

St. Francis Anglican Church - Stockton, California
Proclaiming the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ
through Sacred Worship, Serious Discipleship, & Selfless Service
stocktonanglican.com

“...these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.” (Isaiah 56:7 ESV)

Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

It has been an honor to serve you as your priest for this first year of my rectorship at St. Francis of Assisi Anglican Church.

Our church has been through a number of challenges in its ten-year history following its formal break with St. John’s Episcopal Church in downtown Stockton. I have been hugely encouraged and blessed over this past year to see much healing taking place in seeking to re-ground us in what it means to be an Anglican Christian and what our purpose is as a church in this city together. Many seeds of growth have been planted, some have already begun to sprout, and I continue to look forward to seeing what the LORD will do with us here as we grow together more-and-more into seeing and embracing His saving love in Jesus Christ in our own lives, as well as sharing that with others and inviting them into it for themselves.

The **current facility we occupy** at 5401 N Pershing Avenue to host a majority of our worship services and events has too been a blessing, but also not-without its **challenges**; our high monthly rental cost for-example has made saving and planning for outreach and ministry undertakings a challenge, while also building no equity into a property of our own.

Through 2023 and the first half of 2024, God (in-large-part through your own generous giving) has provided sufficient financial support for us to remain stable and pay our monthly costs while we **intentionally seek His will and timing on where He wills for us to be based and grow out from.** But our Lord Jesus Christ in his Great Commission of Matthew 28 (To, ‘*Go...and make disciples of all nations*’) and his promise in John 10 (that the Gospel will bring, “*life...abundantly*”) desires so much more for us in our lives of faith than merely staying-afloat and surviving.

To that end, our Church Vestry (governing board) has begun work to cultivate **options for purchasing a church property** of our own that provides for us **long-term stability** and **a platform for church growth:**

- The church has partnered with a local **realtor** to review the **property market** in our area to provide **baseline numbers** for a potential purchase of either an existing property or land to construct our own purpose-built facility upon.

- The church has connected with a **Christian lender** to clarify the 'buying power' that we currently have, and what would be possible to borrow for a potential property loan.
- The church has made inquiries to **purchase our existing property**
- The LeaderWorks Trust has provided a **\$10,000 grant** to conduct a **Feasibility and Readiness Study** for property-purchase fundraising through Horizons Stewardship. The study will determine both our readiness for a capital campaign and the feasibility of its success.

With all of these exciting possibilities (and more!) on the table, we are looking for **your support to increase our buying power** as we enter this process to prayerfully seek the LORD's will.

The church has a **Future Home Fund** in its budget set aside exclusively for this purpose. This is currently populated with around **\$15,000** of funds. In addition to this, a partner charity foundation - **The Anglican Foundation of Stockton** - was set up in the wake of the departure from St. John's Episcopal Church to serve as a holding company for funds donated towards a potential property purchase. Once a purchasing plan is finalized and approved, the Foundation has around an additional **\$100,000** to inject into this campaign.

Our lender advises that they would be able to lend us up to **3 times our annual church income (currently \$100,000)**, and so **at-present the church possesses around \$400,000 of 'buying power'**. In our market survey, we estimate that for an existing property purchase, we would need to cultivate at-least **1 million dollars** of buying power. For a land-based purchase only, there would be a higher final overall cost, but this could be phased in more-slowly as funding grows for the land to firstly buy outright, and then construction work piece-by-piece to plan and build a custom facility of our own.

In discerning a calling to serve as your priest, one of my primary draws to this place personally was the multicultural nature of both our city and our church. Particularly with our Anglican 'way of doing things' of being both historically-mindful and biblically-rooted, we have a **tremendous opportunity together** to grow St. Francis Anglican Church into the Prophet Isaiah's Pentecostal vision from God of that, "*house of prayer for all peoples*".

I invite you to prayerfully consider how you might be able to contribute to our efforts to build buying power together. Through our meetings and discussions with Horizons Stewardship, my hope and prayer is that you might be excited and inspired through this process, and that our LORD's will would become clearer to yourself and to us all.

Luke+

The Reverend Luke Childs

Rector, Saint Francis Anglican Church