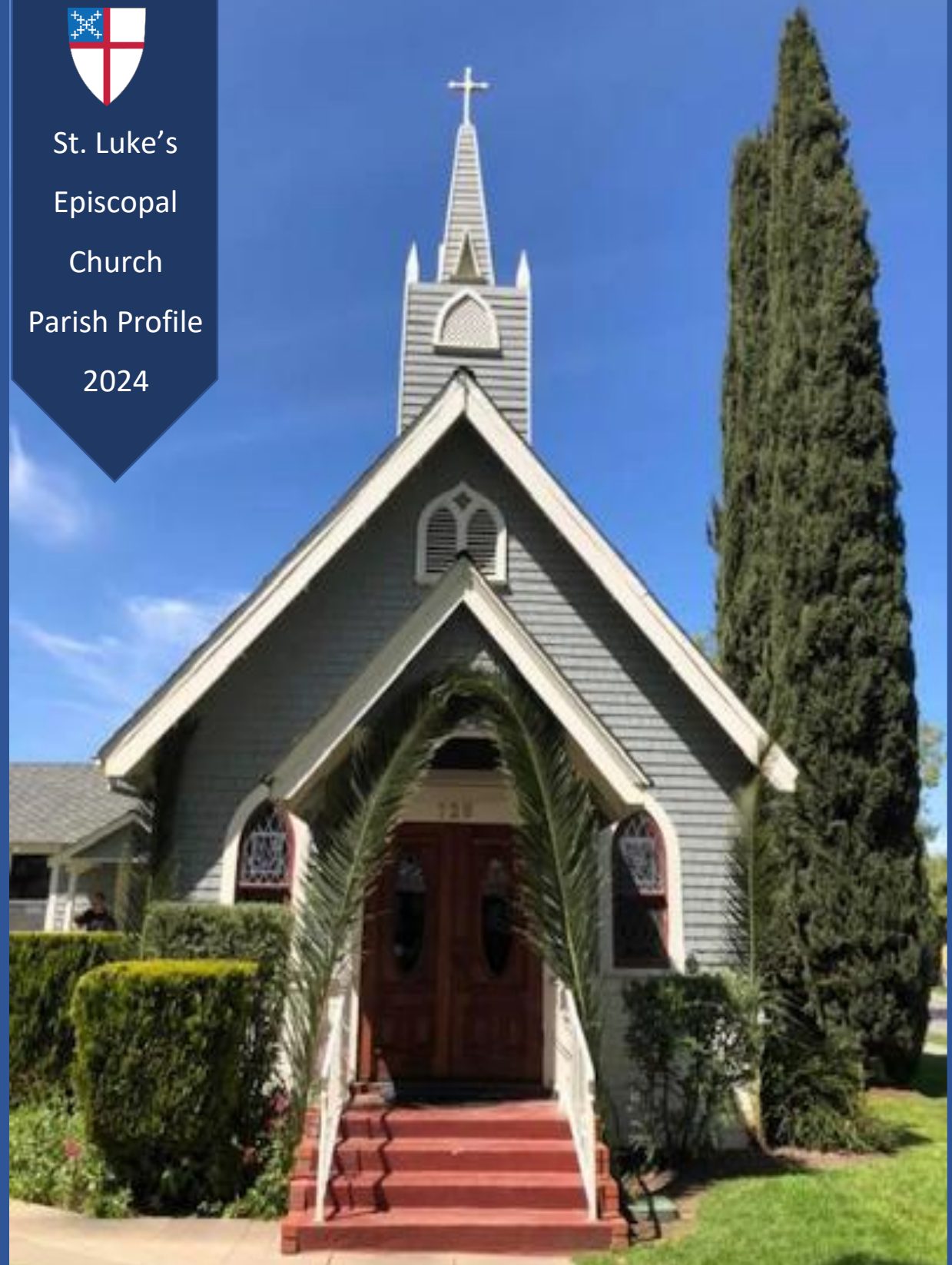




St. Luke's
Episcopal
Church
Parish Profile
2024



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Welcome Statement

Welcome to St. Luke's Parish Profile. We are overjoyed you are here to read about the church we love. Our Congregation is small but mighty. We have a diverse congregation that includes people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, different sexual orientations, and different political persuasions. We pray that God will bless us with a Priest who will see the meaningful opportunities afforded by joining our community.

