



St. Anselm's Episcopal Church Parish Profile 2023

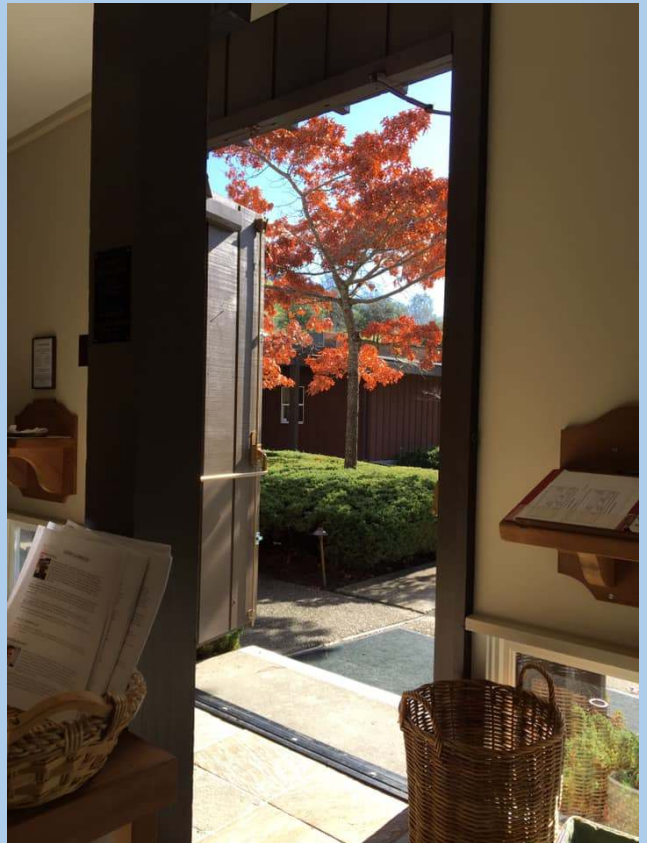


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Welcome!

Welcome to St. Anselm's Episcopal Church! The most important thing we want you to know is that this is a community which welcomes and values all who seek an experience of God's love, whoever or wherever they are on their life or spiritual journey. Whatever a person's age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, social or economic circumstance, or religious background, you are welcome in our worshipping community and at the Lord's Table.

"I love the feeling of coming into a comfortable circle of people when you enter the church."



As part of the Episcopal Church, St. Anselm's is a church that is both rich with ancient tradition and relevant to life in the 21st century. We strive to apply God's Word in our daily lives, grow in the love and knowledge of God, and build a community that knows and cares for every person. We would like to have you join us here for spiritual growth, fellowship, and making a difference in the world.

"It is a wonderful feeling being greeted by so many friendly people when you walk in the door."

Who We Are and What We Value

St. Anselm's is a welcoming, inclusive community committed to loving God and neighbor, growing in faith, caring for each other, and serving others.

Our building is nestled against the rolling hills of Burton Valley in Lafayette, but our community reaches well beyond our physical boundaries to make a difference in the world. We are warm, caring, and accepting, knowing that everyone who comes through our doors is a gift from God.

St. Anselm's is named for Anselm of Canterbury. Anselm is perhaps best known for his teaching on the relation between faith and reason, his motto being *"faith seeking understanding"*. He writes, *"I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand."*

The people of St. Anselm's also seek to deepen their understanding and experience of God as they live out their belief that God loves, cares for, and values every person, and that, as followers of Jesus, we are called to do the same.

Our Core Values Are:

- † We Welcome All
- † We Celebrate Our Unity
- † We Nourish and Care for One Another
- † We Seek to Understand
- † We Reach Beyond Ourselves



We Welcome All

Our doors and our hearts are wide open to **everyone**.

Our church-in-the round allows us to feel close to each other as we worship together, like part of a family.

Sharing of the Peace is a celebration!



"People are always welcoming, accepting and caring."



We recognize that everyone has something to contribute, and that we are all enriched by each other's experiences, regardless of age, background, or identity.



We invite and gratefully appreciate everyone who wants to participate in our services and in any of our church ministries – grief support, outreach opportunities, and social events. This includes friends and community members who are non-parishioners.

We strive to show by example how God and the church have enriched our lives!



"The church and community evoke feelings of kindness, caring and compassion. The kindness and compassion draw me to St. Anselm's."

