



# Coming Home

News from The Bishop's Ranch

Spring 2024

## Through The Chapel Doors

by Genevieve Navar Franklin

The number of people who enter The Chapel of St. George in a given week tends to ebb and flow, given the unique factors of being a 'Chapel Peculiar' housed at a diocesan retreat center, but the depth of spiritual experience that is felt there is ever-constant. Since its dedication in 1955, the Chapel has seen all manner of guests and pilgrims come through its welcoming doors, which remain dressed in a blazing red that recalls the fire of the Holy Spirit. With a rich foundation laid by the untold numbers of clergy and laypersons who have worshipped there over the years, it now enters its seventh decade with that same mission of service from the past and a transformative present vision of contemplative, all-embracing Christianity sustains seekers from many walks of life.

Having joined us after the retirement of the beloved Rev. Patricia Moore (who now makes her home in Alaska), Father Brendan Williams, CMR, continues to carry the mantle as Bishop's Ranch Chaplain, bringing spiritual guidance and leadership that is steeped in the perennial wisdom of the great contemplative and mystical traditions. He readily shares with the Bishop's Ranch community his vast knowledge and compassion.

While the Chapel is open throughout the 24-hours of any day for quiet moments of prayer and reflection, sacred music, or inspiring retreat practices, Sunday mornings at 9:30 are reserved for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in the Episcopalian tradition.

As we've continued on our journey together, we've welcomed new faces, young and old, and encountered sublime ways to recognize the work of God in our lives.

Fr. Brendan and the Chapel community welcomed two new babies into the Household of God this past year through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism: In October 8th, Alessandra, daughter of Jeanette and Martina; and on November 5th, Joan, daughter of Sam and Emilie. November 19th brought the blessing of the 50th wedding anniversary of congregation members Luz and Ricardo Navarrette, who have

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## Our Stories Connect Us

Aaron Wright, Executive Director



During our staff meetings this year, we have started a story-sharing practice. For 30 minutes, once a month, we gather in one of the buildings or other significant spots of The Ranch. I share a little of the history and a few stories and then open it

up for others to share their knowledge, stories, and memories of that space. Like all good stories, some are humorous, some deeply felt, and some seem to have been embellished with time. (\*wink)

Our stories connect us to this place, to each other, and to significant moments in our lives.

What I've noticed is that even outside of this monthly time, we're sharing more of the stories that happen every day at The Ranch: stories of how a guest had a significant moment of wonder, the tears and laughter shared around the tables as groups gather, and of course the standard Mango and Sweet Onion tales. The Ranch cats are always a hot topic of conversation. (There is a reason cats still rule the internet.)

Recently, we held a volunteer host training. (For more information on becoming a guest host email [kaitlin@bishopsranch.org](mailto:kaitlin@bishopsranch.org)) Hosting is our most important work, and it's been so fun to invite members of our Ranch community to experience this facet of our ministry. During the training staff share stories of what you might encounter as a Ranch host. There are tales of plunging toilets, wiping down tables, and helping a guest with their dietary needs... and then there are the more profound moments that come, without fail, in between conversations about cilantro and where to find an extra battery – the guest who starts a conversation with, "I experienced a great loss a couple of years ago, and I was finally able to heal this weekend." Or, "Someone close to me is near the end, and I'm here resting and thinking of them," or "I have such great memories of being here with my parents. It's like they're still with me when I'm here."

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## On The Trail In Search Of

*A Regular Column by Greta Mesics*



When we sign out on the trails ledger and head off to hike the trail of The Ranch, what are we in search of? Oftentimes, if I happen upon Ranch friends as I tromp off, they will ask, “which trail are you taking?” I rarely know.

And, if I do, it changes along the way more often than not. Or is it I that changes?

March is the season between fungi and flora. What are we searching for as we head off on our meanders, strolls, hikes, and roams?

This past winter, the woods were full of Turkey Tails, Artist Conks, Witches’ Caps, Elfin Saddles, Lions’ Manes, Coral Clubs, Porcini, and so many more that I cannot put a name to. There were lovely umbrellas and small, delicate, nodding mushrooms. The lichens and moss beg to be considered as well.

Spring is now beginning its lovely bloom into summer with Milk Maids, Shooting Stars, Baby Blue Eyes, Hound’s Tongue, Mule’s Ears, Lupine, Sun Cups, Butter Cups, Larkspurs, Douglas Iris, Purple Chinese Houses, Sticky Monkey Flower, Diogenes Lanterns, and the list continues.

Or, are we looking for Blue Belly Lizards, Blue Tailed Skinks, Rattle Snakes?

