



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Sep 29, 2022)

St. Anselm's, California

682 Michael Ln, Lafayette, CA 94549, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

deniseo@diocal.org

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
55	1	1	
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options Full family	Dental Yes	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Vacation Weeks One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks 2 (standard)	Continuing Education Weeks Details
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision Yes	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

By summer 2020, St. Anselm's was feeling deeply the loss of in-person worship due to the pandemic. The racial reckoning following George Floyd's killing hit many in our parish and many across the country hard. When the Christian Formation Commission proposed the national church's "Sacred Ground" series on understanding and healing racial divides, our mostly affluent, mostly white, suburban congregation was eager to engage. Over several months, we attracted 30 plus participants to two Sacred Ground circles held via Zoom. Participants included former parishioners who live in Nebraska and Wyoming, brand-new parishioners who due to the pandemic hadn't yet set foot in our church building, and non-Episcopalian friends who were concerned about racial reconciliation. Sacred Ground was an eye-opening, community-building, life-giving exercise for facilitators and participants alike. A follow-up discussion series in Lent 2021 featured local community leaders who practice restorative justice in schools and prisons. We continue to look for ways to deepen our community's commitment to racial healing.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

We recognize that the future will be defined by the continuation of current trends such as the overall decline in participation in organized religion, aging of current church members, and significant world-wide issues such as the pandemic and climate change. We will strive to meet these challenges by continually enhancing our online worship experience via Zoom, conducting social and educational events to create and maintain a bridge between the online community and those who attend services in person, and evolving our ministries to provide appropriate and meaningful support for our members. We will continue to reach out to the surrounding community to meet people wherever they are in their faith journey and to actively support local programs that address the physical needs of the underserved. On a practical level we are doing our part to combat climate change. We have installed solar panels to provide power to our fellowship hall and administrative building, and we are in the process of fire hardening our buildings and landscaping. In compliance with state requirements, we have implemented recycling and composting procedures for our church office, kitchen, and preschool.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

pastoral, inspirational, inclusive, collaborative

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

Our services have a casual atmosphere but follow the traditional Episcopalian liturgy. The church is laid out in the round, with the altar at the center of the nave. This configuration allows members of the congregation to see each other and to feel close to the celebrant and lay readers throughout the service. We currently hold a mid-week morning prayer service via Zoom, and one Sunday service in a hybrid format: some members attend in person and others attend via Zoom. This practice was implemented to accommodate COVID restrictions, and we plan to continue with the hybrid format going forward. The service follows Rite II from the Book of Common Prayer and uses recorded instrumental music. A small choir joins us once each month. We also incorporate liturgies from other provinces in the Anglican communion to provide variety in our worship experience. Prior to COVID restrictions, we held two services each Sunday. The 8 am service used Rite I and was a quiet, spoken service. The 10 am service used Rite II and included music with organ, piano, guitar, and choir. We hope to return to the two-service format as restrictions continue to ease and in-person attendance increases.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Each year we hold an event called Opportunity Sunday where members who are the Chairs of our various Ministries and Commissions conduct a recruitment event to talk with members of the parish to tell them about their Ministry/Commission work. The Chairs get to know the parishioners and work with them to determine their gifts and talents so they can be placed in a position that will bring the most joy from their volunteering efforts. A long-time member recently was approached about becoming a member of the Lay Eucharist Ministers/Lectors Ministry. She attended the training provided by the Diocese and is enjoying her new role very much. She says "I've been an Episcopalian my whole life and a member of St. Anselm's for almost 30 years, and I have always enjoyed the service and being part of the church community. However, upon becoming a LEM and participating in the service I have found a much deeper connection to the other members of the church and a joy I have not experienced by simply attending services. It has also brought me to a deeper spiritual level, and I am so glad I became involved in this Ministry."

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

St. Anselm's has a variety of groups and activities to promote well-being for the church membership and the community. For spiritual enlightenment we have a Bible study group and the Lenten interactive lecture series that recently has educated us on topics like racism, the LGBTQ+ community, the Muslim faith and restorative justice to broaden our understanding of others spiritual needs. We have an active Stephen Ministry group and also provide spiritual and emotional support with the Prayer Chain, which enables prayer requests for friends, loved ones and groups (like refugees or those affected by natural disasters). Our Grief and Cancer Support groups enable church members and the community to share experiences, care for each other and celebrate good news. In person and virtual coffee hour after the service enables others to chat and check up on each other. Prior to the pandemic we also had in person celebrations to come together and socialize, like the Epiphany party featuring a recycled gift exchange, the youth-run Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, and the Crab Feed. On site yoga once a week was well-attended and fostered physical well-being.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Winter Nights is sponsored by a county-wide, interfaith coalition of churches that is designed to provide shelter for homeless families from October to April each year. Since 2010 St. Anselm's has provided two weeks of shelter and food during the Autumn months. Tents are set up in our parish hall for each family and three meals per family are provided daily, paid for by members of the congregation. A parish member volunteers to spend the night at the church to handle any issues that may arise overnight. Another parish member arrives early in the morning to make coffee and lay out a healthy breakfast. At the end of each day a different group (consisting of parish members, friends, neighbors, scout troops and family members) team up to cook dinner at the church for the families in residence and spend the evening with them. They socialize and sit down to enjoy the meal with the families, help children with homework, hold and play with babies and assist in packing lunches for the next day. When our time falls on Halloween some parish members provide costumes for the children and take them trick-or-treating.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

