



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Feb 19, 2026)

Christ Church, California

815 Portola Rd, Portola Valley, CA 94028, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 03/20/26.

deniseo@diocal.org

Weekly Average Sunday
Attendance (ASA)

44

Number of Weekend
Worship Services

1

Number of Weekday
Worship Services

Number of Other per Month
Worship Services

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

Continuing Education Weeks
Details

Continuing Education
Funding in budget

Sabbatical Provision

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.

In 2024, we began a program which we call 'Voices in the Valley', a speaker series to highlight and share the stories of our parishioners and those in the surrounding area. We have heard from someone from Filoli, a golf course designer (and author) from our own parish, other parishioners on the happenings of the Supreme Court, a foundation started by family in Africa, and a travelogue through the minsters of England. We culminated the series in 2025 with a December talk by parishioner Courtney Kingston who spoke of her development of a successful winery on her family's property in Chile. With a fire crackling in the fireplace, a group of 70+ from the parish and the surrounding community cozied up in our library to hear Courtney's amazing story of transforming part of a milking farm into a successful winery. It was a talk filled with laughter, insights, connection and warmth. The evening culminated with appetizers and tastes of the Kingston Vineyard wines. The speaker team is currently planning our winter/spring line-up of speakers.

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

We became involved with the Vital and Thriving program a few years ago and part of our discernment was to find out what our Parish community was thinking and feeling. We were going through a tough time with our former rector, so the V+T process came at the exact right moment. One of the major outcomes of the discernment process was that although we were doing a fabulous job feeding and caring for the unhoused and underserved, we were not doing so well with outreach to the local community of Portola Valley and were often mistaken for the Presbyterian Church, the "church with the big window." Since we went through this process, we have instituted the Speaker's Series discussed in question #1, monthly community dinners, a silent movie (with organ accompaniment) night, and a children's choir which draws from the neighborhood. We needed to become relevant as a local resource, giving our church a standing in the community as we move toward the future.

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

compassionate, emotionally grounded, community builder, inspirational, thoughtful

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

Rite II is offered at 10:00am, with choral and congregational music. We have a high standard of preaching, with primary focus on the Biblical text as it relates to contemporary issues and personal experience. Our Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Lay readers, acolytes, greets and ushers and the Altar Guild faithfully assist every Sunday.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Last fall, on a crisp but sunny day, we hosted a Ministry Fair in the breezeway between the Church and the Parish Hall. After the service, parishioners walk by engaging tables with a mix of visuals to learn about the offerings at Christ Church such as Women's Spirituality, Altar Guild, Acolytes, Flower Arrangers, Lectors, Tech Team, Ushers and Greeters, Coffee Hour Hosts, etc. They learned more about what we offered and signed up for those offerings in which they might have an interest. Each table was staffed by that ministry's point person, someone who could answer questions and encourage involvement. Tables offered games and prizes as well but mainly served as contact points to connect people with opportunities.

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

Our parish, as has been stated, is very strong in outreach to surrounding communities with needs for food, shelter and other necessities, but somewhat lacking in "in-reach". We piloted a project that was based on a successful program at Christ Church Ponte Vedra, Florida, we called 'Shepherds Care' with the goal of 'taking good care of each other within the church and strengthening our beloved community.' Shepherds, a group of trained parishioners, are a 'caring presence providing spiritual and emotional support to members, establishing an intentional friendship and walking a path with them in time of need.' Shepherds have a 'flock' they stay in contact with through calls, texts, emails and cards. They may visit a flock member, take them out for coffee or lunch or check in on them if they are on the prayer list. The Shepherds have a retired priest mentor and lay leader they can consult if necessary. Holy Hikes, a collaborative endeavor with Christ Church Los Altos, and our church choir, also provide for spiritual, emotional and physical well-being.

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

Outreach addresses urgent needs of the most vulnerable. Action is taken through partnership with newer organizations (SpiritCare, Rise Against Hunger, Project WeHope) and organizations we have worked with for more than 25 years (GAIA Global Health and Life Moves). In 2025 we also gathered Outreach groups from 16 local Episcopal churches to improve program coordination.

