



St. Jude the Apostle Episcopal Church in Cupertino

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St. Jude's is a spiritual oasis where lives are transformed.

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the View from the orchard

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Our Mission Covenant Goals (MCG)

Carlos Estrada

Four years ago, I was asked to be part of a discernment committee tasked with crafting a vision and direction for St. Jude's. That group of diverse, engaged parishioners wrestled with identifying the "secret sauce" that made our parish what it is and with identifying areas where God wanted to stretch us towards growth. The result of our work was a Mission Covenant that has served as our strategic direction for the past three years.

The document summarized seven key areas that both highlighted where we already had a focus but also identified key areas where we felt we could improve. If you read it again and think about who we are, it is clear that all goals are integral to St. Jude's. The Covenant, or strategic plan, is there to remind and encourage us to take it to the next level. As our dynamics change over time, this is critical to our vitality as a congregation.

Over the last three years serving on Vestry, and especially this last year as Sr. Warden, I saw the Covenant in action first hand, in big and small ways. I saw it in tough discussions about our finances, in rallying around a fallen tree, in songs together around a campfire, in youth Sundays, in unassuming and private service by individuals, and in the community coming together in challenging times. If you reflect on the words of the Mission Covenant and on who we are as a St. Jude's community, you will see it too.

The Mission Covenant was meant to be more than a static document. It was meant to be an imprint of who we are and who we want to be. In 2018, as we revisit the words in it, I would encourage you to see the connection between the document and our actions as a Parish and to embrace what it means to be part of this diverse family striving at the end of it all to be better followers of Jesus, which is one of the key ingredients of our 'secret sauce'.





Our Mission Covenant Goals



1. Learn to live as disciples of Jesus in the modern world.

2. Focus energy and resources to make a greater impact in social justice and outreach.

3. Deepen our welcome and accessibility to people of various backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and situations.

4. Support parishioners through all stages of their lives.

5. Strengthen our community by holding courageous conversations within a safe space.

6. Nurture our leaders and volunteers.

7. Joyfully share our abundance.



Respectful communication

R = take Responsibility for what you say & feel

E = use Empathetic listening

S = be Sensitive to differences in communication styles

P = Ponder what you hear & feel before you speak

R = Examine your assumptions

E = keep Confidentiality

T = Trust ambiguity, we're not here to debate right or wrong



The Light of Christ Shines In Us and Through Us—Let Your Light Shine!

Wilma



In this Epiphany season, we remember that the light of Christ shines into the murky shadows and brokenness of our world to bring healing and love.

With the realities of wildfires and mudslides, hurricanes and earthquakes, floods and droughts, and so much human trauma and

devastation everywhere, we, now more than ever, need Christ's light and love. There's a Chinese proverb, 'it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.' How do we find ways to light candles and let Christ's light and love shine into us and through us into the world?

At St. Jude's, it is through our Mission Covenant, with which we have been working since 2015, to develop and strengthen major areas of our church life and mission, and I am grateful for the work of the Mission Covenant in our lives. As Sarah says, it is time to remind ourselves of the original intent, what it is about, and integrate it more deeply into our church life, connecting it strongly to our ministries, our outreach and mission, our life together.

Come and hear more at the Annual Parish Meeting on January 28. We will celebrate what was achieved through the Mission Covenant in 2017; present the 2018 budget; and hear about our financial/ministry/mission trends and future possibilities. The new vestry will focus on remixing the Mission Covenant at the vestry retreat on February 9-10; please pray for them.

Lent is around the corner (watch announcements for details)... In a couple of weeks we will eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, February 13, and put ashes on our forehead on Ash Wednesday, February 14 (yes, it will be your Valentine's Day gift or love letter from God). Our Lent program will explore *'Finding Joy in the Midst of ...'* I hope that many embrace the opportunity to pause in our busy lives and pay attention to our faith and how it can bring us joy and resilience amidst the shadows and brokenness of our world.

***The Book of Joy*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, with Douglas Abrams**

"How do we find joy in the face of life's inevitable suffering?" This is the question at the core of this inspiring and accessible book. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and

Archbishop Tutu spent a week together in 2015, answering this question and others from the author Doug Abrams, as they told stories explaining their faith approach to life's challenging situations of suffering, teased each other, laughed, and shared their spiritual practices. They explore *The Nature of True Joy*, *The Obstacles to Joy*, and *The Eight Pillars of Joy*, and daily Joy Practices that are an essential part of their lives. This remarkable combination of stories, wisdom and science, is based on their very real lives of struggle, suffering, pain and turmoil, and how they discover a level of peace, courage and joy which inspires many people around the world. There is a copy in the St Jude's library. **Make sure you read it this Lent. It's life-changing!**

Remembering and Remixing our Mission Covenant Goals!

