



## Episcopal Diocese of California The Bishop Search Committee

**July 27, 2005**

Dear Friends:

The Search Committee for the eighth Bishop of California offers this profile of the Diocese of California as a tool for everyone involved in discerning whom God is calling to this office. This profile presents a view of the diocese as of June 2005 and is offered with the caveat that such a document can neither be complete nor entirely objective. The Search Committee has tried to present an honest portrait of the people of the diocese and their concerns and hopes, but we recognize that a small sample, those who chose to participate in the 22 Town Meetings held in March, April and May of this year, are the primary contributors to the profile; an overview of life in the Bay Area in general is continued in the appendix of this document. The profile attempts to present fact, but necessarily includes much interpretation. We hope that what we have presented here will help us and those who feel called to offer themselves for this office, seek God's will for the church and the Bay Area and for all those who live here.

In Christ our Lord,  
The Bishop Search Committee

# The Diocese of California

## Diocesan Profile

August, 2005



**The Search Committee for the Election of a New Bishop for the Diocese of California:**

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## **WHO WE ARE: Some Basic Traits of Our Diocese**



The Diocese of California occupies the epicenter of the changes and challenges that face the United States and the Episcopal Church today. Our churches range from big to small, wealthy to struggling, and urban to suburban to rural. The character of our church reflects the history of the San Francisco Bay Area, long a great center of technological and social change, and a magnet for migrants from home and abroad.

We have answered many challenges with vigor, being among the first parts of the Episcopal Church to welcome women as well as men into all areas of our worship life and into clerical and lay leadership. We provide social ministries at a level disproportionate to our size. Yet many daunting challenges remain. Our churches do not reflect the ethnic diversity of the Bay Area. While the local population is younger than most of the United States, our church membership is largely older. Our inclusive and welcoming Gospel message has not yet reached one of the most unchurched populations in the United States, where many ache for spiritual connection and community but seem to have given up on Christianity.

We value our identity as pioneers. Our first missionary bishop arrived in San Francisco in 1854 expecting a wilderness outpost but finding that the first Episcopal churches had already sprung up on their own. We grew up with California as its mother diocese in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, gradually focusing on the Bay Area as five other dioceses emerged.

We also value our heritage as an ancient Church while responding to today's world, spreading the Gospel through new media like the Internet. From the Gold Rush to Silicon Valley to today, we try to find opportunities where others see obstacles, and we try to respond to the rapid changes in our world. And yet we also highly value continuity, as a place that only seven people of faith have served as bishop over more than 150 years.

We speak our minds. Many of us feel called to take strong stands for justice, challenging the conventional wisdom of secular society and sometimes even of the Episcopal Church itself. Like our Anglican forbears who saw schism as a greater risk than heresy, we value communion as a gift from God that we must nurture with loving conversation, in unity without uniformity. In a place where the life of faith sometimes seems hopelessly out of style, we also try to foster loving conversation with our Christian, Muslim, and Jewish neighbors.

We serve California and we love California. Many of us call ourselves both Californians and Episcopalians not by accident of birth but by conscious choice. We invite you to read more about who we are to discern whether you feel the same call to serve God in this place that we have.

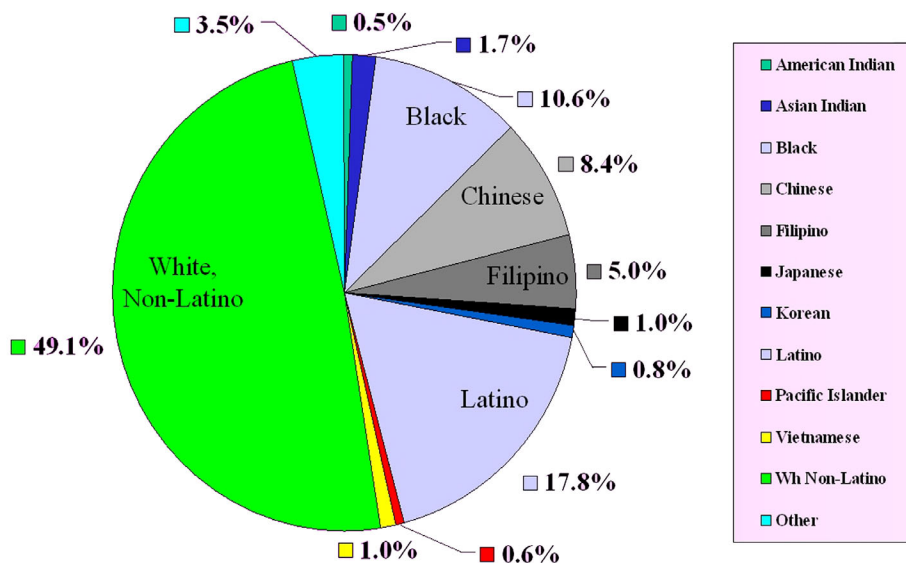
## **WHAT WE DO TODAY: Faith in Action, Serving the Diverse Community**

### The Context in Which We Operate

The Diocese of California operates in a distinctive environment, notable for the diversity of its population and the high percentage of people who identify themselves as having no religious affiliation. As does the state of California, the Bay Area reflects demographic trends characteristic of the entire country. Non-Latino whites constitute 49.1% of the Bay Area's population, with their declining for the last 20 years. By contrast Latinos have increased during the same period, and now

constitute 17.8%, while Asians, Asian Indian and Pacific Islanders have increased to 17.7%. Well represented in many Bay Area communities, the overall African-American percentage has nevertheless dropped to 10.6%. Native Americans comprise .5% of the population.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census tallies 112 languages spoken in Bay Area homes, primarily English, Spanish, Mandarin and Cantonese, Tagalog and Vietnamese. While the Bay Area is slowly aging like the rest of the state, it is doing so more slowly than the nation as a whole. Thus, 89% of the population is age 65 or younger, with 24% being 18 or younger. On the other hand, starting in 2011, baby boomers will begin to reach retirement age, and by 2030 the numbers of seniors in the state will double.