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

Our outreach program serves the homeless by supporting non-profits that run homeless shelters. We provide food and clothing and supplies. Our parishioners are actively involved in donating necessary items, making blankets and cooking and delivering meals. We bring music and learning and food to senior shut-ins through our Spirit Care program and package 15,000 meals in one afternoon with the Rise Against Hunger Program. We collaborate with local churches, offering Evensong, Christian formation classes, and 'Holy Hikes'. When USAID collapsed, we, along with other local churches, funded scholarships for 93 nurses in Malawi through GAIA. Many of our parishioners have attended protests and vigils in the past year. We funded a 'bike rest' on Portola Road on our property which offers a water bottle filling station, bike repair stand, trash can, picnic bench and bike rack for those bicyclists who ride through our hills. We also carry out our ministry in Christ in personal ways in various soup kitchens, SPLC, ACLU, Second Harvest, looking after each other and inviting people to visit our church.

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

We lost our much-loved administrator to cancer a couple of years ago and subsequently hired an energetic and dynamic person to take her place. Our new administrator has a soft spot for animals, and when Rose, the cat, started regular visits from across the street, it was mutual affection on the part of our administrator and the cat, who really made herself at home on our campus. Rose became our church mascot. Our administrator wanted to meet Rose's owners and while visiting, let the owners know that our choir director was thinking about starting a children's choir at our church. "You do not have to belong to our church to sing in the children's choir," our administrator told Rose's owners, "We want community members to be involved." Rose's owners had some children that got involved and those children had some friends. Along with our parishioner's children and children from our Carillon Preschool, we now have a group of 11 who practice and sing occasionally for our church services. We call Rose our evangelical cat!

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

The Vestry proposes a budget for the upcoming year in the fall, and our annual stewardship campaign begins at that time. The Stewardship Committee announces both the dollar and participation goals for the campaign during services and through our weekly newsletter. Each parishioner receives a personalized mailing thanking them for past contributions and inviting them to participate in the new campaign. The Stewardship Committee keeps the parish informed about the progress of the campaign and continues to encourage participation throughout the fall and, if necessary, into early winter. The committee also makes follow-up calls to parishioners who have not yet contributed. Almost all of our regular church members participate in the campaign and have done so for many years. We track pledge payments and follow up as needed, though we rarely encounter issues with collection. We also pass the plate during services to supplement the campaign. Finally, the Stewardship Committee hosts an annual event in late fall to thank and celebrate the collective generosity of the parish. These events are often themed and have included a Harvest Dinner, a Chili Cook-Off, and a Family Carnival.

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

We had to part ways with our previous rector who was not working out with our church. We reached a consensus decision on the vestry and followed up with a request for Bishop's Godly judgement and worked closely with the diocese to ensure a dignified and fair transition. With this experience we realized the importance of listening to our parishioners and staff in a timely manner. The vestry then set up an executive committee and designated an ombudsman for grievance intake. We launched an "In-reach" effort to promote and facilitate open communication through various church events.

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?

Our Church went through a period of turmoil and upset that culminating in parting ways with our former rector. We determined that we needed to work on taking care of each other (in-reach) and having a larger presence in the community (community outreach). We embarked on a plan to add programs to the church that addressed both of these areas. An after-school day care program is one example of a new program, as are the several new offerings mentioned in this portfolio. These new programs enlivened the church and drew in new and old parishioners. These programs were very well received. There were other programs that were proposed that did not become airborne due to push back from parishioners, required unwelcome changes to existing norms or found no advocates to advanced the program. These included Pray Ground, a space for small children to be in the sanctuary with their parents, a weekend art program, and a tai'chi exercise program, among others. We learned that advocating for new programs requires dedication, buy in from the parishioners, and time for the new to catch fire and thrive. The programs that do stick really make a difference and come with a sense of community spirit.



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Prior Incumbents

| Name | Position Title | Date Begun | Date Ended |
|------|----------------|------------|------------|
| Name | Position Title | Date Begun | Date Ended |
| Name | Position Title | Date Begun | Date Ended |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Church School https://www.carillonschool.org/ | 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 |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

Pre-K



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Contact:
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Worshipping Community Web site:

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

The Rt. Rev. Austin Rios

Diocesan Transition Minister
Canon Denise Obando

deniseo@diocal.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader