

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH Los Altos, California

Located in the center of Silicon Valley, Christ Episcopal Church seeks a rector who will lead us to be a blessed community of faith in which the Spirit speaks, works and acts through us. One of our most important ministries is our Episcopal day school. Are you the one we seek?

Who are we and where are we going?

We treasure tradition and our heritage of Anglican music and liturgy, and look forward to balancing stability and tradition with what is new and inspiring. We are looking for a leader who will help us embrace a way of church for the 21st century.



We have always been doers and planners. This forward-looking attitude has been part of our DNA since our beginning as the first church in a new town. In recent years, we have demonstrated these qualities as we founded a school, hired a gifted 14-year-old organist and composer, and began our current project of building a rectory. And yet, we may have become too comfortable with the status quo. Like many other congregations, our attendance is declining and our parishioners are

aging. The world around us is changing rapidly, and we know that to survive we must change, not by abandoning our core but by opening to God in our midst and to God's purpose for us. We seek a rector who will work with us to meet and adapt to challenges and help us grow in faith and become a conduit of grace in our community.

Our region is full of talented, world-changing young adults. It is not surprising that many of our parishioners are connected with high tech fields. Our community is highly educated, and our neighbors come from every inhabited continent on the globe. Ours is a valley of engineers and artists, scientists and entrepreneurs, and the culture is not hospitable to religion. Many of our neighbors are not affiliated with any religion, and of those that are, they are just as likely to be Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu as Christian. We need creativity in engaging with a diverse and unchurched community. Our neighbors value education for their children, and many are searching for meaning. How can we engage them?

We value community outreach. We value our rich heritage of art and music. We value intellectual richness and inspiring preaching that makes scripture relevant to today. We value the three-legged stool of scripture, tradition, and reason. We are also grateful for our Diocese of California, with beautiful Grace Cathedral and a peaceful wine-country retreat house, the Bishop's Ranch. Our diocese has many thoughtful resources including a long-running clergy support group that has been valuable for our rectors.

We have enjoyed unusually long relationships with our most recent rectors. Our former rector, the Very Rev. Dr. Malcolm Young was with us for 14 years until he was called to be Dean of Grace Cathedral. Malcolm was preceded by the Rev. Morgan Silbaugh, who retired after 10 years. Morgan was preceded by the Rev. Dr. Harold Brumbaum, who was our Rector for 18 years.

Our Image of Ourselves at Our Best

When asked what image of Christ Church comes to mind, our parishioners responded with two striking images. One is of our glowing Loire stained glass windows with the light shining through. The other is the image of parish members of all ages at our yearly 12th Night Celebration. The January evening begins with wassail and food, carol singing, crowning a king and queen, and a medieval-style Herod Play, and it ends with a quiet candlelight service in the church.

Purpose, core values, and yearnings

Our Purpose

We are a worshipping community where people can discover the peace of their own faith in the midst of Silicon Valley.

Our Core Values

Community. We value fellowship and families; we respect humanity from all quarters; we welcome all in the love of Christ.

Service. We give of our time, talent, and treasure to those in need, for in this way we live out our faith.

Reason. We value the ability to think for ourselves, and to speak richly and clearly with intellect and reason, and to nurture inquiring minds and hearts in people of all ages.

Episcopal Traditions. We value the liturgy, music, and ritual of the Episcopal church, and the artwork and natural setting of our church home, all of which make it to us a haven of blessing and peace in the heart of Silicon Valley.

Ethics. We aim to apply the word of God as revealed through Jesus to our everyday thoughts, words, and deeds.

Faith. We share a faith in God that sustains us as individuals and as a church family through life's seasons and through personal sorrows and joys.

Our Prayers for the Future

Background: Many of us have relied throughout our lives on our intellect, even in the ways we express our faith. Over the years, members of our church have been among the builders and innovators of Silicon Valley. We greatly value the freedom to question, to draw our own conclusions, and to engage our minds. We consider this a positive quality, and yet we also see that our region has become highly technical, profit-driven, and brutally competitive, often at the sacrifice of other human qualities. As a Christian congregation, we realize that God desires more for us.