The people of the Bay Area lead in another national trend, the decline in religious affiliation. Northern California has been referred to as “unexcelled” in its lack of religious observance, with San Francisco receiving the lowest ranking in a national survey that examined religious commitment.<sup>2</sup> Marin, San Mateo, and San Francisco are among the five California counties with the lowest number of evangelical Christians. At the same time, the region has a high level of religious diversity-- 10%<sup>3</sup> of the population identifies itself as belonging to a religion other than Christianity or Judaism, compared with 3% nationally. The 700,000 Bay Area residents who practice Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and other religions dwarf the number of persons who identify themselves as Episcopalian.



### Congregations

Today the Episcopal Diocese of California continues to serve a diverse community of faith. 27,000 people form 80 congregations, 22 of them missions including 2 special ministries, in 49 cities and towns. We are organized into six deaneries — the Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco and Southern Alameda deaneries cover their respective counties; the Peninsula Deanery consists of all of San Mateo County and a small portion of Santa Clara County. Peninsula and San Francisco report the

<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Scheinin, “Patterns of Belief,” San Jose Mercury News, March 31, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> In Marin County the percentage reaches 26%, according to a 2000 study by the Institute of Jewish and Community Research.

highest membership and highest average attendance, respectively.

We spread the Gospel in many tongues. St. James, Oakland and Holy Trinity in Richmond offer services in Spanish; El Buen Pastor (Redwood City) and Buen Samaritan (San Francisco) are our Spanish-language missions. Our Saviour, Oakland, True Sunshine Episcopal Church and the Church of the Incarnation in San Francisco serve Chinese-speaking congregants, Christ Episcopal Church-Sei Ko Kai (San Francisco) serves Japanese-Americans, Daly City's Holy Child and St. Martin's parish offers an Asian-American and Filipino ministry, and St. Peter, Redwood City serves the Fijian community. We serve the deaf through the Holy Spirit Church of the Deaf, Walnut Creek and the American Sign Language community at St. James, Fremont.

We embrace all kinds of worship. Church of the Advent, San Francisco, offers mass in the Anglo-Catholic tradition. At St. Gregory of Nyssa, San Francisco, congregants dance from one end of the church to the other for communion. St. Clement's in Berkeley worships with the 1928 Prayer Book, while St. Augustine's in Oakland rejoices in the traditions of African-American music. Renowned postmodern theologian Matthew Fox, Roman Catholic-turned-Episcopal priest, leads techno-cosmic masses through the University of Creation Spirituality.

Our campus ministries at the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, and San Francisco State University support students as they grow in faith. At Cal Berkeley, the diocese offers a service learning community at Canterbury House, a residential program focused on social issues and intentional Christian community. Stanford's Canterbury group, a combined Episcopal and Lutheran chaplaincy, is in its third year and welcomes all into its worship. Students at San Francisco State gather through The Edge, an intentional ecumenical community.

Additionally, there are two nationally chartered Jubilee Centers which further social ministries at Our Saviour, Oakland and at True Sunshine in San Francisco.

### Grace Cathedral

The largest Episcopal cathedral in Province VIII, San Francisco's Grace Cathedral exemplifies the creative nature and strong civic involvement of our diocese. As the home of our largest congregation, Grace Cathedral's 2,000 members include about 1 in 15 Bay Area Episcopalians. Acclaimed for its dynamic music ministry, the cathedral hosts many clergy and parishioners from throughout the diocese for confirmations and ordinations, as well as the diocesan convention, the annual ministries conference, and other large-scale events. As one of the Bay Area's largest worship spaces, Grace serves as "the City's Church," frequently hosting major public events, sacred and secular concerts, and the fundamental rites of life—baptism, marriage, and burial—for many people with no other church home. Musicians ranging from Duke Ellington to Art Garfunkel to Aaron Neville have recorded there. Every month some 60,000 people pay a "virtual" visit to Grace Cathedral's award-winning website, [www.gracecathedral.org](http://www.gracecathedral.org), including thousands listening to webcasts of the Sunday Choral Eucharist and Evensong. GraceCom's ground-breaking media ministry offers live weekly interviews with local and global leaders on *The Forum*, as well as inspiring faith stories through its *Lightworks* television program, aired on local Channel 4.

The cathedral close occupies a city block atop Nob Hill and includes the cathedral itself, the cathedral's Chapter House, the Cathedral School for Boys, and the Diocesan House. Because Grace has no vestry, the bishop and its trustees serve as its governing body while the dean and Cathedral Chapter run its day-to-day operations. The bishop presides at the cathedral congregation's annual meeting and uses the space as a home base for ministerial acts and ecclesiastical meetings. The

cathedral receives no direct financial support from the diocese, although only 28% of its budget comes from congregational stewardship; the remainder comes from its trustees, community donors, special events, and other sources.

### Laity

You will find that our lay people are everywhere. If they are not lending their time to one of our parish and diocesan outreach programs, they are singing in the choir, preparing the altar, teaching Sunday school or adult education, serving as eucharistic ministers, or mentoring youth. Members of St. Stephen's, Belvedere travel to Honduras for several weeks each year to volunteer in HIV/AIDS clinics. The people of St. Michael's in Concord recently celebrated 25 years of feeding the hungry in its Loaves and Fishes ministry. Our young adults meet in city bars to do "Theology on Tap," discussing God over a good brew. At our recent diocesan Town Meetings, the median age of participants was 54, five years younger than the national average. 13% of youth and young adults participating identified themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered; our diocesan GLBT average is 8%. Of those participating, 76% identified themselves as white non-Hispanic while 24% of laity participating were people of color.

### Clergy



Ordinands

We are brimming with talented clergy. No fewer than 420 of them, 335 priests and 85 vocational deacons, minister to the congregations. We owe the high number partly to the presence of many educational institutions in the area. Our priests are multi-dimensional — 129 of them work outside of parishes, and many split their time between churches and secular jobs or church-related nonprofits. And they offer rich perspectives—our diocese has ordained more women and openly gay and lesbian priests than any other; an inmate at the Solano State Prison was ordained a priest in 2005. Our leaders stay fresh through groups like the Clergy Wellness Commission and Clergy of Color. The

Center for Anglican Learning and Leadership (CALL) at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific provides a yearly conference for lay and ordained leaders nationwide as well as countless continuing education classes in Berkeley and over the internet. The Bishop has also worked with the Diocesan Stewardship Department to develop a curriculum and now leads a three year stewardship study for clergy.

Soon after Bishop Swing took office he founded the School for Deacons, symbolizing a strong commitment to service. The School now provides diaconal formation for three dioceses: California, Northern California and the Diocese of El Camino Real. The School moved to its current location on the CDSP campus in 1998. A Council of Deacons meets annually with the bishop to review diocesan ministry needs. Our deacons are ordained along with priests in diocesan services, participate in a two-year diocesan program for new clergy, and have full clerical voting rights. Two thirds of the diocesan deacons serve in parishes or other ministries, including hospital, jail and prison chaplaincies, police departments and the FBI, and homeless, seniors, food banks, meal kitchens and after-school programs. You can find them in foreign countries or patrolling Bay Area city streets. Their biggest challenge is balancing ministry with a secular job, which, while often providing the "bridge" to the secular world, imposes significant time constraints.

## Religious Orders

We host several religious communities that offer spiritual direction and social services. The Brothers of the Society of St. Francis and the Sisters of the Community of St. Francis are First Order Mendicants in the Anglican Communion. Both of them conduct urban ministries in San Francisco and offer guidance, retreats and workshops. Incarnation Priory in Berkeley is one of four North American houses of the Order of the Holy Cross. Its Prior, Br. Tom Schultz, is chaplain to the clergy of the diocese; the monks celebrate the Divine Office and mass daily and offer spiritual direction and retreats.

## Diocese in Action

Realizing the need to grow our congregations, particularly among non-English speakers and young adults, we kicked off our Jubilate Deo initiative in the new millennium. The diocese created a new office of congregational development, including the “condev blog,” a widely read online resource ([www.diocal.org/blogs/condev/](http://www.diocal.org/blogs/condev/)). Our Creative Ministry Fund has supported a variety of programs, most recently a “kids’ church” program at Holy Innocents, Corte Madera; a Pan-Asian Ministry in Foster City; evangelism to the Spanish-speaking community in San Bruno; outreach to the unchurched in Marin County; and the development of an urban ministry to families. Jubilate Deo concludes at the end of 2005.

We are not afraid to try things. Partners for Sacred Places, another recipient of Jubilate Deo funds, is a group of churches seeking outside sources for capital projects. The Bay School of San Francisco, a new interfaith high school with a Jewish Buddhist as its chaplain, opened its doors in 2004 with strong diocesan support. That same year the lay and clergy of Every Voice Network in San Francisco launched *Via Media*, a multi-media evangelism curriculum produced by the Every Voice Network for the Episcopal Church. Focused on spiritual seekers both within and outside of the church, *Via Media* is widely used in dioceses nationwide.

Administratively, our programming reflects the wide arc of our mission together. Whether it is the YAYA (Youth and Young Adult Ministries), Online Communications, or World Missions; the Department of Faith Formation, Gift Planning, or the Commission on the Ministry of All the Baptized, we are grounded in the Gospel. The Commission on Peace and Justice joins hands across denominational and religious lines to witness for the rights of the oppressed. Another committee coordinates anti-racism training. Oasis California advocates for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

We offer countless ways to serve the less fortunate. Episcopal Community Services gives more than 6,000 homeless women and men opportunities to thrive each year. The Bay Area Seafarers’ Service provides counseling, meals, recreational activities, telephones, transportation and advocacy to all seafarers and those who work in the local maritime industry. Clausen House supports the developmentally disabled through several residential facilities throughout the Bay Area. The interdenominational San Francisco Night Ministry counts on our labor and leadership to conduct in-person and phone counseling, referral, and intervention for people in distress in the middle of the night.

Our outreach is not limited to church organizations. Episcopal Charities operates as a foundation, building a community of givers by providing philanthropic funds as vehicles for giving, special events and appeals. It makes grants to a network of 14 partner agencies, eight commissions of the

Department of Social Ministry, and parishes — all working to feed the hungry, house the homeless, care for the sick, treat the addicted and educate children. One of its partners, the Episcopal Homes Foundation, owns and operates five continuing care retirement communities offering life care in northern California. Episcopal Homes also sponsors and manages two affordable housing communities for the elderly, including Presidio Gate Apartments, the result of a partnership with the federal government's HUD program. Founded as a diocesan facility in 1871, St. Luke's Hospital has recently linked up with Sutter Health Care. The 260-bed medical center provides community-based health care for residents in San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

We are always looking beyond our own neighborhoods. We have partnerships with the Diocese of Jerusalem, the Beijing Christian Council, and the China Christian Council. United Religions Initiative is a multi-denominational spiritual movement which operates on five continents and conducts 241 grassroots cooperation circles in 65 nations.

### Quiet Place to Pray



Bishop's Ranch

We value time for discernment and Christian formation. The Bishop's Ranch and St. Dorothy's Rest are camp and conference centers that provide spaces for spiritual growth. Set in scenic Healdsburg in Sonoma County, the Bishop's Ranch provides a variety of meeting facilities, comfortable lodging, wholesome meals, and recreational activities for nonprofit, religious and educational groups of all ages. St. Dorothy's Rest Camp and Retreat Center began in 1901 as a camp for critically ill youth and is the oldest, continuously operating summer camp in the state of California. Today it provides two weeks of camp to cancer survivors and transplant recipients, as well as five weeks of traditional camping programs for youth ages 8-15. During the fall, winter and spring, St. Dorothy's hosts a wide variety of groups for retreats.

### Teaching

Numerous educational affiliates bless our evangelism efforts to a post-denominational culture. The Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP) was founded in 1893 by Bishop William Ford Nichols and is one of the 11 official seminaries in the Episcopal Church. A member of the prestigious Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CDSP offers a variety of degrees and certificates for students intending ordained and lay professional careers in the church and society. The Seminary's Center for Anglican Learning and Leadership (CALL) offers on-line and short-term educational opportunities for both lay people and clergy, and the School for Deacons operates from the CDSP campus. The Académica Teológica Latina, supported by the Jubilate Deo initiative, prepares lay and ordained Spanish speakers for church leadership.