We Celebrate Our Unity

St. Anselm's warmth and welcome are evident throughout every aspect of our communal life. We celebrate our shared identity as children of God; at the same time, we seek to understand and fully embrace people who elsewhere may have felt isolated or unwelcome due

"St. Anselm's has and will always be an extended family for me."

to some aspect of their identity. People from the LGBTQ+ community, people who are neurodivergent, and people of different races and ethnicities have found themselves at home in the St. Anselm's faith community.



We deepen our relationships through annual fellowship events which include (pre-COVID) an Epiphany Party with "white elephant" gift exchange, a Crab Feed and a Harvest Festival. Such social events have been a well-received way to widen our

circle to friends and family who are not regular churchgoers.

Our unity is regularly reinforced through Sunday worship, where we take to heart the prayer book's Eucharistic reminder to "*celebrate the memorial of our redemption.*" The annual "Blessing of the Animals" reminds us that God's love extends beyond the human family.

"There is a strong sense that the congregation pulls together. It feels like all of the members are pulling in the same direction for the common good."



We Nourish and Care for One Another

St. Anselm's provides a variety of mechanisms for supporting our members.

Our weekly coffee hour following morning services provide for social interaction and reflects the warmth of our congregation.

The Stephen Ministry uses trained parishioners to counsel members dealing with various difficulties in their lives.

Our many social events and celebrations nourish both our bodies and our souls by deepening our connection to our fellow parishioners.



The Prayer Chain encourages members to pray for those needing spiritual support.

Our Grief and Cancer Support Groups provide an opportunity for parishioners to help each other deal with health and grief matters they are experiencing.

"The warmth of the people has kept us here."

"Over the years, I think we have all celebrated each other's happy times and shared the sad times together."



We also have a Memorial Garden and Columbarium where our parishioners can find a quiet place to be contemplative or visit a loved one who is interned there.

We Seek to Understand

Faith seeking understanding; this is how St. Anselm defined his theology and this is how we live our faith at St. Anselm's church.

We seek to find ways in our chaotic, modern world that the liturgy, though traditional, is relevant through a variety of Christian Formation activities.

We strive to learn how we as a congregation can understand our faith better through our Lenten Series.

"It is a place that provides food for thought and spiritual growth among people sincerely trying to live as Christians in a complex world."



In these series we have discussed how racism has influenced faith and vice versa, how our LGBTQ folks have grappled with matters of faith, and how social justice and faith are forever intertwined. We have had speakers come and share their stories and their souls with us, helping us overcome bias and gain new insights into what it means to forgive. We have held panels of speakers from other faiths to understand how we are both the same and different in our beliefs.

Previous rectors have used their sermons not only to uplift, but to help folks develop a better, more personal relationship with Christ by encouraging critical thinking and discussion.



"You don't have to check your brains at the door, members are encouraged to think about and interpret the teachings of Christ for themselves."

At our core, we understand that love is the basis for all understanding through our faith and that there is no one answer to fit all. But we continue to move forward, ask questions, and see our faith blossom and grow through understanding.

We Reach Beyond Ourselves

St. Anselm's has a long history of supporting others in the broader community. Every Fall we work with the Winter Nights

Shelter organization to provide food and temporary shelter for unhoused families.

St. Anselm's also has a fundraising drive we call the

Harvest Festival to raise money to support Trinity Center, a non-profit that provides services for unhoused adults. Before pivoting to an online event during the pandemic, the Festival was an in-person catered dinner with games led by the youth and an auction. Recently Festival funds have supported a newer Trinity Center Winter Shelter program.



We also host "Souper Bowl Sunday" the day of the Super Bowl where the youth collect donations in soup pots for the local community food bank.

Some additional events include: a Lenten sock drive for Trinity Center; Christmas card writing for clients at a local mental health care facility; and a special collection for a local animal shelter on Blessing of the Animals Sunday.

St. Anselm's reserves a portion of its budget to support other community organizations. These organizations provide services ranging from emergency childcare support to a ride service for disabled seniors and veterans. Our Stephen Ministry aligns with other denominations in the area to train and provide Christian Care Givers to people during serious life events. Support provided to others through these events and ministries are one way we strive to become the Beloved Community.



"I was immediately impressed by the feeling of community and how active St. Anselm's was in addressing societal issues."