Our prayer: We pray that Christ Church becomes, more than ever before, a place where each person is loved, even and especially for qualities that are not valued in our midst. We pray that Christ Church becomes a place where people of our community are nurtured by our beautiful music and by Episcopal liturgy and traditions, and simply by being given enough breathing space to come to themselves and to God. We pray for fair opportunities for all. We pray for those whose lives are filled with opportunities, that these opportunities include a way to seek and to be found by the God whose peace passes all understanding, and whose paths lead to meaning and transcendence.

As a church we long to be:

Open to God in Our Midst. We long for a deeper relationship with God, and a deeper reliance on the power of the Trinity in our own lives, and in the mission of the church.

A Place of Refuge and Peace. In a fractured world and in this hyper-competitive region, we aspire to be a community where the diverse people of Silicon Valley find wholeness, healing, freedom, and joy as they discover ways to be open to God.

A Thriving, Vibrant Church. We long for more relationships that emerge from deep spiritual connection, and to authentically express our faith in ways that engage the local community and make a difference in people's lives.

True Partners with Ventana School. We desire a rich relationship between church and school based on a shared vision of the school as a vital part of God's work in the world.

Ready for Change. We seek a rector who will lead and nurture us to grow into the thoughts, words, and deeds through which we become a blessed church community.

Worship

We embrace the *Via Media*, the middle way. We are neither high church nor low church. We value the traditional liturgy and the rich heritage of Anglican music. We use Rite II at our 10:15 choral Eucharist, and we use Rite I at our 8:00 a.m. service. In the recent past we also had an informal 9:00 a.m. service primarily attended by families with children. In that service the sermon was replaced by an interactive discussion of the scripture readings. We treasure our choral Evensong services, which are held quarterly.

Music

Our Music Minister, Eric Tuan, is a 2012 graduate of Stanford University and holds a master's degree in choral directing from Cambridge University, England. Eric is director of the vocal ensemble *Convivium*, dedicated to exploring what choral music can be in the 21st century. *Convivium* brings Eric's peers into our community where we experience both rarely heard repertoire and the familiar at quarterly concerts at sung Evensong services in our sanctuary.



Although our regular choir is small, Eric has the training and skill to draw beautiful anthems from them. His music notes in the Sunday Bulletin explain the history and context of the music in the service. In addition to leading our choir and playing our pipe organ, Eric teaches the Ventana School choir which performs at some of our services.

Four years ago we took a risk and hired a gifted 14-year old organist and composer, Ethan Haman. By the time Ethan was 16, he had been certified as a Colleague of the American Guild of Organists (CAGO). But he had already challenged our way of thinking, and on school breaks he changes us still. Eric continues to work with "our" young organist Ethan during school breaks, and both are appreciated when they play a postlude after church.

Spiritual Formation

Our Sunday Forum for adults occurs between the two morning services. The Forum usually features a video presentation followed by discussion. Forum topics have included church history and videos by Bart Ehrman. One of our parishioners is an art historian who presented a series on Christian symbolism in carpets shown in Renaissance paintings. During Lent, we hold weekly soup suppers that begin with an informal Eucharist and follow with a discussion. Our most recent Lenten soup suppers centered on a lively

discussion of the book *Changing the Conversation: A Third Way for Congregations* by Anthony Robinson.

Our youth group seeks to combine fun and service. Recently the youth group provided lunch to residents of the San Jose Family Shelter. Following the meal they hosted games and activities for the families. We provide free child care and Sunday School for our school-age children every Sunday.

Ventana School

Ventana School is one of our most significant ministries. It brings active, involved parents who are working in fast-paced fields and who are dedicated to education. The faculty are inspired by the highly-regarded education centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy. The program engages children in a multi-discipline, inquiry-based project curriculum. The class size is small, and the school offers enrichment classes that may include choir, Mandarin, Spanish, science and other subjects.



When our church campus was built in the 1960's, there was a plan to start an Episcopal school, so several wings of classrooms were built. After receiving an anonymous gift of \$100,000 in 2005, we started Ventana School. Ventana has grown from one preschool class to a school serving pre-school through 5th grade. Ventana currently serves 57 pre-school students and 80 elementary students. We are planning to add a middle school serving grades 6-8, which will require facilities that we do not presently have.

