



# The Franciscan



February 2022

● **Diocesan Bishop** ●

*John Harvey Taylor*

● **Our Vicar** ●

*The Rev. Sarah Kitch*  
[stfrancis.simi@gmail.com](mailto:stfrancis.simi@gmail.com)

● **The Bishop's Committee** ●

- Bishop's Warden  
Amy Brown
- Junior Warden  
Dan McCarty
- Finance  
Sam Anusiem
- Clerk/ Communications  
Ruth Haskins
- Service/Outreach  
Gerri Harrington
- Fellowship/Outreach  
Cathy Grimes
- Worship
- Pastoral Care

**FROM OUR VICAR**

Gratitude begins in our hearts and dovetails into behavior. It almost always makes you willing to be of service, which is where the joy resides. It means you are willing to stop being such a jerk. When you are aware of all that has been given you, in your lifetime and in the past few days, it is hard not to be humbled and pleased to give back.



... Continued pg. 2

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES**

Ash Wednesday Services will be held outside on the St Francis Patio.

**Services will be held at 10am, 12noon and 6pm.**

*10am Service will take place of the regularly scheduled healing service*



**VERNAL EQUINOX DRUMMING CIRCLE**

Welcome in the Spring with an outdoor drumming circle service as we gather around the firepit. Re-energize, Gather, Renew –

**Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm**  
*(outside the Sunday School building)*



# From Our Vicar...

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*Gratitude begins in our hearts and dovetails into behavior.*

*It almost always makes you willing to be of service, which is where the joy resides.*

*It means you are willing to stop being such a jerk.*

*When you are aware of all that has been given you, in your lifetime and in the past few days, it is hard not to be humbled and pleased to give back.*

*Most humbling of all is to comprehend the lifesaving gift that your pit crew of people has been for you, and all the experiences you have shared, the journeys together, the collaborations, the births, the deaths, divorces, rehab, and vacations, the solidarity you have shown one another.*

*Every so often you realize that without all of them, your life would be barren and pathetic.*

*This is called radical gratitude in the face of whatever life throws at you.*

***From Anne Lamott: Help Thanks Wow The Three Essential Prayers***

The writer Anne Lamott says it well as she describes with great gratitude all those who have been in her life in all its seasons. So St. Francis Church, too, has gratitude for all those around our community and in our fellowship as we continue to serve with joy what God is doing in and through our church.

What joy to look forward to this coming year, as we continue to reach into the community of Simi Valley and make a welcoming space for all to come. We are grateful for our Annual Meeting and the review of what has been. We are grateful for what is yet to be and to be realized. It is a time of great gratitude as we appreciate one another. As we consider this upcoming Lent, reflect again on all the people in your life that are part of your “pit crew.”

Let us return with renewed sense of ministry as we enter into this year and Lenten Season. May we find joy in service, with gratitude for all the people in our life that share our experiences of God’s great Goodness to us. Radical Gratitude!!!



**Blessed Epiphany and Happy New Year**

*Susan*

Ash Wednesday is March 2. As we begin to prepare for Lent, I wanted to share a blessing for us as we look to this season of quiet and reflection.

Jan Richardson, a writer, artist, and minister, writes blessings for all occasions. It seemed appropriate to include a blessing for this time of Lent and our reflection in this quiet time of the church. We are held in a waiting period. We are mindful of our own shortcomings and our heart's longing for something better. We are longing for something we cannot name and find someone of whom we hope we know. It is a time in the Desert. It is a time in the dark. Yet, in this time of quiet and reflection, what is it that we hear as we respond to the Psalmist words, "Be Still and Know That I Am God?" As we are still, what do notice and celebrate? What gives us hope in this held time of God's Great Love?