There are many Episcopal primary schools scattered throughout the Bay Area. St. Paul's Episcopal School in Oakland, founded in 1975 by the vestry of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, educates K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade youngsters from diverse backgrounds. San Francisco's Cathedral School for Boys, located next to Grace Cathedral and the Diocesan House, has served K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students since 1957. St. Matthew's Episcopal Day School in San Mateo, with an educational tradition dating back to 1865, currently enrolls pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Trinity School in Menlo Park also serves students pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.



### Spreading the Wealth

If money indeed measures unity, then the diocese's 99% assessment participation rate reflects more than a solid budget. Each parish is invested in spreading the Gospel and historically has paid its full amount for our shared ministry. The bishop, in his role as Corporation Sole, owns all the diocesan real property, which is worth over \$15 million; the Corporation Sole has a line of credit currently at \$200,000. In 1995, we performed a \$1 million renovation on our diocesan offices located in the cathedral close.

We have consistently operated under the same budget format and report percentages for several years. Our total budgeted income for 2005 is \$3,849,730. Of this figure, 87.8% comes from congregational assessments. We also collect fees to offset expenses in endowment administration, payroll and benefit services, and the work of our Planned Giving Department. Remaining income categories are listed below.

<u>Income</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Congregational Assessments	\$3,380,430	87.8%
Administrative Fees	\$242,000	6.3%
Endowment Distribution	\$172,300	4.5%
Interest & Other Income	\$55,000	1.4%
Total	\$3,849,730	100.0%
<u>Expenses:</u>		
Personnel	\$1,457,647	38.5%
National Church Commitment	\$675,310	17.9%
Departmental & Program Expense	\$661,854	17.5%
Administration and Support	\$450,608	11.9%
Mission Subsidy	\$314,500	8.3%
Social Ministries & Commissions	\$221,540	5.9%
Total	\$3,781,459	100.0%

Total budgeted expense for 2005 is \$3,803,761. Personnel costs, including compensation and benefits, make up 38.5% of this figure. The next largest expense is our executive council apportionment to the national church of \$675,310. During Bishop Swing's episcopate, we have always paid the assessment in full. Other expense items are indicated in the following table.

Our parishes' unified giving has allowed our \$14.5 million endowment to grow, spurring us to share God's word boldly through programs like the Jubilate Deo initiative. The Planned Giving Department administers deferred gifts of approximately \$4,800,000, which are allocated between the diocese, various congregations and other diocesan organizations. Custodial funds totaling approximately \$1,200,000 constitute our only financial liability.

### How We Lead

Our governing structures keep the wheels turning. We gather every October for our convention, presided over by our bishop and attended by canonically resident clergy and elected lay delegates. When we are not in session, the Diocesan Council joins the bishop in making sure our policies are

carried out. Each of our six deaneries elect one cleric and two lay persons to serve two-year terms on the council. We elect four clerics and four lay persons to our Standing Committee, which serves as a council of advice to the bishop. The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of California, a nonprofit religious corporation over which the bishop presides with nine directors elected by annual convention, manages our diocesan investment funds; the Episcopal Bishop of California, a Corporation Sole, owns all diocesan and mission property. Our bishop appoints and convention approves one or more chancellors of the diocese to provide us with legal advice when needed.

The complexity of our rules and regulations is a growing edge, one that often calls for a good sense of humor and a greater deal of patience. We acknowledge the opportunities for us to streamline our administration as we seek to follow Jesus more cohesively.

## HOW WE GOT HERE: A Brief History



Isle of California

Our diocesan history is one of progressivism and pioneering. Our first formal gathering rose out of the Gold Rush in 1849 when the Rev. Flavel S. Mines founded Holy Trinity Church in San Francisco. Four years later New Yorker William Kip was consecrated as missionary bishop to California. Over his 40-year tenure, which did not end until his death at age 81 in 1893, he transformed the diocese from a fledgling collection of far-flung missions into a more cohesive network of churches. Our current companion Episcopal dioceses in California—the Diocese of San Diego, the Diocese of Los Angeles, the Diocese of El Camino Real, the Diocese of San Joaquin, and the Diocese of Northern California—have all branched off from our community over the past century and a half.

The last 25 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw us build the first Episcopal divinity school on the West Coast, the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, as well as orphanages, hospitals, and schools, many of which we continue to run today.

Our next bishop, William Ford Nichols, served until 1924. He led us through the devastation of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, which destroyed much of our church property. In 1910 we laid the cornerstone of Grace Cathedral, our diocesan seat located in San Francisco's Nob Hill district.

Edward Lambe Parsons guided the diocese into modernization, closing rural missions that had lost members to the cities. Like many of us today, he was committed to civil rights, ecumenism, and liturgical reform, serving as one of the principal crafters of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. He kept the divinity school running, moving it to its current site in Berkeley, and oversaw the continuing construction of Grace Cathedral.

Karl Morgan Block, fourth bishop of California, was consecrated in 1938. He vigorously pushed for new missions for ethnic groups, notably African Americans, and supported the increased visibility of the Episcopal Church Women. The number of churches more than doubled under his watch as thousands poured into California after World War II.

Bishop James Pike, controversial theologian and spiritualist, took the helm in 1958. The sometimes provocative leader made national headlines as he tackled hot-button issues of race, anti-communism, Vietnam, birth control, and women's rights. Under his watch Grace Cathedral was completed, and in 1965, he made Phyllis Edwards a priest, the first woman to be granted "extraordinary ordination" in

the history of the Episcopal Church.

After Bishop Pike resigned in 1966, Chauncie Kilmer Myers was elected to the post. For the next 12 years, Myers bridged the gap between polarized political groups during the Vietnam War, the counterculture movement, and women's rights.

Over the past quarter century we have continued to lead the way with progressive, far-sighted outreach and witness under our seventh bishop, William Swing. Since his consecration in 1979, Bishop Swing has spoken out on numerous social issues, notably AIDS and the interfaith movement. Both the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and the 1991 Oakland Hills fires called for his pastoral presence, as they caused millions of dollars in damage and destroyed many lives and homes. In 1995 he founded the United Religions Initiative, a global organization devoted to collaboration across religious lines. To celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the diocese published a book about its history entitled *From Gold Rush to Millennium: 150 Years of the Episcopal Diocese of California 1849-2000*. The writer was none other than our first bishop's great great granddaughter!