Our previous rector and deacon used Godly Play lessons as part of the chapel experience called “Wondering Time.” We seek a rector who is very comfortable communicating with children, including those with multicultural family heritages. Not all of the students are from Christian families. Not all the teachers are Christian, either, and our new rector must be able to embrace a diverse staff.

Our new rector will need vision and experience to create a dynamic and mutually enriching relationship between the church and the school. As Ventana has grown from a preschool serving a handful of students into a thriving elementary school, it has naturally developed a life and culture of its own. The progressive educational philosophy of the school aligns with the culture of Christ Church and our diocese, but it must be continually explained and nurtured. We have not had an influx of new parishioners from the school, and for some parents religious content is not valued or thought necessary. There is a tremendous opportunity to foster relationships and cooperation between our parishioners and these parents.

The Ventana web site is <http://www.ventanaschool.org>.

Ministry of the Laity

Christ Church parishioners are called to various ministries within the Church. In addition to the choir, mentioned above, there is a regular rotation of readers, intercessors, Eucharistic ministers, acolytes, counters, ushers and greeters. The Altar Guild cares for our collection of altar vestments, vessels and linens. They decorate the church and chapel as is appropriate for the season and clean up after each service. Each Sunday our Lay Eucharistic Visitors take the sacrament to the ill and to shut-ins. Healing ministers of the Order of St. Luke the Physician are available during communion.

Social Outreach

Fellowship is promoted through a variety of events to which we invite friends and neighbors. Summer barbeques are very popular, as are Valentines Dances, Oktoberfest, choral and organ concerts, and our Passover celebration. Twelfth Night sees us gathered for a medieval-themed party culminating in a Three Kings Pageant. This year we offered Ashes-to-go on a street corner on Ash Wednesday and had a booth at the Los Altos Art and Wine Festival for the first time.

Our Outreach to the Community

Five years ago two of our parishioners led us to initiate a ministry to injured veterans and their families at the local Veteran's Administration Hospital. We are regular participants in two monthly dinner programs, one at Fisher House, where families of hospitalized veterans stay, and one at the Polytrauma Unit. We also host an annual barbecue nearby at Shoup Park in Los Altos for Polytrauma Unit patients and their families and staff.

We have monthly food collections for the food closet at the Community Services Agency, whose Director is a parishioner. Our Home Ministry Committee organizes receptions after memorial services and maintains a closet where people can borrow high chairs, wheel chairs, walkers and other health aides to meet temporary needs. We join with two other parishes in the diocese to provide assistance to a homeowner in need on National Rebuilding Together Day, and we support GAIA—Global Aids Interfaith Alliance.



Picnic for veterans in Polytrauma Unit.

History of the Church

Established in 1913, Christ Episcopal Church is the oldest church in Los Altos. A small group of Episcopalians in the new town of Los Altos met in an upper room above a Main Street business on Palm Sunday 1913. The parishioners built a lovely Gothic church on Orange Avenue and moved into this building in 1914. By 1954 the Church and the Sunday School were bursting at the seams, and the Vestry purchased 6 ½ acres of orchards in farmland just south of the City of Los Altos. At that time the Church had 791 communicants and 471 Sunday School pupils. Since then the City has spread south, surrounding the church property.

In 1962 the Vestry sold the Orange Avenue Church to the Foothills Congregational Church and moved into the newly constructed parish hall, where we worshiped until the new sanctuary was completed in 1968. We brought the church bell from the Orange Avenue Church with us, and it still rings us to worship every Sunday. In 2013 we held a joyous celebration at our Centennial Gala.

The Loire Windows

In 1968 when the new sanctuary was built, the parish planned for stained glass windows but did not have available funds. In the early 1980's we held a capital campaign to raise money for stained glass windows and we committed that for every dollar we raised for stained glass another dollar would go to community outreach. We met



that commitment. We contracted with famed artist Gabriel Loire of Chartres, France to design our four window walls and the two lancet windows behind the altar. Along with Matisse and Chagall, Loire was one of the great stained glass artists of the 20th Century. The Loire windows, which weighed over 19,000 pounds, were shipped from France and installed and dedicated in October 1986.