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The Leader We Seek

At our current size, we can confidently commit to and therefore seek a half-time priest. The priest we seek will carry out our foundational commitments to the next level through:

- Being true to the beauty of our Episcopal liturgical traditions
- Nurturing love, acceptance, and inclusivity of all the diverse peoples and backgrounds in our Parish as well as our extended family of Hollister and San Benito County. Compassionate and empathetic, offering support and guidance to all individuals and families in times of joy and sorrow.
- Limited engagement with the preschool, not as head of school but as informal chaplain and be known to parents and children of preschool
- Desire to meet with other faith groups and community entities to promote joint fellowship and dedicated to serving others, both within the church and in the broader community, through various outreach and mission efforts.
- With approximately a 70% Hispanic population in Hollister, having a bilingual priest is highly advantageous, but not required

Mission Statement and Values



St. Luke's Mission is to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment dedicated to spiritual growth and renewal. We proclaim God's Good News and share God's love through Jesus Christ with everyone in our diverse community.

St. Luke's History

The journey of St. Luke's Episcopal Church is a tale of faith, resilience, and community spirit that spans over a century. It began in 1876, when a small group of Episcopalians gathered informally in an upper room above a downtown store in Hollister. Their dedication to worship and fellowship laid the foundation for what would become a significant and enduring community presence.



By 1884, their mission had grown in both number and purpose, prompting them to formalize their efforts under the name "St. Luke's." This was a pivotal moment, marking the transition from informal gatherings to a recognized Episcopal mission. The congregation's commitment was further solidified when, in 1899, they purchased land on the corner of Monterey and Seventh Streets, setting the stage for the future of their church.

The year 1903 saw the completion of St. Luke's historic redwood chapel. This building, constructed with care and reverence, became a symbol of the church's enduring presence in the community. The chapel was not just a place of worship but a cornerstone of the congregation's identity.

As the 20th century unfolded, the church continued to evolve. In the mid-1900s, a church house was built, adding to the facilities that supported a growing parish. The significance of these developments was underscored in 1987, when The Rev. Joan Gardner became the first woman to serve at St. Luke's, reflecting broader changes in the Episcopal Church and the world beyond.

The 1990s brought new traditions, including Bikers rally parking, a unique event that became an integral part of St. Luke's community life. This period also saw St. Luke's officially becoming a parish, a milestone that marked its maturity and stability within the Episcopal Diocese.

However, the journey was not without its challenges. The 2000s brought financial distress, a trial that tested the congregation's resolve. Yet, through these difficulties, St. Luke's continued to thrive, finding new ways to engage with the community. The Holy Stir services, which began in the early 2010s, became a highlight of church life, drawing people together for worship and fellowship.

The tradition of the "Beer & Wine Stroll" also began during this time, adding a festive element to the church's calendar and fostering community connections. The refurbishment of the sanctuary and parish hall in 2012-2013 revitalized the church's physical space, reflecting the renewed energy and commitment of its members.

In 2014, the founding of a preschool marked a significant expansion of St. Luke's outreach, providing early childhood education and nurturing the next generation. The church also established new traditions, such as honoring first responders in 2016 and founding a Memorial Garden in 2018, further deepening its role in the community.

In 2019-2020, St. Luke's undertook the installation of a ramp, making the church more accessible and inclusive for all members of the community. This act of practical support underscored the church's ongoing commitment to serve and support its congregation.

The journey of St. Luke's took another significant turn in 2022 with the retirement of Fr. Ken, the Priest in Charge. His departure marked the end of a chapter, but also the beginning of a new era for St. Luke's, as it continued to build on its rich history and look toward the future with hope and faith.

Through decades of change and challenge, St. Luke's Episcopal Church has remained a steadfast beacon of faith and community, evolving with the times while staying true to its core mission. Its story is one of resilience, growth, and unwavering commitment to its spiritual and communal values.

We at St Lukes continue to seek opportunities to share our belief and engage with the Hollister community in a way that honors our faith and gives community member a chance to experience the love of God and our core values.

"The worship services in our beautiful historic church always moves me whether there are just a few of us or a full house. It always makes me feel like this is the place I need to be. Our St. Luke's family and our rituals makes it home to me, but our beautiful little haven is the best icing on the cake!" Pat A. Member



Membership, Fellowship, Music and Worship, and Outreach

Membership

The congregation of St. Luke's takes an active role in being welcoming and inviting to new people. Because the sanctuary is small, no one is

inconspicuous or goes unnoticed. However, both members and visitors say they feel accepted however they choose to participate. This is a community that truly respects and honors the dignity of each person. St. Luke's is a safe place for living out the diversity of life's journey ... it is in our DNA to listen and be aware of folks' comfort zone. Members and visitors often share experiencing a very special spirituality at Sunday services Our beautiful, historical sanctuary as well as our traditions, fosters the feeling of Holy Presence.

