work of helping people get and stay well.

*(continued on page 4)*

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**Senior Warden** *(continued from page 3)*

The other day, I was on my way to a field health care site we have prepared. As I was driving, I saw a gathering of people at a local school. With masks and gloves on, dozens of volunteers had shown up to distribute food to their neighbors, friends and strangers who are feeling some of the greatest economic impact of this pandemic. As I passed the group I was filled with gratitude. I believe this deep sense of community and connection is part of what makes us resilient and will take us forward to greet the days ahead.

Many thanks for all the ideas, feedback and information so many of you have shared with Contra Costa County Health Services. Your input is helping us to improve each day. Thank you for your continued support of our health department and each other.

Wishing you all safety, health and wellness.

Anna”

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## CRITERIA FOR COVID-19 TESTING IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Our Senior Warden, Shanda Young, has advised us that the criteria for COVID-19 testing in Contra Costa County testing has been updated to include the following symptoms:

- Fever >100.0 or may be subjective
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Chills
- Myalgias (muscle aches)
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New confusion (especially in elderly)

For a screening appointment call: 1-844-421-0804.

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## *SCHEDULE OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS*

**May 5th, Grief Support Group** will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon. To be invited, email Father John at [suttonj@comcast.net](mailto:suttonj@comcast.net).

**May 6th and each Wednesday in May, Contemporary Bible Study** will meet via Zoom at 10:30 AM. To be invited, email Father John at [suttonj@comcast.net](mailto:suttonj@comcast.net).

**May 8th, Bridge Group** will meet via Zoom at 6:00 PM. for social hour. To be invited, email Cathy Witkay at [cathy.w@stanselms.ws](mailto:cathy.w@stanselms.ws).

**May 11th Vestry**, will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM. Vestry members will receive an email from Father John with the meeting link.

**June 7th, Cancer Support Group**, will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon. To be invited, email Julie Rinkenberger at [jrjpmaggie@hotmail.com](mailto:jrjpmaggie@hotmail.com).

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## ***WINTER NIGHTS UPDATE***

I'm sure some of you have been wondering, as I was - Is Winter Nights still happening in these days of COVID-19? Yes. Are they sheltering-in-place? Yes. What does that look like? How is it working out?

At the beginning of the shelter-in-place orders, there were six families, seven adults and fifteen kids. Since then they have been able to find homes for two of the families, and they continue to look for homes for all. They decided not to take on any more families and, if possible, to end the year early.

During this time, the congregations have volunteered to host for four weeks at a time, instead of the usual two. No volunteers from church are allowed in. They buy groceries for breakfasts and lunches and drop them off. Take-out dinners are ordered from local restaurants. Because there are no longer any volunteers and the families are there 24/7, they now have two Winter Nights' staff on duty at all times. Everyone is checked daily for any signs of illness.

The tough part is, of course, the children - keeping them occupied, entertained, learning. They are allowed to run around out in the church yard. Staff have created a daily schedule that includes two study periods/quiet times Monday through Thursday. All adults and children have daily chores. The faithful "Traveling Tutors," who now can't go there in person, are finding creative ways to connect online.

The program is short on funds and asking for donations. Staff costs have more than doubled, because of needing to have two staff there and needing staff during the daytime hours. They are paying for the take-out dinners. They've had to buy some laptops for children that need them. They have bought board games, art kits, ukuleles, whatever will keep them entertained. They also would like an emergency reserve in case a family needs to be quarantined in a motel or to help a family move.

If you are willing to donate, please make your check out to ***Winter Nights Family Shelter*** and send it to:

Winter Nights Family Shelter  
404 Gregory Lane , #1  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

If you have questions, please call me, Anne Brown, at 925-788-0664 or e-mail me at [annechalfantbrown@gmail.com](mailto:annechalfantbrown@gmail.com).