### ***Blessing the Desert***

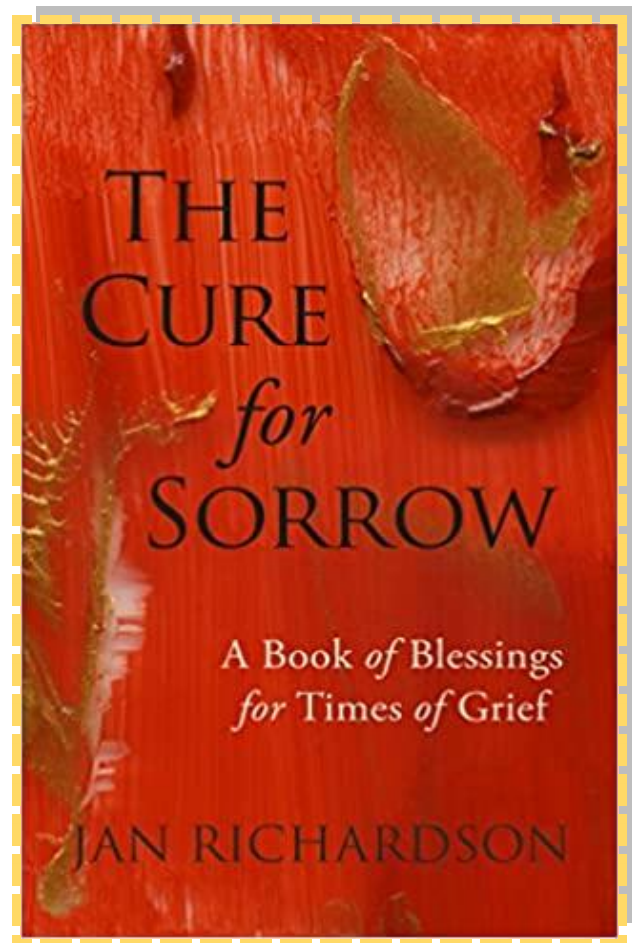
*Ask me what this blessing sounds like  
and I will tell you about the wind  
that hollows everything  
it finds.*

*I will tell you about locusts  
who chose this night  
to offer their awful,  
rasping song.*

*I will tell you about rock faces  
and how it sounds when what was sturdy  
and solid suddenly shears away.*

*But give me long enough,  
and I will tell you also  
how beneath the wind,  
a silence, not of absence  
or of agony that leaves all speechless  
and stricken when it comes,  
but of rest, of dreaming,  
of the seed that knows its season  
and the wordless canticle of stars  
that will not cease their singing  
even when we cannot bear  
to hear.*

—Jan Richardson from *The Cure for Sorrow*



## A Deepening Intimacy

*Father Richard Rohr shares that right relationship is the central theme of most biblical stories:*

It seems that this YHWH who is uncovering and showing Godself in the Bible desires not just images or ideas, but even *persons* with whom God can be in very concrete and intimate relationship. God is creating, quite literally, some friends for God! Jesus became the full representation of one who accepted and lived that friendship. In fact, he never seemed to doubt it. That must be at the core of our imitation of Jesus, and exactly how we become “partners in his triumph” (2 Corinthians 2:14).

Yet God does not settle for mandated or fear-based relationships, but rather desires willing and free relationships with “friends” (John 15:15). It is called a “new covenant” (Jeremiah 31:31; Luke 22:20), but one that is still a quite new and unbelievable possibility for most people.

One way to read the entire Bible is to note the gradual unveiling of our faces, the gradual creating of “persons” capable of relationship with God and all others. We grow from infants totally receiving love, to teenage love, to infatuation, to adult communion. Biblical spirituality has the potential of creating persons who can both receive and give out of love, and love that is perfectly free.

We all fear and avoid intimacy, it seems. It is too powerful and demands that we also “have faces,” that is, *self-confidence, identity, dignity, and a certain courage to accept our own unique face*. Then we have a greater challenge—once we have discovered our own face, we must be willing to give it away to another.

The biblical tradition says that truth is found not in abstract concepts, but in *an encounter with otherness*. As in the Trinity, trust is a relationship of love with what we gaze upon. Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas (1906–1995) said the only thing that really converts people is “the face of the other.” [1] The face of YHWH for Moses, the face of a lover for Jacob, the face of an accuser for David, the face of the enemy for Judith, these change people’s “truth.” It is relationship, “the face of the other,” that transforms us, converts us, and gives us our deepest identity. Not book knowledge!

In the philosophical traditions in which Western Christians have been educated up to now, truth is formed and found by the private mind and its collections of agreed-upon ideas. Identity can be achieved autonomously, with a certain kind of self-sufficiency. Thus, we speak of the “self-made person” and familiar cultural truth.

Jesus instead defines truth itself as relational rather than conceptual. He says “I am the truth” (John 14:6) and then immediately describes himself as one who is in absolute relationship with his “Father” (14:7, 9–10) and the Spirit who is in relationship to both (14:16–18). This rearranges the world of religion from arguments over ideas and concepts into a world of encounter, relationship, and presence to the face of the other. That changes everything.

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[1] See *Is It Righteous to Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Lévinas*, ed. Jill Robbins (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001) for an introduction to his work.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality* (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2008), 53–54, 56, 61.