## **WHAT WE ARE SAYING: Looking to Our Future**

### Gathering to Listen

We faced the challenge of learning more about the opinions, feelings, needs and desires of God's family in the Diocese of California. For this purpose we embarked on a series of Town Meetings throughout the diocese to listen to the status of the diocese and what direction people wanted the diocese to move in.

The facilitators posed six questions:

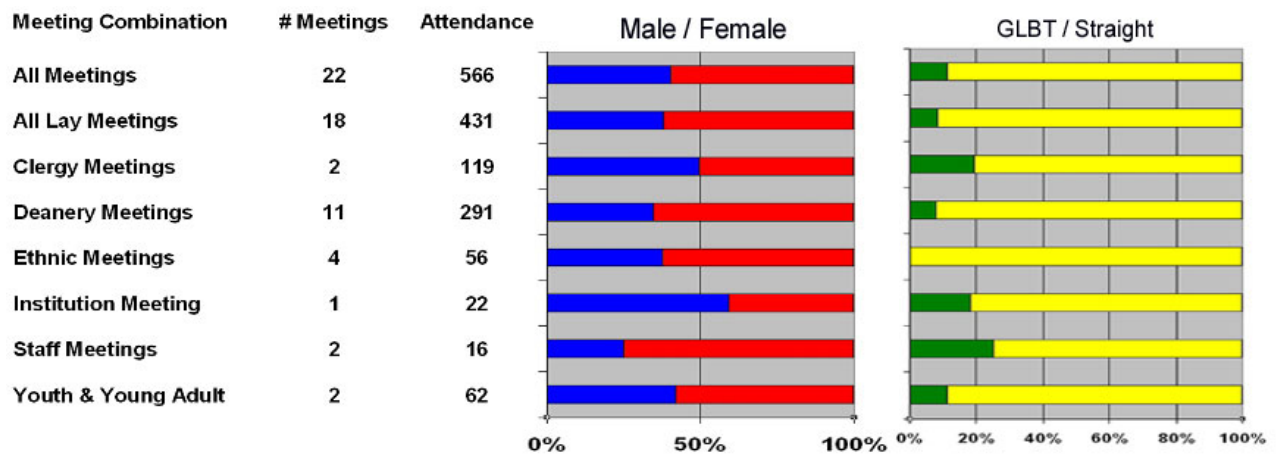
1. What is working well in this diocese?
2. What is not working well in this diocese?
3. Where do you see God calling the diocese?
4. What are the challenges to fulfilling this call?
5. What skills and experience should this bishop have?
6. What personal characteristics should this bishop have?

We had two objectives with regard to coverage of our constituents: breadth and depth. For breadth, we held 11 meetings, (6) for the deaneries (lay only) and (2) for clergy. For depth, we held meetings for the following: the major ethnic groups (1) African-American/Afro Anglicans, (1) Asian and (2) Hispanic, (1) institutions, (1) staff and (1) senior management, (1) youth and (1) young adults.

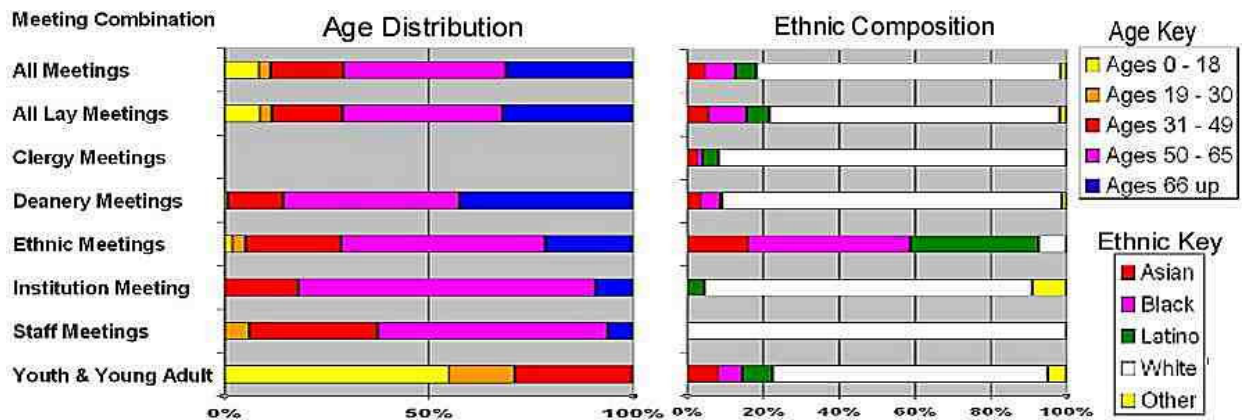
In terms of participation, 566 members of 57 congregations (69%) attended. The actual percentage of attendees in relation to diocesan membership was quite low, with an understandable bulge in attendance from the larger congregations in each deanery as well as those congregations hosting a meeting.

We have compiled a comprehensive database of all the comments received which informed the pertinent sections of this profile as well as the demographics of Town Meeting participants which is available for review at [www.bishopsearch.org](http://www.bishopsearch.org).

The following graphics give a further look at the composition of the meetings.



What is missing in the database is the passion of people in the diocese. We found many different viewpoints and political beliefs represented, some are conservative, but most are liberal. We found that we are most certainly not a single issue church. We listened to people who care deeply about social justice, homelessness, gay, lesbian, bi- and trans-sexual issues, domestic violence and child abuse, diversity and inclusiveness, support for youth and families, new ethnic ministries, mending rifts in the Anglican Communion and more. These meetings reinforced that we may be deeply divided on an issue, yet continue with respect to converse. Above all, there is a deep and abiding passion in our diocese to have our church do more and be more in service of humanity.



Now all that was left to do was to listen and to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit.

### Strengths

The people of the Diocese of California are its core strength. Dedicated and creative lay people boldly lead many ministries, and we are encouraged and supported by the diocese to share our unique gifts in spreading the Good News. Our talented and versatile clergy lead our churches in compelling Gospel witness and worship, welcoming fresh ideas from members while providing strong moral direction. Our appreciation of the important role of deacons in the church and the world has resulted in a flourishing diaconate whose ministries provide a tremendous asset to our communities.