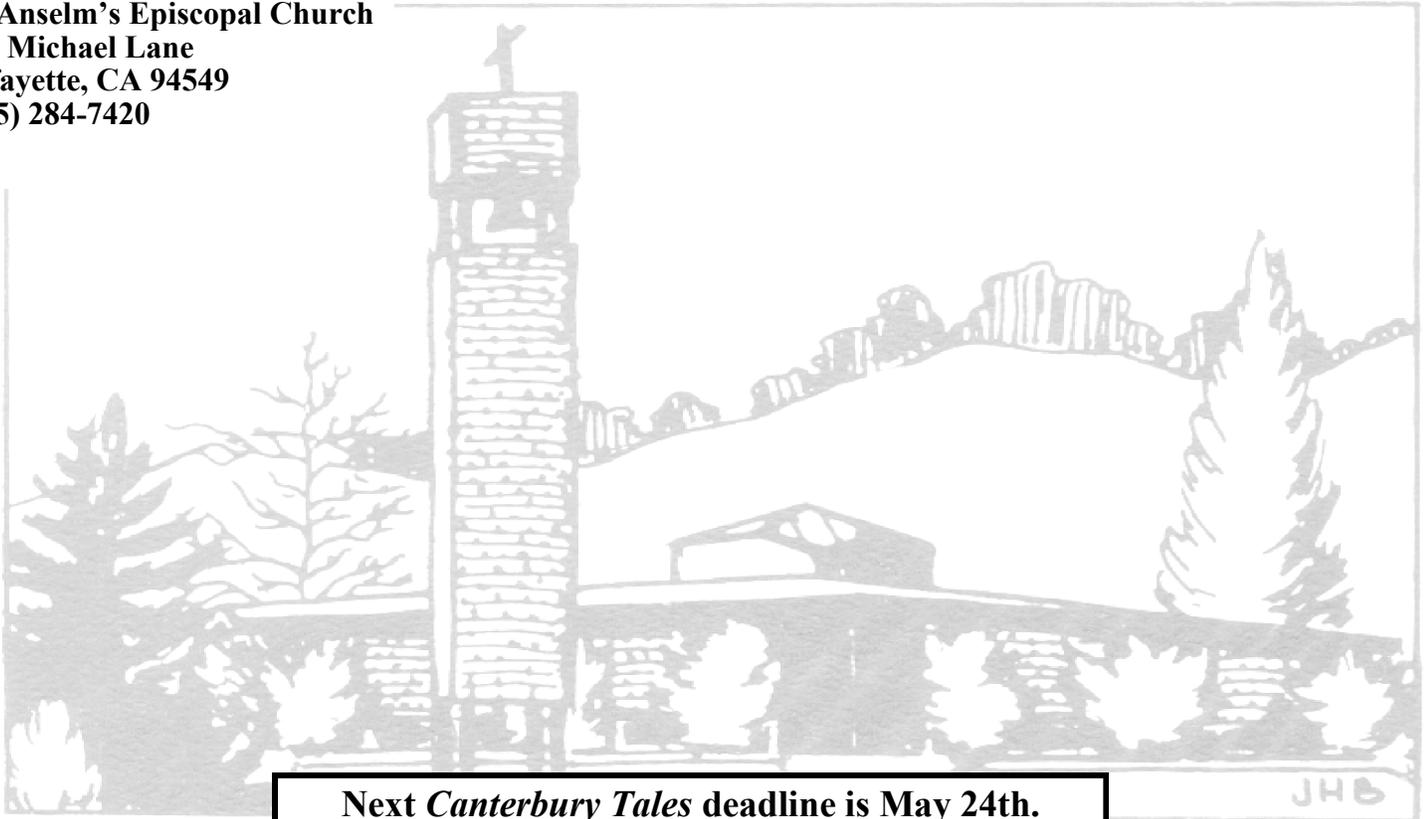
P.S. We're scheduled to have families in Jackson Hall again from September. 7th to 21st. That is, of course, no longer a sure thing.

Thank you so much!

Anne



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**Next *Canterbury Tales* deadline is May 24th.**

### ***Prayer for a Pandemic***

*By Cameron Wiggins Bellm*

***May we who are merely inconvenienced*** remember those whose lives are at stake.

***May we who have no risk factors*** remember those most vulnerable.

***May those who have the luxury of working from home*** remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

***May those who have the flexibility to care for our children when schools close*** remember those who have no options.

***May we who have to cancel a trip*** remember those who have no safe place to go.

***May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market*** remember those who have no margin at all.

***May those who settle for quarantine at home*** remember those who have no home.

***As fear grips our world,*** let us choose love during this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us find ways to be the loving embrace to God and our neighbor.

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