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*We cling to the present out of wariness of the past.*

*And why not, after all? We get confused. We need such escape as we can find. But there is a deeper need yet, I think, and that is the need — not all the time, surely, but from time to time — to enter that still room within us all where the past lives on as a part of the present, where the dead are alive again, where we are most alive ourselves to turnings and to where our journeys have brought us. The name of the room is Remember — the room where with patience, with charity, with quietness of heart, we remember consciously to remember the lives we have lived.*

*- Frederick Buechner*

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## **Stay Connected With Us!**

- Pastoral Care through the church office (805)526-5141
- Pastoral Care via email [Stfrancis.simi@gmail.com](mailto:Stfrancis.simi@gmail.com)
- Keep up through the St. Francis Website <https://www.stfrancischurchofsimi.org/>
- Sunday Worship Live Streamed - link in the St. Francis Weekly
  - Remember to keep in touch with each other through the Phone Tree
  - Stay connected through weekly services and activities made available

Please remember St. Francis with your donations and pledge.  
Secure online Giving available through PayPal:

<https://www.stfrancischurchofsimi.org/donate>



### Coming Up:

- Women's Retreat Sign-ups Open
- ECW is Collecting Toys for Hillsides
- Mardi Gras Great Gumbo Cook-off
- Ash Wednesday Services
- Lenten Bible Study w/David Kitch
- Vernal Equinox Drumming Circle



### 2022 Women's Retreat

The 2022 Women's' Retreat will be held at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino, California. If you have never gone and are interested in learning more about Holy Spirit or the retreat itself, please ask me or Leslie Lonergan. Many of the women in the congregation have gone in the past so you could very well find someone sitting right next you that you can ask! The grounds at Holy Spirit offer a restful location where you will find peace and tranquility. There are many activities where fellowship is a part of the retreat and everyone is welcome to join; unless you just want to relax, sleep or go for a walk. **Mark your calendars for the weekend of March 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>**, the retreat starts with dinner on Friday evening and ends on Sunday after lunch. *The cost for the 2 night stay, which includes 6 meals; will be \$250 for a double room and \$290 for a single. Right now, due to Covid, we may be asked to do single rooms. We will keep you updated on this when we get confirmation.*

**There is a signup sheet at the church or you can contact me at (805)358-4438 or by email at:**

**[patriciaudell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:patriciaudell@sbcglobal.net).**

Hope to see you there for a fun, relaxing weekend!



**Ash Wednesday Services will be held  
outside on the St Francis Patio**

**Services will be @ 10am, 12Noon and 6pm**  
*Each service includes Eucharist and  
Distribution of Ashes.*

*The 10 am service will be held in place of the  
regularly calendared Healing Service.*



### **LENTEN BIBLE STUDY 2022**

**Join David Kitch via Zoom!**

*More Details to come as the season draws near.*

**STAY TUNED...**



### February 1st - March 31st

The ECW will be gathering unwrapped toys for children of all ages.

The toys collected will be given to Hillsides in support of their program and aides in providing gifts year-round for birthdays and special occasions for the children in their care.

Learn more about Hillsides and other ways to get involved [here](#).

**A collection box is located in the Sanctuary.**  
**Any questions: Please ask Sylvia Moya**



### Vernal Equinox Drumming Circle

*Re-energize, Renew, and Gather  
 around the fire pit as we form a drumming circle  
 to welcome the spring.*

The darkness of winter fades; giving light;  
 revealing the “greening” of the vernal spring.

We invite you into the connectivity as we  
 celebrate this seasonal change and look ahead  
 to the season unfolding. What better way than  
 gathered around the fire pit under the night sky?

**We will begin at 5pm, March 20<sup>th</sup> on the  
 Sunday School Picnic Benches under night  
 sky.**

### January News You May Have Missed:

- **Annual Meeting was held following Sunday Service on Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>.** Please contact the church office if you would like a printed copy of the Annual Meeting Report and have not received it in the mail by **February 7<sup>th</sup>**. *For digital copies please email the church office.*



Random Photo of "Frank"  
-courtesy David Kitch ☺

### Parish Prayer Needs:

**Healing:** Barbara, Sylvia, Brody, Avalon, Shantel, Lee, Michael, Megan, Jean, Braydon, Hank, Fr. Steve, Al, Mary, Yvonne, Dee, Jeff, Jim, Bill & Leslie, Jan, David, Lee, Trish, Sue, Tony, Mark, Michele, Eric, Louise, Bob & family, Edith, Howard, Mary, Donna, J.D., Frances, Patrick, Margaret, Beverly, Margie, Alan and Alan's family, Kevin, Eve, Amy, Judy.

Go to [smile.amazon.com/ch/95-2558848](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-2558848) and Amazon donates to **St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church every time you order through Amazon.**

Joy and gratitude  
make my cup runneth over,  
spilling thanks to you.