In response to a need for a community-based preschool program, St. Anselm's opened a preschool on their church campus in January 2003. Nestled in the beautiful hills in the Burton Valley area of Lafayette, 17 children play to learn each day at Michael Lane Preschool (MLP). The program was created by several members of the church with experience in early childhood education. MLP enjoys an exceptional reputation and is beloved by many families in the community as well as members of the church. MLP offers an emergent, play-based curriculum for the preschool child and parent education support for the parents. MLP was accredited for 10 years and follows best practices for early childhood education. We have been able to successfully keep the program running during COVID by creating an entirely outdoor program. MLP is a self-supporting program that is run by a Board consisting of the rector, 2 church members and 2 parent volunteers from the preschool. The Director is a non-voting member of the Board. The Vestry of the Church is the ultimate governing body. The preschool enlivens the church atmosphere and is the largest ministry of St. Anselm's Church.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

The homelessness situation in our wider community has been an ever-growing problem for more than five years. Our church has had an ongoing supportive relationship with Trinity Center in Walnut Creek (a non-residential program serving homeless and working poor adult men and women in Walnut Creek and Central Contra Costa County) <http://trinitycenterwc.org/> for eight years. However, in 2016 the Center was able to acquire the use of the local National Guard Armory for the winter months of December through April to house the homeless. This required a large influx of new funding, and St. Anselm's really responded to the challenge. Under the leadership of Marty Fischer, a parish member, our Fall Harvest Festival became an even bigger and better event, providing a greater sense of purpose and unity as we increased our fundraising effort to \$54k in 2019. When COVID forced the cancellation of an in-person event in 2020, we continued our efforts via letters and emails, reaching out to others outside the congregation. The results have been outstanding, with donations of \$101k in 2020 and \$81k in 2021.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

St. Anselm's attracts broad and deep financial support from its members. Our annual stewardship campaign is led by laypeople and features community-building activities. During subsequent Sunday worship services in November a few parishioners offer personal testimonials about why they belong to and pledge financial support to St. Anselm's. These comments are often very powerful and serve to inspire and solidify support from both newcomers and longtime parishioners. Financial contributions are voluntary, and no one is compelled to pledge, but over the years parishioners have given generously to the general fund, to address community social needs, and to maintain and upgrade our physical facility and grounds. We approach stewardship with a deep sense of gratitude for all that our community has, and we frequently and publicly recognize individual contributions of time and talent.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

In July 2018, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed a resolution regarding "Becoming a Sanctuary Church." The resolution urged members of the church to challenge unjust immigration laws and called on congregations to become places of welcome, refuge, and healing and to provide other forms of material and pastoral support for immigrants. St. Anselm's approached this issue by facilitating several town hall style discussions. Members were encouraged to have a dialog and voice their opinions about the idea of being a sanctuary church and what that would mean - if and how we would want to engage in the sanctuary movement. Many members were ambivalent about participating in this movement. There was also some conflict, as a few members felt alienated by this idea and wanted to leave the church. However, the rector and members of the congregation were able to address their concerns and they were able to return as active members. Overall, it was a very healthy and open process for dealing with conflicting opinions. Members of our congregation treat each other with mutual respect and acknowledge that we are one body, drawing strength and wholeness from each other.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

St. Anselm's has risen to the task in meaningful ways when faced with change. When COVID became prevalent in our community and it was clear that in-person worship was not going to happen due to health restrictions, we adapted by instituting services over Zoom. The ministries involved in the worship service adapted quickly to the new procedures. Also, during the height of the pandemic, our music director made the decision to move closer to family. To meet this challenge, the music director worked with our pastor and the Zoom director to prerecord music for future services so there would be no gaps in the musical side of our worship. Since restrictions on in-person worship have lifted, we have created a hybrid service: in-person for those who feel comfortable and Zoom for those who continue to socially distance. We have also started a Zoom coffee hour to foster a feeling of fellowship among Zoom attendees. Some Zoom participants have said that they feel a lack of connection to the rest of the congregation. To address this, we have continued to adapt the Zoom service, adding camera angles, and discussing adding monitors so the Zoom participants can be seen during services.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Kathy Trapani	Interim	2021-12	

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. John Sutton	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1998-01	2021-11

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Robert Moore	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1992-01	1997-01

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
	17		4



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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://stanselms.us/>

Media Links:

> <https://www.facebook.com/StAnselmsLafayette>

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

English

References

Bishop:

**The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc
Andrus**

Diocesan Transition Minister

Canon Denise Obando

deniseo@diocal.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Joan Martin

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Eva Woo

Search Chair

**Sylvia Williams & Peg
Matson**

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader