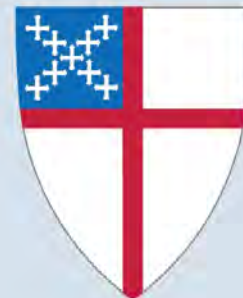




A LIGHT TO THE WORLD,  
DRAWING ALL PEOPLE TO CHRIST



# ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ATASCADERO

## Pastoral Partnering Opportunity in the California Central Coast Area

### Contents

- 1 Pastoral Partner Opportunity.
- 2 Mission & Vision
- 3 History
- 4 Location
- 5 Leadership & Energy
- 6 Faith
- 7 Ministries
- 9 Connection and Hope

St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Atascadero, California seeks to call a bi-vocational priest to partner with the church family in continuing its 70-year ministry. We will require a strong leader who can help us discern and carry out a new and inspiring vision for St. Luke's as the body of Christ in Atascadero. We offer a beautiful location, and a small but committed congregation, ready for new directions and ideas and with a long history of ministry to, and with, the community.

This is a part-time position. The congregation is fully equipped, ready and has expanded roles in lay leadership.

St. Luke's is an inclusive Parish, committed to social justice. We welcome applications for all those who are interested in serving with us.

*Please send cover letter, CV and transitional ministry portfolio to Canon Martha Korienek, Canon to the Ordinary:  
canonmartha@realepiscopal.org.*

## Mission and Vision

As the Body of Christ the congregation is bound together by the cherished experiences of worshipping and working together. It is our hope and our vision to draw people to Christ by welcoming all who come to us into the beloved community, by serving those in need as Jesus served, and by sharing the love, acceptance and mercy we each have received.

Active members tend to be people with a long history who are bound to St. Luke's with ties of memory, friendship and stubbornness. Membership has been in decline since the mid 1990's. The advanced age of many members is a factor, but there are other factors as well, including the changing role and message of the church in our society. The present congregation is dedicated to welcoming people of all ages, lifestyles, viewpoints and means, however we have very few young families. While the congregation is appreciative of the presence of children, we need more guidance in being welcoming to young children.

*"Children are the future. I am here to love them. I am here to learn from them." Ann H.*



*Church Doors carved by member of St. Luke's*

## Families at St. Luke's

1951-2001 This was a time of many children and great energy at St. Luke's. St. Luke's and St. Barnabas in Arroyo Grande had the most children in our Deanery at that time.

Together, with St. Barnabas, the many activities included: Adventure of the Month, service projects and Diocesan youth events such as 30-Hour Famine, ski trips, and Big Sur Camp.

1999-2016 Our pastor had a vision of opening a before-and-after school care program for latch key children. The result of this was to open Youth Arts Activity Center which offered art classes, snacks, and transportation to 30 children on most days. A Montessori pre-school was added in 2007. Two United Thank Offering Grants helped establish and support these programs. Both programs were on the church campus until 2016.

## What If We???

- ◆ Offer the church as a center for ESL education for children and adults as well as other after-school activities and amateur performances.
- ◆ Support Prison Ministry Outreach in conjunction with other local organizations.
- ◆ Develop new community outreach events.
- ◆ Figure out what a Sunday School for this generation looks like and implement it.
- ◆ Explore possibility of combined worship with other congregations.
- ◆ Send parishioners to become members of the Boards of local organizations to represent St. Luke's and to create advocates in the congregation for the marginalized in our city.
- ◆ Develop our outdoor space to better enhance spiritual growth.





## History

1951 The Mission of St. Luke the Evangelist In the Diocese of California, was founded April 1, 1951. The name was chosen because Luke was a physician and the founders wanted the church to be based on the principles of healing and evangelism. Those themes have been part of St. Luke's for 72 years.

1980 St. Luke's joined the newly formed Diocese of El Camino Real.

1999 St. Luke's became a parish after 50 years as a mission. The congregation was energized and proud to finally come into full standing with its Diocese.

## History, Location and Environment

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is located in Atascadero, California (pop. 29,973), in San Luis Obispo County, in California's Central Coast region. It is midway between Los Angeles in the south, and San Francisco in the north. The town is 18 miles north of the County Seat, (San Luis Obispo) and 17 miles east of Morro Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Many parks and hiking trails are spread among the rolling hills, dotted with oak trees, and Atascadero is home to a variety of wildlife.



Atascadero was founded in 1913 by Edward G. Lewis, as the first planned community in California. The original City Hall, built between 1914 and 1918, is one of California's Historical Landmarks. (No. 958). Although the Colony has been in existence for over a century, the City of Atascadero was not incorporated and City government was not formed until 1979.

Traditionally, the economy of Atascadero has been based on farming, ranching, and commerce. Healthcare and Social Assistance are now considered the largest industries in the local economy. Tourism has become an important contributor because of Atascadero's scenic beauty and many opportunities for sightseeing and recreation (Big Sur, Montana de Oro State Park, the beaches of South County, Hearst Castle, boating, the Central Coast Wine Trail, and much more.

<https://www.atascaderochamber.org/>



The town also serves as a bedroom community to San Luis Obispo, and California Polytechnic State University (22,000 students). There are a total of 11,621 households in Atascadero, each made up of around 3 members. Approximately 8% of the population lives at, or below, the poverty level.

It is also home to one of the County's largest employers, the Atascadero State Hospital, a Secure Forensic Hospital.

Because of its proximity to California Highway 101, San Luis Obispo County is easily accessible for cultural opportunities. Music venues are located throughout the County, and the yearly Festival Mosaic and Paderewski Festival are cultural highlights.

The neighboring town of San Luis Obispo is also home to the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, and California's largest Farmer's Market.

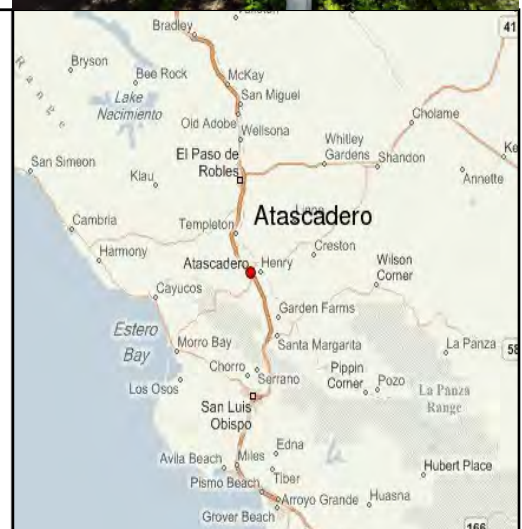
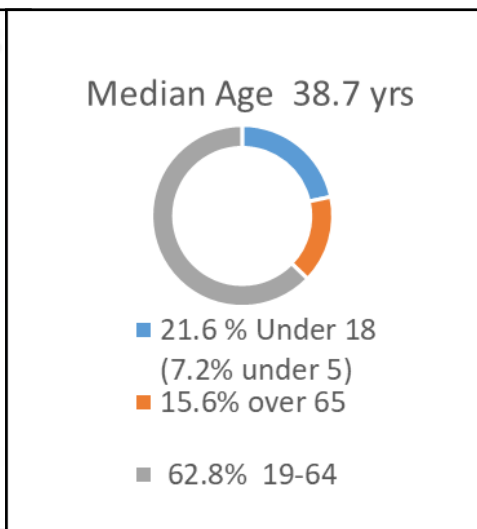
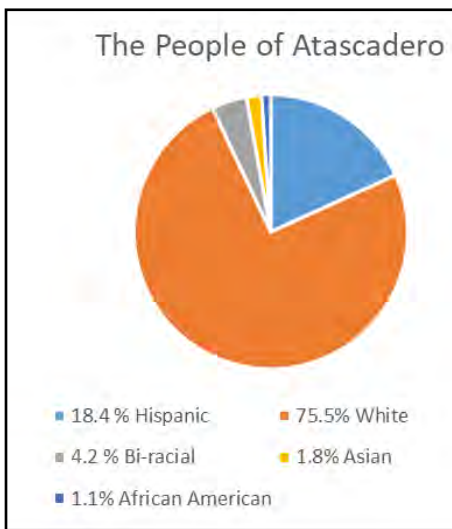
St. Luke's Episcopal Church is located within walking distance of the downtown area of Atascadero, two blocks from El Camino Real, the historic highway that serves as Atascadero's "Main Street". The Church is on a residential street at 5318 Palma Avenue. The neighborhood is a mix of residential homes and apartments. St. Luke's is one of three churches on Palma Avenue.

Almost all of St. Luke's congregation resides in the Atascadero area, (26.13 sq. miles). A few families come to St. Luke's from outside the city limits, including the towns of Santa Margarita, Templeton and Paso Robles. Our Zoom broadcast has provided an opportunity for new members of our faith community to participate from out-of-state. Currently, almost all of the St. Luke's Community consists of parishioners 65+, with the majority female.

### Some Statistics

- The Median Household Income (2019) is \$79,658.
- The median listing home price is \$694,900 (January, 2022).
- 34.4% of the population are renters. The average rent (2022) for a one bedroom apartment is around \$1700.
- The Atascadero Unified School District is home to 7 Elementary Schools, 2 Middle/Junior High Schools, 2 High Schools, 1 College, and 5+ miscellaneous school sites and programs.

<https://www.atasusd.org/District/Department/1-School-Board>



## Leadership

*“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10)*

As a small church, we are challenged by the conundrum of how to get things done with the resources and people we have. Nonetheless there are many active committees doing the work of the church directed by the Vestry. During the pandemic, the Re-opening Committee has made decisions regarding safety protocols, the Outreach Committee has found safe and satisfying ministries, and the Daughters of the King have kept all prayer concerns and the habit of prayer always with us. We have a newly formed Caring Parish Ministry dedicated to further nurturing ties and communication among the congregants. Also addressing this need is the Tech Team, providing Zoom access to our live worship each Sunday.

## Energy

The congregation has done best when it has some specific goal or focus. With a vision and a plan, enthusiasm and commitment follow. Much energy was brought to the tasks of finally becoming a parish in the late 90’s, to the establishment of the after-school and preschool program in the early 2000’s and to the remodel of our sanctuary. We have brought energy to the navigation of the ever-changing requirements of the pandemic and to the new responsibilities and awareness of being between Clergy leaders.

With the exception of Sunday Worship Services, most things are planned and carried out by lay members. There are 74 communicants in good standing on the church books with 33 pledging units. Active participants in mission projects, workdays, fundraisers, etc, average around 30 to 35 individuals. Sunday morning attendance ranges from 12 to 20 in person and 5 to 10 online.

Currently worship services include one Sunday morning service live and on Zoom; lay-led Evening Prayer Tuesday and Thursday evenings; and a Zoom Taize service on Sunday evenings. A supply priest officiates at Holy Eucharist twice per month with Morning Prayer led by Deacons on alternate Sundays. Communion is delivered to those who ask on the first Sunday of each month. A musician plays piano for services three times per month. A secretary is employed for ten hours a week for bulletins and a weekly newsletter.



2013

After a ten-year effort to re-envision the church sanctuary, we entered into a contract for the remodel of our worship space and a new ADA bathroom. The improved access, visibility, and order of the worship space has made the worship services more welcoming and more esthetically pleasing.



## Living Into Our Faith

On a regular basis, members of our community are engaged in support of each other through prayer, transportation, and reaching out. We support the greater community by cooking for the homeless shelter, provisioning apartments for medically fragile people, making quilts to be sent to disaster areas world-wide, and ringing bells for the Salvation Army. Individuals may regularly be found taking elders to grocery stores or doctor's appointments, bringing flowers to members in distress, cleaning or serving on the board of the homeless shelter or doing various repair projects around the church.

*"My wife and I enjoy providing food for ECHO. We have been so blessed to have been raised in families where our parents truly loved the Lord. Proverbs 22:9 'A generous person will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor.'"*

*Sally and Mike F.*

Service is a natural result of spiritual grounding and growth. At St Luke's prayer is very important. Members of Daughters of the King lead the Tuesday and Thursday Evening Prayer services and the Wednesday morning Bible Study. They also collect and disseminate prayer requests to the membership. The Caring Parish Ministry group, recently reformed and is charged with making monthly check-in phone calls to each member. Individual members also create "Prayer Shawls" which are knitted or crocheted while praying for the recipient, blessed, and given to those in distress.



## Connection is Important

1972 A member of the vestry, Jim Hickok, was working at Camp Roberts and learned that for the work of dismantling one of the old wooden chapels, St. Luke's could have the wood. We sold the wood and purchased new beams, pews, and carpet for our sanctuary. Jim, while at Camp Roberts, met a bi-vocational Baptist minister whose congregation was meeting at the time in a home. The St. Luke's Vestry agreed to have the Baptist congregation meet at St. Luke's and that congregation in turn helped us on weekends to tear down and haul the wood from Camp Roberts. They continued to meet at St. Luke's for 6 months and then found a building for their congregation in North County.

2003 We arranged with the Atascadero High School Band to have students play postludes at the 8am service and preludes at the 10:15. Two High School students ran that program.

2010 The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was first celebrated by 9 different churches in the North County of San Luis Obispo. This included 8 nights of prayer and music from January 18-25. This was on-going until the pandemic began.

2014 Our retired former pastor, Matthew Conrad, founded a North County Clergy organization which welcomes all clergy and meets regularly for mutual support.