"I think this embodies so much of what St. Luke's has been about for me. Being seen for who you are and being reminded that you're loved and appreciated for all of it." Beth A. Member

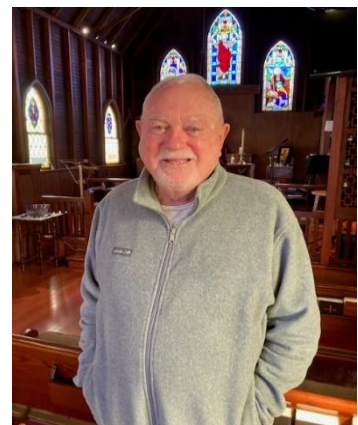
Although the congregation at St. Luke's is small, it is a mighty, full of love and support for one another and the local community. Through financial struggles, times when we were without a permanent Priest, earthquakes, and a global pandemic, we have continued to see St. Luke's as our home and the congregation as our family. Together, we have accomplished many things.



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"I was at the altar reading about Jesus giving bread and wine at the first communion. I started to cry because I was so touched by the words." Dave H. Member



2022 Parochial Report Data

- 42 Active Participants
 - 15 adults 35-64
 - 27 adults 65 and older
- 66 Easter Sunday Attendance
- 37 Christmas Eve and Christmas Attendance
- 20 Confirmed Pledges
- \$65,230 Pledges

"St Luke's has been there for us throughout our good times and bad times. We have always felt so at peace being there and just wish more people would know what we are about."
Celia and Mark A. Members

Fellowship



The St. Luke's congregation has accomplished many things together. The idea of a memorial garden at St. Luke's was started by Parishioner, Rose Bryan, in her desire to have her beloved husband and life-long member of St. Luke's,



Harvey, buried at the church he loved. The congregation pulled together and with love and donations of time and money made this a reality in 2018. The Memorial Garden was dedicated after Sunday services on June 24, 2018.

"This garden became especially important to me after both my mother and father passed away unexpectedly, within two months of each other. The relief I felt for being able to place them together in a small garden that I could visit meant the world to me. I will forever be grateful for this act of love." Dee S. Member

In 2019, after at least 20 years of trying to figure out how to implement and pay for a handicap entrance; mission accomplished!

The logistics (and budget) of reconfiguring the entire porch entrance, as well as determining placement of the ramp, came with special challenges for our aging facility. Working together, bringing this long-term dream to fruition has been a very special blessing.

Worship and Music

"I was awed by the feeling of peace and holiness that immediately Enveloped me (and still does). But mainly, I realize it's always been about the people. The people – always caring for one another, always volunteering in the community, always a hug or a meal or a prayer when you need it most. So, my spiritual and emotional moments are a compilation of interactions – worship, Holy Week, weddings, baptisms, Sunday school, refurbishing, yard work.... I love the people and what St. Luke stands for to me and the community"
Alice E. Member

St. Luke's is the only Episcopal church in San Benito County. This matters because the Episcopal blending of traditional liturgical worship and inclusive acceptance of all of God's children gives folks a choice of worship offered nowhere else locally.

St. Luke's follows Rite II services. Once COVID restrictions were lifted, our 8 am and 10 am services were combined as a 10 am service only. Another change made when in-person services resumed was to create Service booklets each Sunday. Members and visitors have enjoyed this change which has made the liturgy and music easier to follow. That change continues today. The feeling in the air during worship could be described as peaceful, holy, enriching and comforting.

Music uses live and recorded organ, guitars, flute, blending traditional, folk, and contemporary Christian music.

Outreach

Realizing the vital importance of our calling as a Christian community, St. Luke's is actively engaged in ministry and mission outreach throughout Hollister and San Benito County.

The weekend nearest 9/11 we honor local First Responders. Our preschoolers make cards which are delivered by church members along with treats to various fire stations, police, and the Sheriff's department.



The community food bank is supported by parishioner donations of time and goods, as well as both preschool families and church families joining to pack weekend snack bags for local school



children, approximately 1,000 bags during each participatory event. Including the preschool in these outreach programs provides an opportunity to share both Christian values and foster community spirit in our children.