Or Blue Birds, Tanagers, Great Blue Herons, and Hawks?

Or Crawdads?

Or Blue Gills?

Or, Frogs?

Or, a fine family of five Otters?

What are we in search of?

A painting, a poem, a prayer?

Amen.

## Our Stories Connect Us (cont.)

Our stories and shared experiences are some of the best things about The Ranch. This place can hold it all, and when we practice hospitality, it opens up space for moments like these. It’s the reason I repeatedly say that hospitality is the gateway to community, transformation, healing, and so much more. As you consider your next visit to The Ranch, I invite you to share your stories and in doing so, add to the tapestry that makes The Ranch truly special.

We all have stories of The Ranch. I would love to read yours! You can share it by emailing me at [aaron@bishopsranch.o](mailto:aaron@bishopsranch.o)

## Cal Fire Work on Westside Rd.



*Fuels Crews line up at The Ranch*

Cal Fire and the Northern Sonoma County Fire District have been on-site for several weeks now, clearing fire fuels and vegetation overgrowth from several areas along Westside Road and in Gina’s Orchard. They will continue their work into April. Later in the year, The Ranch will serve as a demonstration site for pile-burning training. This vital work is made possible by a \$350,000 Cal Fire grant awarded to The Northern Sonoma County Fire District in partnership with our C.O.P.E Westside Community to complete extensive work along Westside Road. Many thanks to our Fire Chief, Marshall Turbeville, and board member Marjorie Sun for their roles in helping secure this grant.

In other fire-fuels reduction news our favorite 4-legged fire-fuels reduction team – the goats and sheep! – are returning to The Ranch the first week of May. If you are on retreat that week, you can find them munching down in the boneyard and the canyon that runs behind the Kip cottage over to The Ranch House.

## Ranch Team Spotlight: Housekeeping

Led by the incomparable Mari Gonzalez, our housekeeping staff consists of five dedicated women who deeply love and care for The Ranch. Together, Mari's team swoops in the minute a group vacates rooms to lovingly and quickly remake bed with fresh linens, scrub bathrooms to a shine, tidy, and ready each room for its next inhabitants. While cleaning and maintaining the guest spaces at The Ranch is the housekeeping team's primary task, they are also responsible for many details you may not often consider. New curtains in rooms are hemmed and hung with care. Upholstery on furniture in the Harrison House living room or the Ranch House dining room is repaired or replaced. Chairs in the Pavilion and Chapel are steam cleaned, windows are washed inside and out. The team works a running list of mattresses that need to be replaced, carpet that needs to be cleaned, dishes in kitchens that need to be stocked, and linens that need to be purchased. Most weeks, Mari hand cuts and arranges the flowers in the Chapel, a uniquely special place for her.

Collectively, Mari's team has over 60 years of experience caring for The Ranch. Mari herself has just celebrated her 22nd year on staff. Adriana, Assistant Housekeeping Manager, has been with us for over 16 years. Leti, 9 years and sisters Irais and Areli have been here 8 and 7 years respectively. They know every nook and cranny of this place, and have probably wiped each one down at some point

When you walk into any room at The Ranch and take that exhale that comes with entering a place that feels like home – peaceful and welcoming – that's the love and dedication of Mari's team!



*Leti, Mari and Adriana*



*Irais and Areli*

## The Ranch Quilt Project

Quilters are an integral part of what makes The Bishop's Ranch the unique and beautiful place it is. Groups of quilters have been coming on retreat to The Ranch for more than 20 years, and each year nearly a dozen different quilting groups come for a week or longer to spend dedicated time immersed in their favorite hobby. These groups gather in The Pavilion or occasionally Harrison House or St. John's Meeting House where we set up dozens of tables, plenty of extension cords and extra lighting so quilts can be spread out and crafted with love. Many groups host "show and tell" on the final day of their retreat; a favorite hour for many staff members who pop in to see the incredible craftsmanship and love that goes into each work of art.

We want to bring the love, artistry, and joy of quilting to all our guests for many years to come. Through The Bishop's Ranch Community Quilt Project we will replace our existing bedding with quilts lovingly created by our very own Ranch patrons. Quilters, individuals, and groups, may create a quilt for the Ranch lodging spaces to be enjoyed by all guests of The Ranch. Donated quilts will include a label identifying the artist(s) who created each one.

For more information on this project email [kaitlin@bishopsranch.org](mailto:kaitlin@bishopsranch.org)



*One of two twin quilts made by Kate Smith*

We have received our first two quilts – complementary twin quilts crafted by long-time Ranch quilt retreatant Kate Smith, who created these using the Bitty Bungalows pattern. The gorgeous quilts will be gratefully placed in Ranch House 13.