## Other Ministries

Over the years, we have engaged in many fundraisers. This year 40% of the income of each fundraiser is designated annually for a local non-profit such as the food pantry (**Atascadero Loaves and Fishes**), the homeless shelter (**ECHO**), the medically fragile housing program (**Transitional Food and Shelter**). Some of these ministries are: rummage sales, seasonal dinners, auctions, Spring Plant Sales, Christmas Bazaars. Before COVID, we provided refreshments at the summer Movies in the Park. We served dinners at our Atascadero Lake Tuesday Dinner and Concerts. We served as a polling place for elections and sold BBQ sandwiches on Election Day. These activities served both as fundraisers and fellowship events, and ways of being seen by the community.

St. Luke's partners with St. James Episcopal Church (Paso Robles) to provide clothing, ponchos, hygiene kits, etc. for unhoused individuals. St. Luke's leaders and youth led Diocesan Sierra Service Project work teams through 2016.

St. Luke's rector helped establish the Canterbury Campus ministry to Cal Poly and Cuesta students and we have a continuing financial commitment to help support this ministry.

The pandemic situation of the last two years has put several of our activities on hold. Yet we have found that it is possible to worship together, to work together, to build the community even under constantly changing restrictions,

- If we bring persistence and resilience to our efforts.
- If we treat each individual & their needs with love & respect.
- If we look for the presence of God in even this set of circumstances.
- If we seek the wisdom of the Spirit.

## Outreach Projects

1984-1995 **Loaves and Fishes** food pantry used our campus for storage and distribution. Upon leaving for a larger building, they donated our first stained glass window, appropriately depicting the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

1990—Mid '90's **Ad Care** (for adults with Alzheimer's) began using our campus for adult day care.

2001-Current Members of St. Luke's gather with other local churches to form **El Camino Homeless Organization.(E.C.H.O.)** Our congregation has fixed dinner for the clients and volunteered as the night chaperones.

2018-2020 The congregation stepped up to help furnish apartments for **Transitional Food and Shelter**, housing medically fragile homeless families and individuals. The County is currently changing the structure of housing support



As church services went on-line for many months during the pandemic, we moved our traditional Sunday Farmers' Market to Saturday mornings, social distancing and masking required. Garden production and the amount we could send to Atascadero Loaves and Fishes remained the same. In November, instead of our Thanksgiving Mountain of Food Offering, we were able to create virtual mountains of food representing total dollars donated. Our Quilting Group which makes and sends quilts to disaster areas, now operates in a different way as individuals take responsibility for different stages of the quilt making. Instead of meeting together, one member might create many quilt tops, a couple more might layer the quilts and one or two people might tie or finish the quilts.

We try many approaches to being church at St. Luke's and if we try something that doesn't work, we try something else.

Recently, we are exploring new ways of encouraging congregational leadership and involvement in Church governance, simplifying methods of communication in the Parish, and fostering accountability among leaders.

We have established a "Vestry of the Whole" which is an open meeting after Church on the 4th Sunday of the month. All Members present serve as voting members of the Church Vestry - checking financials, setting Parish policy, maintaining the Church building and grounds, etc. The experiment has been enthusiastically received by the congregation.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church has a long history of participation in the life of Atascadero. Even during the recent COVID Pandemic, the Parish has continued its commitment to the community. This year we are excited to be participating in the ACE (Annual Community Engagement) project, in which members report weekly on their number of meaningful contacts with individual members in the community to emphasize and encourage being "church outside the walls."

## Ordinations

1985 Since 1985 we have been privileged to participate in the process of many Deacons.

2014—2022 In the past 8 years St. Luke's has raised up 3 priests for ordination.





## A History of Connection and Community

Fundraising and involvement in local organizations continue to be an important part of parish life. St. Luke's is committed to working for Social Justice as a focus of its ministry.

Historically we have tried always to make the Lord's resources available for the Lord's work. Although the facility is older it has been used by many groups over the years and is frequently open for public activities. These include: poetry readings, small concerts, a food bank, an Alzheimer's program, an after school program, and an election polling place. There are currently four 12-Step Programs meeting weekly on the church campus. High public usage of an older facility has led to some law suits and citations. We have had three such actions, one for safety requirements, one for incorrect labor practices, and one for a fall in the parking lot. The safety of the members and public are a high priority and when we discover an issue we fix it. Currently we are working on the emergency exit stairway which has become questionable in its old age.

We are often, but not always, flexible and open to new ideas. We are often, but not always, creative. We try to be open and respectful of each other's ideas, viewpoints and life situations. We strive to be a safe place for all who come to us, although we do not always perceive the ways in which we are being unwelcoming. In a world of increasing polarization and stress, we hold the vision of living out the call of Christ to love God and one another.

The person who can be a successful priest for this congregation will be a person of integrity with a strong sense of the Good News, and the desire and ability to tell it. This is a person who knows how to lead and knows how to be led by a community of believers, and who can form strong bonds with the individual members of this community.