Sarah+

Matthew 6.21, "For where your treasure [time, energy, property, money, other resources] is, there your heart will be also. (NRSV)" Or "The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being. (Message paraphrase)"



Questions I often raised in "Congregational Development" conversations with parishioners include: In five years, where will we want to be as a faith community? When you're at church, what do you enjoy most? What do we have to offer different from other churches? These are all questions that relate to our Mission Covenant Goals (MCG; <http://saintjudes.org/mission-covenant-goals>), St. Jude's strategic plan for a sustainable thriving future of faith and life together.

When the MCG were first rolled out, it worked well to have dedicated teams addressing emphasized goals, but now, many congregants have forgotten the intent of and/or the goals (e.g., people asking what our strategic plan is or where we're going as a church); many congregants have come to think of the goals as being for someone else/group to address, implement, and sustain, or as an "add-on" to existing ministry (e.g., MCG and ministry reports are totally separate in the Annual Parish Meeting); the MCG can be more integrated into our existing ministries and to guide our faith and life together (i.e., repeatable, integrated, shared strategic plan).

(continued on next page)

The Diocese of El Camino Real experienced a similar developmental process several years into their original strategic plan (2011), and in 2016, updated their objectives, goals, and tasks to reaffirm and remix their strategic [plan](http://www.realepiscopal.org/our-vision-and-strategic-plan/) (www.realepiscopal.org/our-vision-and-strategic-plan/). At this point in our developmental process, Wilma, the Wardens, the Vestry, and I have been reflecting on how to reaffirm and remix our MCG.

2017 Report on Mission Covenant Goal, "Deepen our welcome and accessibility to people of various backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and situations."

Judy Bailey

2017 DOW members were Noriko Kunimi, Juneann McDonald, Marianne Wilcox, and co-leaders Shanie George and Judy Bailey. Beth Estrada joined the committee later in the year. The committee started in the spring by reading the book, *Radical Welcome*, by Stephanie Spellers. It led to numerous discussions about where St. Jude's is on the continuum between an Inviting, Inclusive, and Radical Welcoming church, what this means to St. Jude's, and how to move toward radical welcome. The committee had challenging discussions as each member reacted differently to the book. We decided that St. Jude's is an inviting, inclusive church with a few small aspects of radical welcome.



We interviewed 12 parishioners about their experiences at St. Jude's, and received a variety of responses. The committee brainstormed strengths and weaknesses in various aspects of church life: worship, welcome process, small groups, coffee hour, and a miscellaneous category. We brainstormed ways to deepen our welcome to new people, and to those who are already part of our parish.

The following 'completed' and 'in-process' list represents ways in which we believe our welcome at St. Jude's was strengthened throughout 2017:

1. Addition of iPad for visitor sign-in, and alternative visitor cards for those who prefer paper
2. More information assembled in visitor bag, including brief history of St. Jude's, clergy biographies, and booklet on "Being an Episcopalian"
3. Increased diversity of oblation bearers during services, include choir members during summer
4. Additional languages for the Lord's Prayer

5. Invitation to coffee and fellowship at the end of the service
6. Vestry table at coffee hour two or three times per year
7. Inclusion in the photo directory (Mary Hultquist)
8. Food Truck Sundays (Mary Hultquist)
9. Additional small groups, GOTS (Linda Morris)
10. "Believe Out Loud" church emblem added to website
11. Evaluation of welcome process, roles, and incorporation of newcomers into small groups and/or ministries, including those here three to five years
12. Enhanced sound system (Ken Foot)
13. Social media, Yelp reviews, local publicity (Jean Lin and others, including clergy distributing fliers for Christmas services at local hotels)

A warm, welcoming environment requires that all of us not only help make visitors and newcomers feel welcome, but that we also help those already here feel as if they belong. Our 2018 hope is that everyone will be aware of who is new at church, who is sitting alone, and that we reach out to them.

2017 Report on Mission Covenant Goal, "Support parishioners through all stages of their lives."

Karen Carlson

An intergenerational Ages and Stages committee was convened in 2017 to try and help bridge the gaps in our generations and our parishioners in their different stages of life.

We had a great start with providing rides to people who wanted to go to the all-parish campout but were not able to drive themselves. The next plan was to find where parishioners might not be aware that services are available to them at their stage, and to go to each of the ministries to learn how each ministry might better serve parishioners across various ages and stages. Additionally, the Community Forum Committee had two talks about bridging gaps in our community: "Spiritual Formation Across Ages and Stages" and "Mind the Gaps," both with strong attendance and vigorous participation.

After these forums, we discovered there is no quick way to inform our community of support available across all ages and stages. The GOTS Sundays, Shrove Tuesday, 4th of July events are all great ways for all our parishioners to be in community with one another. Our efforts are still a process that will become more visible over time as we all open our hearts to one another and are present to one another, no matter our age or life stage.