Our Preschool Ministry

St. Anselm's opened Michael Lane Preschool in January 2003. Word quickly spread through the community and now 20 years later we are a popular and highly respected preschool in our community.



Michael Lane Preschool is comprised of 3 classrooms and a large outdoor play area on our church campus. Our program offers an inviting, secure and nurturing environment for both the child and parent.

*"We Learn
to Play and
Play to Learn"*

Children spend the day exploring and learning through developmentally appropriate play. Our child centered curriculum is developed through hands-on experiences that allow each child to develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively at their own pace.



Our Current Challenges

We at St. Anselm's have faced many challenges (as have many others) the past few years due to COVID. The biggest impact has been on our worship services. We have returned to one service (both in person and on Zoom) at 9 am rather than two services at 8 and 10 am Sunday mornings. During this time many of our parishioners have chosen to worship on-line for health reasons (not all related to COVID). Some of our long time parishioners have declined in health and some are no longer living on their own. Therefore, we are looking to continue keeping the online Zoom services and working to forge more of a connection between the two groups.



Our choir ceased in 2020 due to COVID and our Choir Director moved. We restructured the choir late in 2022 with 7 former members and added 7 high school choir members. This self-directed Choir now sings most Sundays, though a Choir Director search awaits a new Rector.

Another of our challenges has been the decline in the number of active members. Over the past 10 years we have had a decline in families with children join the church and as a result we no longer have any youth programs at the church. On the upside we have brought in more members during this time from the Rossmoor retirement community. Despite these challenges there is genuine excitement about our future!

"Excitement! The idea that everyone at a service is filled with the spirit that they need to go out into the world feeling empowered to spread God's love and to face the challenges in their lives with gratitude and hope."



Our Vision For The Future

Energy

Our energy at St. Anselm's is contagious and joyful. We believe this energy will help bring the message of Jesus beyond the walls of our church and into the greater community, fostering a cycle of growth and sustainability that will serve to enhance St. Anselm's for many years to come.



Community

We believe the St. Anselm's community can have a great impact on the community at large. We see ourselves reaching out to meet people wherever they are emotionally and spiritually, to share our faith. We hope to continue to have an impact outside of St. Anselm's through our charitable giving and outreach.



Growth

We strive to continue to grow as a church, both spiritually and physically. We envision growing a diverse congregation that does not shy away from social justice issues and encourages our youth to become an integral part of the community in order to stay vibrant and energized through our faith.

What type of person are we looking for?

Inspirational

*As a Leader and Administrator
Someone Who:*

- † Works well with a variety of people who don't always agree
- † Builds consensus to get important things done
- † Supports and empowers all standing ministries and committees

In Your Sermons:

- † Relate the Bible readings to our everyday lives and current issues
- † Find ways to incorporate humor and encourage a sense of goodwill towards all
- † Help us understand how to live more fully in the world while showing forth God's love in the way that Jesus taught us
- † Engage our minds so that we are excited and want to think more deeply

Inclusive

- † Encourage everyone to participate as fully as possible in all parts of our worship and the life of the church
- † Help build a sense that everyone is an important member in the body of Christ
- † Promote working together to beautify our church building and grounds

Pastoral

- † Able to reach out to everyone with caring and compassion
- † Easy to talk to and enthusiastic about this parish and the possibilities for the future
- † Show us by example how we can be more nurturing and loving towards each other and all those in need

"We are looking for someone who can help us collectively revive our vision of who we want to be as a parish — so that we can hold that as a beacon toward which we point all our decisions and energies."

Collaborative

- † Help us think creatively and solve the challenges that face our parish
- † Be open to new ideas, and help steer us along a path that will allow the church to grow and attract new families
- † Collaborate with members of the church and surrounding community to create a multigenerational home base for worship, connection, support and solutions

Our Sanctuary History

St. Anselm's was established as a mission on January 15, 1959 at a meeting between James A. Pike, then Bishop of the Diocese, and about sixty local residents. The Bishop's plan was to establish a church in Lafayette which would grow with the community. He enthusiastically described a church in-the-round which he had attended during summer vacations on Cape Cod and the group agreed to adopt that building style for St. Anselm's.

The noted architect, Olaf Hammarstrom, adapted his design for St. Anselm's from the Chapel of St. James the Fisherman in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. The design included the free-standing bell tower and a simplified roof with a central skylight above the altar in the center of the sanctuary.