Those participating in Town Meetings expressed the belief that there is a major strength in the open-

mindfulness of the diocese. The accepting attitudes of the congregations, clergy and the diocesan leadership honor the entire spectrum of diversity and reflect our openness to developing creative ministries to serve our parishes and communities. We strive to be tolerant and inclusive and mindful of others' viewpoints, preferring dialogue to monologue. "We have the ability to stay in relationship despite our differences," explained one attendee.

The diocese has many beautiful church buildings, and there is great appreciation for the diocese's two conference and retreat centers in which we gather for spiritual growth and renewal. Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg and St. Dorothy's Rest are used for parish and clergy retreats and summer camps.

Another of the diocese's greatest strengths is the extent to which our presence extends beyond our individual parishes. Forty schools and 65 institutions are important components of our ministry to the greater world. The diocese supports a number of important educational institutions. New leaders are trained through programs like Education for Ministry, the Académia Teológica Latina, the School for Deacons, and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. These schools also provide parishes in the diocese with seminarians who enrich and enliven congregational life. Many elementary and pre-schools are affiliated with parishes throughout diocese. The Episcopal Church is also present at important secular universities through campus ministries and chaplaincies at San Francisco State University, University Of California, Berkeley and Stanford University.



Meals

We are moved by the plight of the suffering. We have been especially vocal with the AIDS epidemic as we tried to serve both our loved ones and the strangers who were dying around us. Our Sojourn Chaplaincy at San Francisco General Hospital trains people to be care-giving chaplains who reach the homeless, the sick, the aging, those with addictions, and victims of trauma and violence. St. Luke's Hospital, the first Episcopal hospital in California, is particularly appreciated even though it is now operated by a private concern. The Ohlhoff Recovery Program, founded in 1958, provides recovery programs for those suffering with addictions. Canon Kip Community House provides permanent studio apartments with supportive services for more than

100 people who were once living on the streets. The Episcopal Sanctuary and Multi-Service Center North provide two meals a day, a change of clothes and a safe place to sleep for 550 shelter residents each night. The Skills Center gives nearly 1,200 homeless and low-income people each year adult education, training and job development.

The diocese and its people are ardent about social justice issues. Support for gender equality is evident in our diocese. Our current bishop has ordained more women than any other bishop in the history of our church and many women serve as rectors, deacons and lay leaders throughout the diocese. Openly GLBT clergy find support and appreciation in this diocese while Oasis, the GLBT ministry of the diocese, will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year. Many parishes have been working through issues of human sexuality well ahead of much of the country and value modeling how Episcopalians can accommodate varying views and significantly address social issues.

### Challenges

The diversity that makes us strong also challenges us. Our church population continues to grey. As more and more non-English speaking families come to the Bay Area, and as our educational structures struggle to provide a future work force, we need to hone our evangelism to people of color,

as well as the many young people who arrive in our communities hungry for direction. Nonetheless, the diocese has not planted a new congregation in years, even though the population has changed and many new communities have emerged. We lack a clear strategy for “church planting.”

We need a clearly communicated and consistent master plan about God’s call for us as a diocese. The current diocesan top-down management style can muffle and distort that call, and does not always use 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies to their full potential. We wish improvement in supporting congregational development, supporting program development, supporting struggling congregations, and overall management techniques. The diocese may pose too many significant administrative challenges to a bishop without an assistant or suffragan.

Our gift of many ministries can be daunting when we need to make strong administrative decisions. Our diocese has always pursued growth, ever since Trinity Church rose up out of the Gold Rush. Yet many of our programs and properties suffer from benign neglect, kept open even as the needs of the populations they serve have changed, draining our resources from more pertinent areas of witness.

Clergy housing and compensation are of great concern, fueled by the high cost of living in the Bay Area. Many congregations face a great challenge in recruiting new rectors because housing is so expensive and our clergy lack the financial resources to effectively live and work among us. Young families are also affected by these economic factors and find themselves priced out of the communities in which they were raised, and are thus forced out of their home parishes. Those who do manage to stay are often so burdened by work and family commitments that they are unable to find the time to participate in the church. The extreme secularity of the Bay Area also serves as a disincentive to church affiliation.

We call for a deeper engagement with critical racial, ethnic and economic issues. People of color have expressed difficulty in advancing to leadership roles, including senior diocesan staff positions and that of rector. Despite our region’s progressive legacy, institutional and societal racism and homophobia permeate our everyday lives. When we try to collectively address pressing justice issues, we are often stymied by the political polarization between members of our diocese, the Episcopal Church, our nation and the world.

Unfortunately, our church suffers from an elitist and exclusive image that hampers our ability to spread the Gospel to those who did not grow up with our language, customs, rituals, or way of accessing the divine. Our relevance seems questionable to many in our surrounding community. We need to continue to pursue coherent, charismatic ways to share our joy and comfort in Christ’s Good News that all of us, regardless of race, gender, age, economic status or sexual orientation, are welcome at God’s table.

### Opportunities

We have the opportunity to support missions as a means of evangelical outreach by providing material resources, clergy and the patience to allow sufficient time to become self supporting. There is great potential for planting new churches because of the population growth that continues in this region. Continued innovation in youth and family ministries can also be fueled by the growing numbers of young people in the region.

Many of us spoke excitedly about opening up more collaboration between deaneries and congregations. There are many opportunities to achieve a strong “intra-diocese” relationship where the parishes can begin to share their resources and strengths and programs, thus leveraging the work

done to date through the diocese. This mutual support can enable parishes to more effectively assist in developing and implementing diocesan-wide priorities.

Existing vehicles of communication such as the Pacific Church News and the diocesan website provide opportunities for improvement in communication, not only within the diocesan community but with the larger community, as a unifying or a prophetic vision. The next Bishop of the Diocese of California will have many opportunities for creative and visionary leadership. The areas of social justice, lay ministry, clergy wellness, more effective use of diocesan resources and the development of a unifying spiritual vision for our faith were all cited as additional avenues of opportunity.

## **WHO WE SEEK: The Role of the Eighth Bishop of California**



Worship & Community

We are looking for a bishop who reflects us: one who is creative and enterprising, one who is aware of different cultural approaches to community and worship, one who seeks ways to share our resources with the needy, and one who can be a prophetic witness to the Gospel in the country's least religious region.