Church Home

LeMel Firestone-Palermo

I joined the Episcopal Church after my therapist suggested it, specifically at All Saints in Pasadena. When it came time for communion, I heard the invitation that all were welcome - "whoever you are and wherever you are on your spiritual journey." I often thought and even mentioned a few times that I did not know what I would do if I moved too far to attend All Saints, and now I know. My husband and I moved to the Bay Area in February 2017. I mentioned my move to folks in my church family, and someone reminded me that Wilma Jakobsen had moved to this area a few years ago. I felt this news as if it were a life raft. I attended a contemplative service first.... this felt like home already. My first Sunday service continued the confirmation for me. Folks have been welcoming and inviting in so many ways! Thank you!



December 2017 Vestry notes

Dennis Lee

Carlos began the December vestry meeting with an opening prayer, which was followed by a reading led by Wilma. Wilma chose verses from Matthew 6:24-34, for discussion in this meeting. The group was asked to express their feelings and thoughts after listening to these verses.

On the business side, the vestry members quickly voted on the combined items listed on the consent agenda and approved the motion. The items included in the consent agenda were: housing allowance and payroll for our clergy, approval of November vestry meeting minutes, and Social Justice and Outreach funding proposals for Napa fire relief, Santa Maria Urban Ministry, Live Oak, Western Tanganyika and PACT.

We discussed the gift of a piano, accepted with thanks. Future discussions will be held on accepting another gift. Discussion and approval of finance-related resolutions concluded the meeting.

Careful with that Memo line!

Jeffrey Pugh, Treasurer

If you will write a check to St. Judes in 2018, and you write anything in the check Memo or "For:" line, keep reading...

To save time and money by reducing the accounting tracking and reporting, in December the Vestry approved changes to what types of *Restricted* and *Passthrough* donations we will accept.

Restricted Gifts

A Restricted gift is one where you make a donation to St. Jude's, but restrict how it can be spent. Restrictions can be established by writing something in the Memo line of a check, or by an accompanying verbal or written instruction.

In 2018, we will still accept Restricted gifts to the following areas: Flowers, Rector's Discretionary Fund, Associate Rector's Discretionary Fund, California Friends of St. Patrick, Social Justice/Outreach, Memorial Donations/Garden, Endowment Fund, and Site Plan 3.

You may also **continue to use these informational Memo lines:** Pledge (please include your box or donation number); Christmas/Easter/Thanksgiving (these are Plate donations); "Attendance at Women's Weekend/Parish Camp/JSOR/VBC" or "Youth Group Chili", "Youth Snow Trip," all of which are payments, not donations. Please avoid Memo lines of "Stewardship" or "Donation" which can create confusion.

In 2018, we will not accept most other restricted checks, for example: "The homeless," Youth, Adult Education, Altar Guild, Library, Music. Instead we suggest you donate to the General Fund or to a Discretionary Fund.

Passthroughs

Another type of restriction is when you write the name of a third-party organization in the Memo line, and are implicitly requesting that St. Jude's "pass through" your donation to that organization.

In 2018, we will not accept most passthrough checks, for example: Episcopal Relief and Development, Hurricane victims, Red Cross, or Bishop's Discretionary Fund. Instead we ask that you write the check directly to the organization (in the Pay To or Payee line). Please contact me to find out which passthrough donations **will** be accepted. Thanks for your cooperation in keeping our accounting time and costs down! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me (jdpugh2@gmail.com).

Bios: Vestry Candidates (4 people to be elected/approved at the 1/28 APM)

Don Disney

I've been a member of St. Jude's since 1996, attending with my wife Kathy and sons Caleb and Reece, both now away in college. Over the years, I've served as co-leader of Faithful Families, parish camp coordinator, stewardship chair, instigator of the solar panel installation, MOTS musician, and two terms on vestry. Outside of church, I work as a technologist in the semiconductor industry and my hobbies include hiking and traveling. I enjoy working within vestry to help manage the business of the church, and I will be happy to serve if elected.



Lauren Minkel

I joined Saint Jude's in 2012, and usually attend the 10:30 service with my husband Steve and our small children, Nathan and Lilian. I have been a youth group mentor for 5+ years, part of the CYFM ministry, and participated in the Mission Covenant Discernment group. I hope to bring a family and youth perspective to vestry, as well as the focus, practicality, and communications skills I've developed working in IT Business Operations.



Scott Rotondo

Last year you elected me to a special one-year term on the Vestry. Much of my attention this year has been devoted to the finances of the church, including creating a new Finance Committee which I currently chair. In that role, it has been my privilege to lead a group of dedicated volunteers as we transition to a new treasurer and craft a budget for the coming year. Now I return to ask for your support for a full three-year Vestry term. I expect to remain deeply engaged with the finance ministry, and I also hope to continue to influence the Vestry as an advocate for the wide diversity of viewpoints found in our congregation.