When Hollister celebrates a July 4th Biker Rally, as a fundraiser St. Lukes provides biker parking on our grounds, refreshments, a place to check gear, rest, and receive a bike blessing.

Hollister sponsored Dec-A-Tree provides an opportunity for our

preschoolers to make ornaments. Preschool families and church members decorate a tree donated to a needy family. The Dec-A-Tree event receives wide community participation and takes place on the grounds of the Veterans Hall.



The Hollister Downtown Association sponsors an annual Beer & Wine, and although it may seem strange for a church to participate in the event, it has proven to be a major opportunity for increasing St. Luke's visibility in the community. Approximately 300 people enjoying the event enter through our historic chapel, often commenting on the beauty, then proceed to our back patio to where snacks and live music are awaiting them.

St. Luke's is devoted to interacting with the community in all these endeavors because we want to meet people where they are get to know them and they to know us ... to help with their needs knowing we are led in our hearts by Christ's love and acceptance of all God's creation.

Los Puentecitos/Little Bridges Bilingual Preschool

Los Puentecitos was a venture grown out of a dream planted in the hearts of St. Luke's congregation. The dream was to nurture and care for children with the desire of building



“bridges” of understanding across cultures, languages, and all that divide us. Based on this vocation and the popularity of a local K-8 Dual Language Academy in the public school district, St. Luke's began this undertaking in early 2014. It was during that time that space was made available due to the departure of the Montessori school that had been renting the parish hall for ten years.



Grants and extensive donations of time and materials brought the vision to life. Currently the school is licensed for up to 45 students. The school also offers extended care as well as summer camp programs. Little Bridges/Los Puentecitos enjoys an excellent reputation in the community thanks to diligent and knowledgeable oversight by the Head of School and a dedicated staff.

Watching the enthusiasm of boisterous 3- to 5-year-olds five days a week is truly a joy. Children's Chapel is provided twice a week. Students enter "God's living room" wide eyed and full of awe. It's hard to describe how inspiring it is to be part of planting a seed in these little one's lives. Three preschool students, whose families are not members of St. Luke's, have been baptized at St. Luke's.

The end of the school year ceremony, held at the Veteran's Hall, is attended by approximately 400 family and friends of the students. The families have various opportunities during the year to interact with parishioners, including holidays and fundraisers. There is a multitude of ideas and plans to expand how the preschool students and families work in tandem with St. Luke's parishioners reach out the greater San Benito County community.

Challenges and Opportunities

Some of our biggest challenges are an aging congregation and decline membership. A calling for our new priest will be to serve the increasing pastoral support needs of our parishioners, some of whom are life-long members of the parish. Implement support systems like pastoral care teams or lay visitors to help manage the increased pastoral needs. While it also offers opportunities to leverage the wisdom and experience of older members, strengthen community bonds through deep-rooted connections, adapt worship and programs to meet their needs, and expand outreach and mission work due to retirees' flexible schedules. Perhaps, develop programs and activities specifically design to attract younger generations, such as mentoring programs, youth groups, family activities, or contemporary worship options. Little Bridges offers a unique opportunity for outreach and potential source of new members for the church.

The Future of the Parish

By developing targeted programs, enhancing accessibility, fostering intergenerational engagement, strengthening pastoral care, and promoting financial stewardship, through opportunities such as expanding the preschool, adding after school programs and continuing our community outreach we can create a vibrant and inclusive community, ensuring continued growth and relevance.

Financial Summary

A journey began when St. Luke's entered "Restoration" parish status eleven years ago, due to inability to pay Fair Share to the Diocese, and to handle the expense of running the parish. During 2018, representatives of St. Luke's attended several meetings with the Restoration and Review Committee of the Dioceses, which manages these programs. Time was running out for St. Luke's. These "forgiveness" programs are intended to last no more than three or four years. St. Luke's needed to get out of being a Restoration Parish, or risk being reverted to Mission status. The downgrade has sharp consequences, and not where St. Luke's wanted to go. A plan was submitted in 2017 and in 2018 St. Luke's reported that it was on schedule with the plan, including its Fair Share payments. On December 13, 2018, St. Luke's programs and successes were presented to the Diocese Board of Trustees, requesting a return to full parish status. The vote was a unanimous Yes!