## Staff Directory

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Kaitlin Horvath

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**Operations**  
Cara Anderson  
Ellie MacLean  
Julie Miller  
Aspen Santillan  
Rachel Spessard  
Emily Smith  
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Miguel Gutierrez  
Matt Kissmann

**Housekeeping**  
Areli Valerio Eufrazio  
Irais Eufrazio  
Mari González  
Leti Gonzalez-Padilla  
Adriana Villafuerte

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Patricia Burke  
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Tania Escobar  
Sarah Farmer-Williams  
Kandie Faurot  
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Pedro Morales  
Mac Wright  
Mateo Wright

**Interim Chaplain**  
The Rev. Fr. Brendan E. Williams

## Coming Home

A newsletter about life at  
The Bishop's Ranch

The Bishop's Ranch  
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Healdsburg, CA 95448

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Contact us to update  
your contact info and  
communication preferences:  
[philanthropy@bishopsranch.org](mailto:philanthropy@bishopsranch.org)

## Through the Chapel Doors (cont.)

long been active in the Sonoma County Latino Community, and who passionately mentored hundreds of young persons through their work together at Santa Rosa Junior College. This year also saw the second celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which was first held in 2022, in part to consecrate the exquisite retablo (icon) that was envisioned and commissioned by Fr. Brendan and Rev. Pat and funded by the latter as a parting gift at her retirement. This last December 10th, members of the Chapel were again joined by guests and musicians from neighboring communities in a jubilant opening procession and Mass with devotional songs that concluded with a moving offering of roses. All were then invited to St. John's Meeting House to "convivir" (warmly spend time together) with traditional music, dancing, food and drinks, including Mexican hot chocolate prepared by the Ranch kitchen. Through storms and quiet, sorrows and joy, the sanctuary lamp will continue to shed its steady light in our beautiful gem of a Chapel, gladly receiving the long-faithful and the newly-curious into its sacred space. If you've never attended a service or other spiritual offering at the Chapel of St. George, or haven't been there in a while, we invite you to come, walk through those vibrant front doors, and become immersed with us in the loving fire of the Divine.



*Father Brendan with Luz and Ricardo Navarrette*

## A Note from Father Brendan

This last year brought many wonderful developments in the worshipping community of The Chapel of St. George. Several of our devoted congregation members stepped up to answer the call I extended to serve on the first incarnation of the 'Chapel Advisory Committee (CAC), an additional interface of the Chapel congregation with the Ranch Board, the larger community of the Ranch, and with the local community at large. The CAC members have also been a tremendous help and support to me as chaplain and presiding priest, and I am very grateful for their continued service.

We have had new families and individuals join our worshipping community this year, and I was blessed to Preside over two infant baptisms in the Chapel in 2023, with a third one now planned for the end of April. On the other end of the emotional spectrum, with heavy hearts, we said goodbye to beloved, long-time Chapel community members and friends of the Ranch, Patty Ford and Kay Wells. Our volunteer musician, Chris Berardo, retired from her music ministry with us after a long time of very generously serving in that role; I know I speak for the whole community in saying how truly grateful we are for all the years of hard work and sharing of her talent she graciously gave to that ministry following Kay, who had long served in the same role before Chris. Rather than seeking a new musician, I decided that we should take the musical dimensions of our communal worship even more deeply into à cappella singing and the expansive, contemplative simplicity and beauty of chant.

Having just celebrated a joyful, deep, and vibrant Easter Triduum here in The Chapel of St. George with our congregation members and a host of others in beloved community—staff, friends, and retreat guests of the Ranch—my mind is brought to reflect on the Mystery of life and death reflected so powerfully in the Christian mythos, and in our sacral calendar. The divine expression we call 'Nature' moves in a continuous cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, seemingly without beginning or end. I rarely miss an opportunity to share and emphasize the personal, interior dimensions and invitations of our Christian inheritance, but Passion and Resurrection have a great deal to say to us about our outward lives as well and about the rhythms of life in communion—with the Earth, with one another, and with God. In all this endless turning, the light of what is good and true and ultimate shines unyieldingly. May that light guide and bless you always. With deepest gratitude, Fr. Brendan +



*The blessed baptism of baby Joan*

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## Summer Camp

[bishopsranch.org/events/camps/](https://bishopsranch.org/events/camps/)

### 2024 Camp Dates

June 16 – June 21	Staff Training
June 23 – June 28	BREAD Explorers
June 30 – July 5	Intergenerational
July 8 – July 12	READ Camp Week 1
July 15 – July 19	READ Camp Week 2
July 21 – July 26	BREAD Adventurers & Discoverers



READ campers prepare for Reader's Theatre

## READ CAMP X 2!

### Turning Pages and Making Waves!

Exciting News: This year we're offering not just one, but two weeks of READ Camp! READ is our day camp for local 4th through 6th graders in partnership with the Healdsburg Unified School District. Each week-long camp includes five full days of learning and fun. READ encourages a love of reading while helping improve language skills as well as swimming skills, all in the fun and community building context of summer camp.

