
Faith, Cameron Park, Northern California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:
andrea@norcalepiscopal.org

Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

The Youth Ministry program at Faith Church has expanded to include the older high school students. Our youth are encouraged to participate in worship by joining a Sunday Ministry where they can learn leadership skills, be mentored by adults and contribute to the worship service. Youth Ministry also offers many other opportunities to engage with other youth and the community, serve others, develop leadership skills and grow in their faith. Within the last year, Faith has introduced multiple formats for Sunday programs aimed at 7 through 12 grade. These programs include Fireside Chats on Sunday evenings, Youth Band, and Faith 5. Our youth are very active in the reading ministry on Sundays and the Youth Band is very popular. As the parish tries new programs, a different energy has emerged among the youth at Faith. We are finding that 98% of our youth in grades 7 through 12 now participate in one or more of these programs. As relationships form among the youth, a foundation for spiritual development is being built.

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

This period of transition to a new rector is a defining moment for Faith Church. In order to prepare for a strong, new future, we first need to understand where we are and where we want to be. Everything else that follows requires that we first understand our DNA. Parish culture is a congregation's second most powerful force next to God's powerful presence. We have started to take the first steps to better understand ourselves by conducting a comprehensive on-line survey of parishioners, as well as, conducting several small group discussions and compiling the data/responses for future study and action. Our focus included all generations from our young adults through our retirees. Our Leadership team has also met to bring our Mission and Vision statements up to date. This work will help inform our potential applicants for rector about who we are, as well as, offering our Leadership Team a "profile" of what should resemble "a good fit" for the congregation of Faith Episcopal Church.

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

inspire, connect, Strategic Leadership, pastoral care, Strong Administration skill

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

Worship at Faith Episcopal Church can be described as a “relaxed formality”. We combine The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal 1982. The music is a blend of contemporary Christian praise songs and traditional hymns. Sunday Service is projected on state of the art screens to facilitate Sunday worship. Greeters welcome people at the door and in the rotunda as they approach the Sanctuary. We are a community that welcomes all. Coffee and cookies are available before and after services. Our Sunday attire is comfortable and casual. However, some dress more formally. We are not afraid to mix it up in our worship services. From Gospel Sunday (cowboy hats, boots and lively music), to our Blessing of the Animals (cats, dogs and even llamas being blessed), to traditional and contemporary Christmas services including a family-friendly pageant by our youth. We are also blessed by our annual Youth Sunday services which take place on Super Bowl Sunday, in which our youth plan and carry out the entire services, along with a food drive for our County food bank. The one-day food drive is one of the largest donations received by the food bank each year.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Invite, welcome and connect applies within the congregation as strongly as it does for people outside the four walls of our church. In September Faith Church held its 10th Annual ministry fair, “Get Connected”. During this event members learn more about the various ministries taking place in the parish. There are various ways to be involved, either through our first serve program where you can ‘try it out for fit’ or, if you feel a strong calling, can jump in with both feet. Our ministry outreach also involves youth and young adults in a variety of programs throughout the year. We see our ministry as benefiting ourselves as much as those we serve.

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

We take our faith seriously, but our worship services reflect a “relaxed formality”, and our music programs are as diverse as our congregation. Faith Church offers programs for spiritual development such as “30 Minutes of Faith” between Sunday services, Women’s Lectionary and Education for Ministry (EfM). We have very robust programs for children, youth and young adults. In addition, we foster an inviting and welcoming atmosphere. Faith offers a plethora of services to support our community. These include, but are not limited to: Stephen Ministry, Divorce Care, Grief Support, preparing and delivering meals, and blood pressure clinics. Our Rector is available by appointment.