We realize we can not have good leaders without a supportive community. We humbly offer the following desired traits for our eighth bishop, acknowledging our shared membership and responsibility in Christ's Body.

### Relevant Prior Experience

We need someone who has demonstrated fiscal responsibility, has an understanding of stewardship, with fundraising prowess and the ability to manage and expand resources of a large institution in a highly diverse urban setting. Our eighth bishop would be comfortable raising and spending money, and would not be intimidated by outside pressures.

We need someone who will passionately support our unique congregations, communities and ministries. Our eighth bishop would share our love and commitment to children, youth and young adults, and the diaconate. We seek a leader able to work with many different cultures and peoples and whose background includes active, hands-on experience with parochial, business, social and environmental justice issues. The ability to speak Spanish and/or Chinese would be most helpful.

### Leadership

The Bishop of California is a high-profile leader in venues ranging from the local community to the world stage. Guided by grace and the Cross, our eighth bishop would continue our long tradition of progressive, far-sighted witness. The laity and clergy desire four key leadership qualities:

**Vision.** We seek someone who is futuristic and prophetic, who sees the crucial issues before us and can light the road ahead. Our eighth bishop would be alert to history while finding creative and innovative ways for our institutions to spread the Gospel.

**Courage.** We seek someone who will meld faith, wisdom and strategy to focus us on our most

important work.

**Motivation.** We seek someone who will challenge and inspire us to change in necessary ways. Our eighth bishop would be visible, joyful, tireless and enthusiastic, at ease with speaking out on today's church issues.

**Broad Scope.** We seek someone who will be able to focus the work of our diocese on the most critical issues of the day at home and on national and global levels.

#### Administrative, Management and Financial Skills

We need a smooth and skilled manager who can get to the core issues and make smart decisions. We seek someone who can delegate, who grasps technology and organization management and knows how to hire (and fire) people. Our chief pastor would be a good listener and communicator—“respectful, in turn inspiring respect” — and would not shy away from the powerful personalities in our midst. We seek someone who can live and even thrive amidst tension and discord, possessing strong mediation skills to resolve conflicts both within and without the church. Our eighth bishop would know how to work with both the national church and other bishops as well as local and global political leadership.

#### Personal Qualities

We seek someone who cares about tradition as well as about change and the future. Our eighth bishop would cultivate a disciplined spiritual life of both action and contemplation. We call for a leader steeped in both traditional Anglican and creative liturgies, who knows scripture deeply and who lives a vibrant theology and can teach it well. We seek a liturgical leader who can preach and preside with dignity.

We seek someone who is faithful about self care and balance. We are interested in a person who has a stable home life, who has hobbies and a strong support system. Our eighth bishop would be joyful, loving God above all things, as well as a life-long learner with a good dose of humor and self-awareness.

We seek someone with superb interpersonal skills, whose presence inspires openness. We need someone who is willing to hear diverse views, who remembers that patience is often the best form of prayer. Our eighth bishop would respect boundaries and would relate to all—laity and clergy, young and old, gay and straight, and people of all races and ethnicities.

We realize that no one person possesses every one of these gifts. We value humility in our leader, envisioning someone who is able to ask for help and forgiveness and who is open to change and criticism, acknowledging his or her own humanity.

#### **A Final Word**

Thank you for taking the time to read about the Diocese of California and our aspirations for it. If you feel that God is calling you to help us in our discernment we hope that you will complete the nomination packet found at our website, [www.bishopsearch.org](http://www.bishopsearch.org). We are at an exciting point in our history together. At every turn we have been surprised by grace, and we have stayed in communion. As Easter people in a Good Friday world, we are grateful for those assisting us to discern whom God is calling to be the eighth Bishop of California. Please pray for us as we pray for you.



## APPENDIX TO PROFILE OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF CALIFORNIA



The Bay Area and the Diocese of California

### WHERE WE ARE: California and the San Francisco Bay Area

#### The Setting

“California” is a word with instant name recognition, and justifiably so. Its very name is mythic, given by an early 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish novel to an island “west of the Indies,” filled with griffins, populated entirely by women, and “very close to the region of the Terrestrial Paradise” (de Montalvo, Garci Rodríguez, *The Exploits of Esplandian*, 1510). Were it an independent nation, as it claimed to be for a few months in 1846 as the movement to seize the area from Mexico gained momentum, it would be the world’s 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy. California is the nation’s most populous state, tipping the scales at 35.4 million people, triple that of 50

years ago. Its three great population centers, the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego, are the 5<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> largest urban areas in the country. Yet remarkably, California is also the United States’ largest producer of agricultural products.

Five Bay Area counties and two cities comprise the diocese including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Mateo and San Francisco counties plus Los Altos and half of Palo Alto. Together with cities in Santa Clara, Solano, Napa and Sonoma counties, the entire Bay Area is a world center of technology, culture, education, finance, commerce, and, of course, tourism. Its depth and creativity in biotechnology and digital technology is unsurpassed anywhere: if the 21<sup>st</sup> century were a place instead of a time, it would find its name here. The Port of Oakland— and nearby dedicated container ports— has become the superhighway to and from Asia. Berkeley’s University of California, Palo Alto’s Stanford University, and many other local public and private schools have fertilized the life of the mind since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and built the intellectual underpinnings of the state. The Church Divinity School of the Pacific and sister schools in the Graduate Theological Union have nurtured the spirit and provided Bay Area clergy. San Francisco boasts a world class opera, symphony orchestra and ballet, wonderful venues for jazz, rock and hip hop, a stunning Asian Art museum, and restaurants that can surpass those anywhere on earth. All major professional sports are represented in the Bay Area and supported by loyal fans. But unlike the forced urbanism of New York and other eastern cities, it’s only a short trip over the Golden Gate Bridge to ancient redwoods, lighthouses on the Pacific, and the Napa Valley wine country-- or to the Marin County beach where, 426 years ago, the words of the Book of Common Prayer opened the first Protestant service in North America, led by Francis Fletcher, the chaplain of Sir Francis Drake’s *Golden Hinde*.