Thanks to several grant organizations including the Josephine Leiser Foundation, The Guardsmen, The Diocese of California and the Maria Kip Foundation, alongside the generosity of individuals who donate to our Partnership Fund for scholarships, READ camp is provided at no cost to campers. READ campers are encouraged to attend our overnight camps as well, for which we provide additional scholarships when needed.

Last year READ had a waiting list, so we are thrilled to be adding a second week of READ to serve even more children.

## Summer and Fall Programs

### Father's Day Weekend Retreat

June 14-16, 2024

Join us for a fresh take on our Individual and Family Retreat weekends. Bring the whole family for the perfect mix of programming and time for rest and relaxation. With a choose-your-own-adventure weekend you can partake in any of the following activities or simply grab your book and settle into your favorite spot on The Ranch.

Weekend activities include:

- ~Friday campfire, s'mores and sing-a-long
- ~Saturday Morning Guided Hike with Julie Miller
- ~Saturday afternoon adult and children's art projects in the Casita
- ~Lawn and board games throughout the weekend
- ~A very special Saturday Night GLOW Pool Party!

### Fall Fun Family Weekend

August 31-September 2, 2024

Similar to our Father's Day weekend offering, this retreat will be full of fun activities for the whole family! And, unlike most weekends at The Ranch this retreat boasts an extra night! Arrive Friday and depart Monday after breakfast. More details to come, so keep an eye on [bishopsranch.org/programs/](https://bishopsranch.org/programs/).

### Fall Hike with Julie Miller

October 19, 2024

Spend a Saturday walking the trails of The Bishop's Ranch and explore how autumn demonstrates itself on the landscape. We will cover 4-6 miles on this moderate hike through rolling topography with a stop for a bagged lunch. Ranch staff member, Julie Miller, will guide this rambling walk with an eye towards the natural history and viewpoints from which to enjoy the autumn scenery.

### A Day of Yoga with Marie Hirsch

November 9, 2024

Use breath and meditation to deepen your understanding and appreciation of yoga. Marie Hirsch returns to guide and encourage you past your resistance into a state of peace, clarity, and joy. After a morning of active, uplifting Asana practice the afternoon will focus on Restorative/Yin Yoga. All experience levels.

Register for any program at:

[bishopsranch.org/events/programs/](https://bishopsranch.org/events/programs/)

# Thank you Annual Fund Donors!

We are grateful for each of the following donors who have donated to the Annual Fund thus far. We are nearly half-way to reaching our 2024 Annual Fund Goal of \$500,000. The Annual Fund is a vital part of the financial sustainability of The Ranch. Operating The Ranch in 2024 will cost approximately \$55,000 per week. Guest fees cover about 75% of those expenses, so we rely on the Annual Fund to make up the remaining 25%. Your donations to the Annual Fund close the gap between revenue and expenses and sustain The Ranch today and for future generations.

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or scan the QR code.

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remit envelope.

Transfer stock or other  
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[bishopsranch.org/  
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## The Bishop's Ranch


of the Episcopal Diocese of California

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Coming Home Spring 2024

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### *Recipes from the Ranch*

## Dried Fruit Scones

**Makes approx. 12 - 2 ½ ounce scones**

### **Ingredients:**

**3 cups (384g) flour**  
**1½ Tbsp. (15g) baking powder**  
**¾ tsp. salt**  
**6 Tbsp (75 g) sugar**  
**½ cup dried fruit**  
**(chopped apricots, currants, candied ginger, etc.)**  
**¼ cup golden raisins**  
**1½ - 2 cups heavy cream**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees
2. Sift together dry ingredients
3. Add dried fruit and stir thoroughly to mix
4. Add cream and stir until just moistened and the ingredients hold together. Be careful not to over mix
5. Form dough into a one-inch thick square on a lightly floured surface
6. Cut into triangles and place on parchment covered sheet pans. Brush with melted butter and sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 375 for 15-20 minutes until light golden brown.