Kathy Yates

I have been a parishioner at St Jude's since 2001. I previously served on Vestry, and I have been Senior Warden, and a delegate to the Diocesan convention. I also regularly serve in liturgy-centered ministries: 8am Lay Eucharistic Minister, an Altar Guild Member, and as a bread-baker. Career-wise, I am a former media/internet/software executive who spent far too many years commuting from San Jose to San Francisco on a daily basis. I stopped that in 2013, and have since enjoyed investing my time with non-profit organizations with an educational focus. My husband, Peter Troop, and I are also parent to two (now adult) children: Jay from Brooklyn, and Tora from San Jose.



Bios: Delegates to Convention (5 people to be elected/approved at the 1/28 APM)

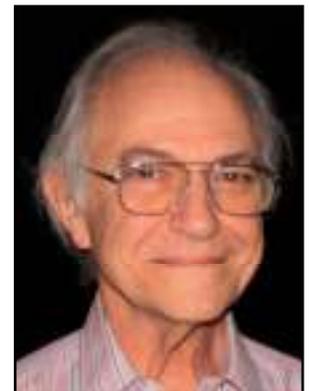
Margot Jacobsen

I have been a Delegate for at least the last two terms. I would like to remain on the Delegate team. I am very interested in the Diocese and how it operates. It takes a while to become knowledgeable, and a while to get to know the issues we face at the Diocesan level.



Matt Matthews

In 1985, I was drawn to St. Jude's. Margaret Campbell welcomed me into the service that Palm Sunday, and Bobbie Grabau, the choir director at the time, allowed me to sing with the choir on Easter Sunday. My wife, Audrey, and I have made St. Jude's our church home since then. I have been blessed to serve on the vestry and as Senior Warden, and have served as a delegate during some interesting times for the diocese. I sing in the choir, am a reader, chair the display board committee, and emcee on July 4th. I am retired from being an Instructional Designer for a couple of tech companies in the Valley, and enjoy being home with Audrey during the day.



Gratitudes : We give special thanks for...

Karen LeBlanc

I have been attending St. Jude's for about 5 years. I attend the 10:30 Service and am a Youth Mentor. I was a delegate for convention last year, and I enjoy being a part of convention. I look forward to the opportunity to represent St. Jude's.



Wren Gray-Reneberg

I moved here for school in August of 2014, and will be graduating with a Master's in Counseling Psychology at Santa Clara University. I found St. Jude's that October. Though I've attended and been a member of a wide variety of denominations throughout my life, the Lutheran and Episcopal veins run strongly in me. I fondly call myself a "Lutherpalian" for that reason, along with my mother who serves as a Lutheran pastor at an Episcopal congregation. I'm thrilled at the idea of growing my roots at St. Jude's and more widely in the church. Serving as a delegate or alternate is a way I would like to give back to the church, as it has been such a big part of my life.



Jesus Seminar on the Road: February 2-3

Emily Holton

How about spending an exciting weekend examining questions that matter about religion? It's the kind of weekend that I look forward to: sitting among questioning adults such as myself and having a glorious time learning about the latest thoughts on topics such as the origins of the Christian tradition and God and the human future. Fortunately, we have such a weekend rapidly approaching at St. Jude's.

February 2-3, we will be hosting a *Jesus Seminar on the Road*, focused on what does it mean to take Jesus seriously? Our changing understanding of the historical Jesus and the God of Jesus may change the foundation of theology and the future of God in today's culture. Now that's an awesome undertaking and one that I would like to be part of, and I invite you to join me. To learn more about the seminar or to register, please go to <https://www.westarinstitute.org/upcoming-events-calendar/cupertino-2018/>.

...who contributed candy in November. The Rev. Deacon Kathleen Crowe wrote, "We had a wonderful time handing out treat bags to students studying for finals. We are going back to do more deliveries and also give students information on where to get food if they need it. As you can see from the attached picture, our little gift went to open hands and hearts confirming that your donated candy was a big hit."



...Wednesday lunch group for cutting out all the Angel Tree angels and to Steve Swayze for decorating the angel tree, under the guidance of Jean, plus all those who donated 44 gift cards this year to SMUM.



...more ADA accessible and welcoming changing stations in the men's and women's bathrooms, thanks to Erika Domokos and Nick Harrah.

... all the musicians, singers and helpers and decorators who worked to make our Christmas services beautiful and joyful.



... the private Men's Group that meets weekly on our campus, for cleaning out and reorganizing the Chair and Table closets in the Parish Hall.

... Doug Bailey for beautifying and nurturing the health of our orchard by planting crimson clover, which will begin blooming this spring.

... Becky Smith, Mike Landis, and all the project leaders for Service Worship Sunday.

... all those who gave back to our shared faith community in 2017 through their gifts of time, skills, and money, enabling our continued mission in ministry together!