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

Faith Church has several different programs for providing pastoral care for one another during difficult circumstances or situations. Our Rector is available by appointment to meet to talk, pray and restore hope. But it also takes a village to support our parishioners. Faith Church has a robust Stephen's Ministry program for one on one support during difficult times. Our volunteers support our grieving with grief and meditation booklets, personal cards and phone calls. Lay Eucharistic Visitors bring the Eucharist to the homebound. Refreshments are provided for grieving family and friends during Memorial Receptions, if requested. Meals are also provided for those in need when ill or injured. Blood Pressure Screening is also provided once a month after Sunday Services. We also make space available at the church for Divorce Care Meetings, Women's AA, and Friends for Survival. Two of our previous Rectors served as Law Enforcement Chaplains, currently a member of the congregation has joined the Law Enforcement Chaplaincy.

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

Faith has a very active Missions ministry. Examples include our support of the local food closet, the Nomadic Shelter, CASA and the Upper Room Dining Hall in El Dorado County which provide meals and nightly shelter. We host the annual interfaith event, the Rise Against Hunger and our children and youth programs also offer many opportunities for local service and mission outreach. Annually we send adult chaperones and youth to Sierra Service Project. We recently added the Assistance League Sierra Foothills who support our local county programs for seniors and children. Our Mission Team also approves grants for targeted needs such as teens affected by the Camp Fire. Internationally, Faith Church sponsors the Honduras Scholarships Foundation in Padre Francisco's Church, as well as financially supporting students in the Hope and Resurrection School in South Sudan. Faith Church is also active within the Diocese. We hosted the Electing Convention in February and provided a large contingent of volunteers to support the Consecration weekend events at the Mondavi Center. Faith had 9 members at the Diocesan Convention in the fall, as well as supplying its choir to provide music.

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

Faith Church has always supported local and international missionary work. Early on, the Missions Program had little structure or process regarding how funds were allocated until a Mission Team was formed. The team formalized the process for reviewing and approving grant requests for financial support to both local and international groups. This team meets monthly to review and approve individual grant proposals. In addition, the team is responsible for allocating on-going financial support to the South Sudan Hope and Resurrection School and to the Honduras Scholarship Fund. In 2019 Faith provided scholarships for 50 students to attend school in Honduras. The Missions Team has also been collaborating with Spirit in Action to allocate funds as seed money for 12 small businesses in Africa. The contact person is Sandy Hanson, (916) 837-1913.

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

We have been blessed abundantly by God who has blessed us with a generous church community. Thereby, Faith Church fosters a strong commitment to Stewardship. As a church community we are involved with the care and maintenance of all the gifts we now have and continue to look to the future of Faith Church for the new generations to come. The church building was recently equipped with solar panels, the exterior was refreshed with new paint, and the church grounds are regularly maintained. We have parishioners who continue to share their time, talent and treasure to maintain what we have and to ensure a future. Faith Church defines stewardship as a responsibility to the church and to our local and global communities. We support each other during times of trouble, we manage our finances responsibly and we support our missionary outreach to those in need, locally and abroad.

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

Faith Church experienced some internal conflict within its membership when the global Episcopal Church announced that it would approve performing same-sex weddings within the Episcopal Church. This issue generated strong opinions and positions not only within a church community but also among the greater population. When this change was announced by the Episcopal Church, although discussions at Faith had been ongoing, the Rector conducted a 6 week series of evening courses to discuss, study and reflect on the history and biblical teachings of the church on this topic. He allowed open discussion, pertinent, even edgy, questions and in the end provided a forum for discernment within a safe environment for the congregation. This resulted in a stronger community in general, more open to diversity and change.

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?

A very impactful change in the church was our previous Rector's unexpected move to a new opportunity in a new Diocese. The loss was felt by all, some more than others. What was heartfelt was the focus on this change as positive by our members for both our previous rector and his family and also for our community. The congregation pulled together under the leadership of our Vestry to support each other as we assimilated the impact of the change and started to plan for the future. The Diocese also supported this change by providing a full time interim Rector who was familiar to many in the congregation. We moved our focus from personal loss to preparing our congregation to help ensure the success of a new Rector. This congregation has roots in starting a new parish and that strength has been visible during this transition. We've experienced peaks and valleys during this transition, but have been reminded that Christ is our Shepherd.