The windows are a thick, faceted stained glass called *dalle de verre*, or paving stones of glass. The glass is set in epoxy which is part of the design. Each of the four major window walls represents a season of the year and a season of human life, and the windows tell the Biblical story from creation through the crucifixion. The tall lancet windows behind the altar are the Resurrection windows. There is a unifying theme of trees and tree branches throughout the windows. The Loire windows are an art treasure.

The Diocese

The Diocese of California is the oldest diocese in California. It serves a diverse community of faith encompassing the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Approximately 27,000 lay Episcopalians and nearly 500 clergy call the Diocese of California their home. The Diocese includes 80 congregations and is organized into six deaneries. The Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and Southern Alameda deaneries cover their respective counties; the Peninsula Deanery consists of all of San Mateo County and a small portion of Santa Clara County.

In its history of over 165 years, the Diocese of California and its members have founded a hospital; hosted the first Head Start program in the country; provided more supportive housing for the homeless than any other diocese; founded Interfaith Power and Light; pioneered the return of the Peace in the Eucharistic service; re-introduced the Great Vigil of Easter into central liturgies of the Episcopal worship; and more recently brought forth the modern Labyrinth Movement, and the practices of the Open Table and Ashes To Go.

The Right Reverend Marc Andrus was elected as the eighth Bishop of California in 2006. Shortly thereafter, Bishop Marc invited members from every corner of the diocese to build a diocesan vision. The culmination of this engaged process became the five Beloved Community principles: Embodied Justice, Church Vitality, Rooted Spirituality, Transparent and Accountable Leadership, and Inclusive Community. Read more about the Beloved Community visioning principles here:

<http://diocal.org/bishop/vision/beloved-community#being>.

The Beloved Community principles were adopted at a special diocesan convention as the official vision of the diocese in May of 2008. Since that time, these principles form a shared foundation for the work of ministry and mission in the diocese. They also serve as institutions of the diocese.

Christ Church by the numbers

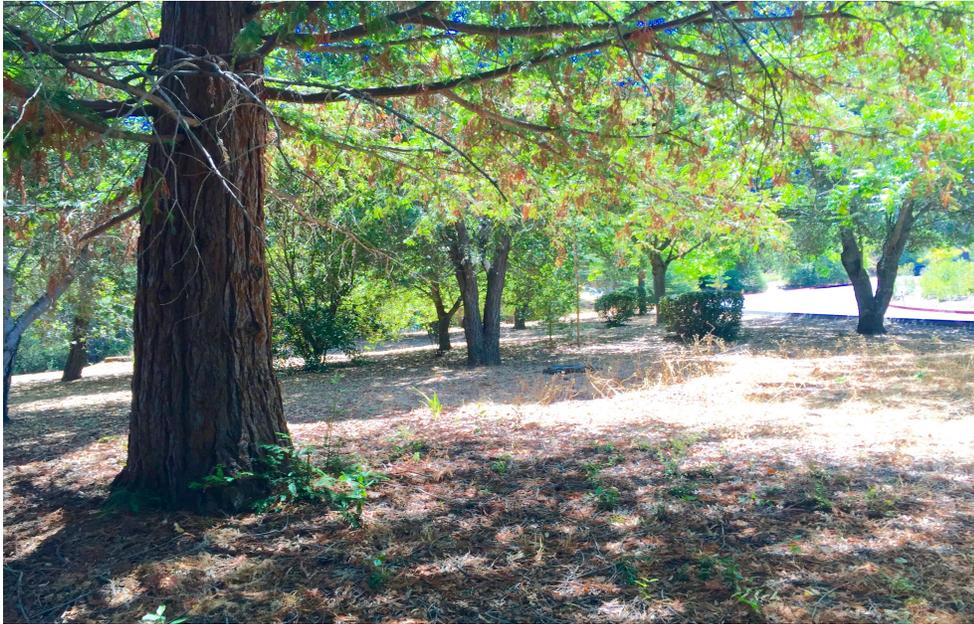
In 2015 our average Sunday attendance was 90. Easter Sunday attendance was 335. There are 300 total active baptized members. The number of pledges was 86. There were 15 students enrolled in the Sunday School and 20 adults engaged in religious education or spiritual formation. The school finished its year with 137 students and a paid staff of 30.