The changes that have been made to the preschool and parish have paid off. The protocols and operational procedures that were adopted and followed since 2017 have resulted in a positive financial position each year since. A four-person Finance Committee meets prior to each Vestry meeting to review monthly financials, parish investments, budgets, grants, and bank accounts to prepare recommendations for presentation by the Treasurer to the Vestry. St. Luke's goal is to carefully manage its finances to ensure continued financial health, while continuing to utilize its resources to accomplish God's will for St. Luke's as His presence in the Episcopal tradition in Hollister.

"St. Luke's is an example to our divided country that in following Jesus we can love and accept others who are not like us. Our dream is that some day we find a way to get that message out to the broader community and beyond" Tina H., St. Luke's Deacon

Table 1 St. Luke's 2023 Budget

	2024 Budget	2025 Proposed
Operating Income		
Designated Offering	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Interest	\$ -	\$ -
Other Donations	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Parish House Rental	\$ 21,120.00	\$ 21,120.00
Plate Offerings	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Pledge Payments	\$ 49,700.00	\$ 49,700.00
Reimbursement from Preschool	\$ 21,900.00	\$ 21,900.00
Income from Reserves	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 34,000.00
Operating Income	\$ 111,520.00	\$ 130,520.00
Operating Expenses		
Diocesan Fair Share	\$ 8,232.00	\$ 8,232.00
Vestry Expenses	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Dues/Subscriptions/Fees	\$ 470.00	\$ 470.00
Insurance	\$ 4,837.00	\$ 4,837.00
Maintenance/Repair Supplies	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Office Expenses/Postage/Utilities/Telephone	\$ 11,540.00	\$ 11,540.00
Payroll Taxes/Fees	\$ 5,300.00	\$ 5,300.00
Property Taxes	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00
Secretary Salary/Lay Employee Pension Plan	\$ 29,148.00	\$ 29,148.00
Accounting Fees	\$ -	\$ -
Software/Technology	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
Priest-in-Charge Pension/Stipend/Housing	\$ 22,150.00	\$ 63,718.00
Pastoral Support	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Worship/Program Support	\$ 7,600.00	\$ -
Other Operating Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
Advertising	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Operating Expenses	\$ 96,567.00	\$ 129,935.00
Net Operating Income	\$ 14,553.00	\$ 585.00

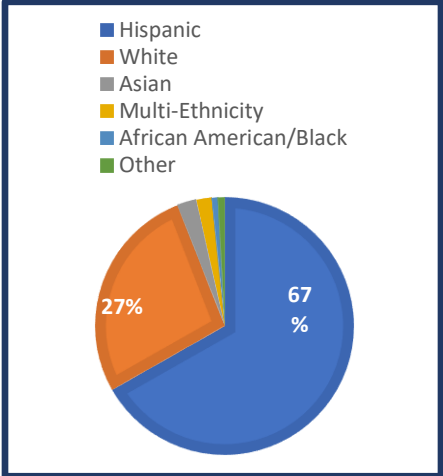
Hollister

St. Luke’s Episcopal Church is located in Hollister, California (pop. 43,703) in San Benito County, in California’s Central Coast Region. It was founded in 1868 and is one of the largest cities in the Monterey Bay Area. Hollister is just 40 minutes from the Monterey Peninsula and less than an hour from Silicon Valley. It is an agricultural town known for its local apricots, olive oil, vineyards, pomegranates, and chocolate.



The beautiful hills and valleys of San Benito County make it an ideal place for outdoor enthusiasts. It is the gateway to Pinnacles National Park which offers over 30 miles of trails through canyons and meadows.

St. Luke’s Episcopal Church is located within walking distance of the downtown area. The Church is on a residential street at 720 Monterey Street. St. Luke’s is one of many churches on Monterey Street. Almost all of St. Luke’s congregation resides in Hollister. A few families come to St. Luke’s outside of the city limits, including from Prunedale, Watsonville, and Atwater. The Hollister Downtown Association, of which St. Luke’s Episcopal Church is a member, hosts



many events in the downtown area just blocks away from St. Luke’s. The events include a Farmer’s Market, Saddle Horse Show Downtown Parade, Street Festival & Car Show, San Benito High School Homecoming Parade, Veteran’s Day Parade, and Lights on Celebration.



In the past few years, the number of new home and apartment developments has exploded. Hollister has a new shopping center and a large Amazon distribution center. The high school has expanded, and another high school is

being built. Widening and improvements on both highways leading into Hollister are under way. Though the City of Hollister and Board of Supervisors are carefully monitoring that growth and available services complement one another, the belief is that there will be a continual influx of new residents.