In describing the "church in the round" design, a priest of the mid-20th century summed it up well when he said, *"The Church is first and foremost a family. Therefore we sit facing one another, rather than looking at the backs of one another's heads as does an audience; we are a congregation, those called together."*



William Sims, an original church member, fabricated the central cross that hangs over the altar and the processional cross of molten bronze and silver on steel. They were fashioned by melting down metal objects donated by church members.

Our Church Property

The main building is our Sanctuary, however, there are several other important features on our church property.



Our Bell Tower is a prominent fixture leading up to our sanctuary doors. Our parish hall, "Jackson Hall", was remodeled in 2005 and has been the hub of many gatherings held over the years such as Winter Nights, Crab Feeds, Advent Festivals, Harvest Festivals, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Suppers, Stewardship Breakfasts, Vestry and Altar Guild Meetings, Cancer Support Group Meetings, Grief Support Meetings, Property Commission Meetings and Coffee Hours.



"There are always such wonderful feelings of warmth, community, acceptance and joy"

Our Administrative Building houses the Rector's Office, the Church Office and the Preschool.

In addition, we have a beautiful Memorial Garden and Columbarium set to the east of the sanctuary.

"A place to worship and be reflective"



Our Greater Community

St. Anselm's Church is located in the City of Lafayette, California, about 10 minutes off Highway 24. The neighborhood where we are located is in the Burton Valley area of Lafayette. Lafayette is part of a larger community known as Lamorinda, which is made up of Lafayette, Orinda and Moraga. Walnut Creek and Rossmoor communities are our neighbors to the south.



Our location in Northern California is commonly referred to as the "San Francisco Bay Area" which includes all of the cities around the San Francisco Bay.

Lafayette and our neighboring cities are part of the "East Bay" area which is about 25 miles to the east of San Francisco.



There is much to do in the Bay Area!

In our immediate area there are good schools, a lot of family activities, biking, hiking and good restaurants. The Lafayette Reservoir (pictured above on the right) is very popular for hiking (6 miles around the rim trail), a 3 mile walk, paddle boating, fishing, family picnics, and a large playground for children.

We are also about 1 hour away from beaches and 3 hours from the mountains and Lake Tahoe for backpacking, hiking and summer and winter sports.

With our mild weather and abundance of city and outdoor adventures nearby there are many opportunities to explore and enjoy the area.

This is a community where people put down roots and invest their time and energy building up our community.

Our Church Staff

At St. Anselm's we have a Rector (currently an interim rector), Deacon and a part time Parish Administrator.

We also have 4 additional employees for the Preschool, our Director and 3 Teachers.

Our Parish Finances

Despite two years of COVID restrictions, the loss of a few long-time parishioners who have moved out of the area and other losses associated with this time of transition, St. Anselm's continues to do well financially. We practice active stewardship and our members have always been financially supportive of our parish to cover our annual expenses and capital expenditures as they arise.

St. Anselm's has no debt: our buildings and property are all paid off. In addition, the parish has approximately \$850,000 in reserves; some is in our checking account, but most is in CDs earning competitive interest rates. While a portion of that amount is allocated for designated purposes through bequests and other gifts, a significant majority of that amount is operating reserves at the discretion of the Vestry. This surplus has been amassed through careful budgeting for the past 20 years, as well as some one-time income from a variety of sources over the same period.

The Vestry has designated a finance committee to handle (conservative) investment decisions to produce interest income from this reserve.

The following "2022 Annual Financial Report" reflects our current financial status.

2022 Annual Financial Report

Income	Actual	Budget
Pledge	\$ 198,413	\$233,190
Plate Offerings	6,312	10,000
Verizon Lease	29,604	29,524
Misc.	23,527	11,000
Interest	319	200
TOTAL INCOME	\$269,175	\$283,944
Operating Expenses		
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 106,691	\$123,898
Programs	3,148	5,275
Operations	85,828	83,262
Supplies	12,385	19,045
Plant	15,723	18,000
Maintenance Reserve	10,000	10,000
Total Operating Expenses	\$233,775	\$259,480
Non-Operating Expenses		
Outreach Agencies	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Rector's Discretionary	68	1,265
Total Non-Operating Expenses	\$ 20,068	\$ 21,265
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 254,043	\$280,745
NET INCOME	\$ 15,332	\$ 3,199