For the year, we had the following income: pledge income: \$393,000, tuition income: \$1,986,000, donations/gifts: \$324,000 and other programs and fees of \$223,000. This gives total operating income of \$2,926,000. Operating expenses were \$2,719,000 and other income/expense was positive \$175,000, bringing net income of \$381,000 to the church. At 2015 year end the vestry had control of restricted and designated funds of \$2,551,000.

The fact that our attendance has declined significantly in the last twenty years is a deep concern. Another concern is that we have lots of children in our day school but not many in our Sunday School.

A new Rectory

Housing in Los Altos is expensive. In 2016 the median house price was over \$2,000,000. We are addressing this concern by building a new Rectory which we have funded through careful planning over 15 years with our previous rector. The county has given us "Building Site Approval" as of this writing. We have developed a plan with a locally-admired architect for a four-bedroom Rectory that will be nestled in a grove of trees on our property. We are fortunate that our property is large, and we hope that the home we plan will provide privacy for the rector and family.



We are thankful

We rejoice and give thanks for the opportunities ahead. We pray for our next Rector, who will accompany us on our journey.



Appendix A– Search Team

	<p>Vicki Kojola (co-chair of the search committee)</p> <p>Member of Christ Church Los Altos since 1990 Biological research (retired) Non-profit board volunteer Married with two adult children</p>
	<p>Loretta Reid (co-chair of the search committee)</p> <p>Loretta Reid has been a member of Christ Church for 35 years, is a software engineer at Google, the mother of two adult daughters, and an enthusiastic choir member.</p>



Mark Bailey

High-tech investor and cofounder of DFJ Growth. Raised in Sparta, NJ, Mark has made his tech career in Silicon Valley. Baptized as an Episcopalian, Mark came back to the church as an adult when he started attending Christ Church in 1990. His three adult children grew up in Christ Church. Mark serves on the Investment Committee, is a former vestry member and an usher emeritus. Mark is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Business School. He enjoys cycling, karate, skiing and sailing.



Jennifer Bishop

Both an art teacher and parent of three students at Ventana School. She has been a member of Christ Church since she was a little girl and has seen many changes come through both the church and school. She is looking forward to working to find someone who can be a valued leader in both communities.



Alice Davis

Flutist and a golfer, busy with family and pets, church and friends. Served in the vestry, chaired stewardship and has been on the altar guild for many years.

	<p>Charlie Munch</p> <p>Charlie Munch is a graduate of Duke University and The George Washington University. He retired from the U.S.Navy in 1983 and from the Northrop Grumman Corporation in 2003. Most recently he was Board Chairman of the Meriwest Credit Union.</p>
	<p>Patrick Sanders</p> <p>Environmental technologist. Married a life-long parishioner with Christ Church in 2001 and we have a 12 year old daughter who went to Ventana School for pre-school and who is currently part of the Christ Church youth group.</p>
	<p>Marcene Van Dierendonck</p> <p>Married with three sons and two grandsons and extended family. Joined Christ Church after being a lifelong Roman Catholic. Along with faith and family, passions are books, politics and hiking.</p>
	<p>Susan Want</p> <p>Physical therapist and horse riding instructor. Attended Christ Episcopal Church since 2000, married with two college age daughters.</p>

 A portrait of Patti White, a woman with short, dark, curly hair, wearing a teal jacket over a dark top. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.	<p>Patti White</p> <p>Semi-retired labor and employment lawyer. Married with three adult children. Member of parish since December 1969.</p>
 A portrait of Meg Withgott, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair, wearing a pink shirt and a colorful necklace. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.	<p>Meg Withgott</p> <p>Co-founder at Panafold; director at Golden Seeds, a network fostering diversity in technology startups. She serves on Barnard's President's Advisory Council in Technology and Harvard Divinity School's Dean's Council. At Christ Church, Meg has served as Stewardship Chair and Senior Warden.</p>