-Haiku by Diantha Ain



### St. Francis Book Club

We are forming a new book club!  
Anyone who would like to join us  
should contact me:  
Chris M at 805.276.4971



### Interested in Centering Prayer?

Let us know! We are looking to resume Centering Prayer and would like to get a consensus on meeting time and day-  
Call or email the church office.

### BABY CLOSET

Don't forget the needs of the Baby Closet that is an ongoing need. The Baby Closet is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is collecting DIAPERS SIZE 5,6,7 and has a HUGE need for BABY WIPES.

*Healing Service Continues to meet weekly on Wednesdays in the Sanctuary.*

All are welcome to attend this casual mid-week service with Eucharist at 10:00 am.



*Have "the Best" Recipe for making Gumbo?  
Want to have fun?  
Contact the church office to sign-up for the Gumbo Cook-off.*

The Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce & St. Francis Episcopal Church Present

*Mardi Gras*  
**GUMBO COOKOFF**  
*and Mixer!*



**MARCH**  
**01**  
FAT TUESDAY

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM • St. Francis Episcopal Church • 280 Royal Ave.

Enjoy a night of bayou filled fun with games,  
music, networking, drinks, and GUMBO tastings!



**SIMI VALLEY  
CHAMBER**  
The Heartbeat of Business

St. Francis of Assisi  
Episcopal Church





# FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> David Kitch Preaching Eucharist with Music  6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>7</b>  8 pm Men's AA	<b>8</b>  6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA	<b>9</b> 9am-1 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service  7:30 pm AA PH	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> Rev. Sarah Kitch, Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>14</b>  8 pm Men's AA	<b>15</b>  6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA	<b>16</b> 9am-1 pm Office Hr. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service 6 pm W.R. HOA  7:30 pm AA PH	<b>17</b>  6 pm H.H. HOA	<b>18</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> David Kitch, Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>21</b>  8 pm Men's AA	<b>22</b>  6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA	<b>23</b> 9am-1 pm Office Hr. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service  7:30 pm AA PH	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> Rev. Sarah Kitch Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  <b>Bishop's  Committee MTG</b> 6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>28</b>  8 pm Men's AA					

## RECYCLING AT ST FRANCIS

Please bring in your Recycling on the **last Sunday of the month** – we'll put those cans and bottles to good use!

# February 2022 Schedule for Holy Ministry

	Feb. 6	Feb. 13	Feb. 20	Feb. 27	Mar. 2 Ash Wed.
<b>Lector (O.T./Psalm)</b>	Kerri-Jo H.	Susan S.	Bernadette	Tony F.	
<b>Lector (Epistle/P.O.P)</b>	Chrissy B.	Eden S.	Rueben A.	Chrissy B.	
<b>LEM</b>	Lisa N.	Rob W. Kristin W.	Chrissy B.	David K.	
<b>Usher / Greeter</b>	Reuben A.	Rebecca S.	Joe Z.	Tony F.	
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Cathy G.	Chrissy B.	Chris M	Gerri H.	
<b>Preaching</b>	David K.	Rev. Sarah	David K.	Rev.Sarah	

# March 2022 Schedule for Holy Ministry

	Mar 6	Mar. 13	Mar. 20	Mar. 27	April 3
<b>Lector (O.T./Psalm)</b>	Kerri-Jo H.	Susan S.	Bernadette	Tony F.	
<b>Lector (Epistle/P.O.P)</b>	Chrissy B.	Eden S.	Rueben A.	Chrissy B.	
<b>LEM</b>	Lisa N.	Rob W. Kristin W.	Chrissy B.	David K.	
<b>Usher / Greeter</b>	Reuben A.	Rebecca S.	Joe Z.	Tony F.	
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Cathy G.	Chrissy B.	Chris M.	Gerri H.	
<b>Preaching</b>	David K.	Rev. Sarah	David K.	Rev.S.Klein	

# *the* Franciscan

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church  
280 Royal Avenue, Simi Valley CA 93065

## Newsletter – February 2022

**TO:**

### St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church

280 Royal Avenue, Simi Valley CA 93065  
P.O. Box 940516, Simi Valley CA 93094  
Phone (805)526-5141  
[stfrancis.simi@gmail.com](mailto:stfrancis.simi@gmail.com)  
[www.stfranchischurchofsimi.org](http://www.stfranchischurchofsimi.org)

**Sunday Service:**

10:15 am

**Wednesdays:**

10 am Healing Service

**Ash Wednesday:**

10 am, 12noon, 6pm