#### Attitudes

With its history as a great international harbor, the Bay Area presents itself to the world as socially progressive, non-judgmental and welcoming, and with time it has surely become more so. By

contrast, its past is unsavory: it was the instigator of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinese Exclusion Acts, and was later the administrative center for the “relocation” of Japanese-Americans from the West Coast to inland internment camps during World War II. Urban renewal efforts in the ‘50s and ‘60s led to the wholesale displacement of Asians, African-Americans and the poor, many from places they had called home all their lives. Yet in recent years, it has made strides. The Bay Area was among the leaders in welcoming displaced Vietnamese to the United States at the close of the Vietnam War, and today there are large and thriving Vietnamese, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Indian communities. The horrific assassination of San Francisco mayor George Moscone and gay city supervisor Harvey Milk in 1979 sent a shock wave around the Bay Area that did much to delegitimize latent homophobia. While discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, sex and sexual orientation remains a sad reality, the Bay Area continues to move in the direction of increased sensitivity and awareness of these justice issues, thanks in no small part to the strong, ongoing political activism by a broad range of groups.

### Government & Politics

Politically, the Bay Area is deep blue with a strong tinge of environmental green. Traditionally, the area has been two to one Democratic, and voter drives before the 2004 Presidential elections showed a five to one ratio of new Democrats. With Democrats holding large State Assembly and Senate majorities, the region makes itself heard in Sacramento. Nonetheless, there are politically conservative pockets in our diocese, and our parishioners span the political spectrum.

But party politics are only half the story. In making major policy decisions Californians often ditch legislative process in favor of initiative and referendum. Propositions limiting property taxes, denying social services to illegal immigrants, establishing term limits, or banning recognition of same-sex marriage reflect a deep distrust of government. In their celebration of the individual, Californians have risked neglecting the state’s political and public funding structure. As the non-partisan Public Policy Institute of California has noted, legislative term limits have made “long-term planning difficult for lawmakers since [such planning] requires spending money or making sacrifices today for benefits that may not be realized until term limits force the lawmaker out of office. . . . [The limits have also discouraged] . . . leadership that can articulate a vision and inspire support for it.” In 2003, with tax revenues declining during the recession, California faced a \$30 billion budget deficit. Although the deficit was partially “futured” through a \$15 billion bond issue, transportation, education and social services have all suffered and are likely to continue to suffer for the indefinite future. California’s rapid growth and prosperity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were largely the result of its massive and innovative public investments in transportation, education and water; today that infrastructure is deteriorating, and it seems likely that things will get far worse in the public sphere before they get better.

### Economics

The Bay Area suffered significantly from the recession accompanying the “dot com bust” originating in Silicon Valley in 2000.<sup>4</sup> Travel and tourism declined following the September 11, 2001 tragedy. Recovery began in 2004, and Bay Area growth in both payroll and personal income is expected to continue. Increasing energy costs and continued corporate belt-tightening along with a slackening of Asian demand for U.S. products, assure that recovery will probably remain slow.

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<sup>4</sup> The official date for the start of the recession is March of 2001, when there were two quarters of negative growth. However, a significant source of the recession — and one of the things that has made it linger in the Bay Area — is found in the tech stock crash of May 2000, which cost the U.S. some \$8 trillion in stock equity.

In part due to its natural beauty and cultural offerings, the Bay Area is America's most expensive place to live. This has a profound affect on our parishioners and clergy.

One peculiarity of the dot com recession was that outside of Silicon Valley proper, housing prices continued to increase, unlike the last recession in the early 1990s, when housing prices fell for the first time in years. The causes of the continued rise in housing prices are systemic and multifaceted. First, during California's long period of explosive growth, homebuilding did not kept up with population growth even though an enormous amount of construction took place. Recent forecasts from the California Department of Housing and Community Development predict a steady housing deficit in the Bay Area of more than 12,000 units per year for the next decade. This physical supply shortfall pushed prices upwards. Second, the physical shortage was compounded by what has become known as Proposition 13 lock-in. Under Proposition 13, the appraised value of real property is locked as of the original date of purchase, with only small appraisal increases allowed thereafter until the property is again sold. Upon sale, however, the property is again assessed at full market value. The effect has been to encourage residents to remain in their property beyond the point where they would normally downsize. The lock-in effect is also especially pronounced in the Bay Area, where a recent study found that the holding period for property is some three years longer here than in similar areas in other states, as against two years longer in Los Angeles and only one year inland.<sup>5</sup>

There is not only a shortfall in supply, but an excess of demand. Persistently low interest rates, relaxed lending standards, and a broader range of lending products have made it possible for more people to purchase property, but have also pushed the demand curve upward. People have moved in together in both the rental and purchase markets. So, too, with the stock and bond markets languishing during the recession, a good deal of investment money has moved into housing—particularly second homes and vacation homes.

As a result of these economic factors, the Bay Area is now the most expensive housing market in the United States. As of June, 2005, the median home value was \$595,000, as against a national average of a bit over \$200,000.

Finally, there is the question of whether current real estate prices are sustainable; giving rise to fears that housing might turn out to be the next economic “bubble.” The question is a fair one, and both bulls and bears can make strong cases. But if there is, say, a ten percent downward adjustment in the next year or two, it will have serious repercussions.

The Bay Area's economic future is far from assured. According to a recent study by PPIC<sup>6</sup>, despite slowed population growth in the coming years, the state will add 8 to 10 million people – the size of Ohio – by 2025. California could face a huge shortage of resources unless its citizens and lawmakers choose to sacrifice short-term comfort for long-term stability.

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<sup>5</sup>N. Wasi & M. J. White, *Property Tax Limitations and Mobility: The Lock-in Effect of California's Proposition 13* (National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper, 2005)

<sup>6</sup> Baldassare, Mark, and Hanak, Ellen, ed., *California 2025: Taking on the Future and CA2025: It's Your Choice* (Public Policy Institute of California, June 2005).

## Wealth and Poverty

The Bay Area is one of the wealthiest regions in the country. In 2002, per capita income was on the order of \$32,500, while median household income was over \$65,200.<sup>7</sup> Yet poverty is endemic. 8% of the population lives at or below the federal poverty level according to The Association of Bay Area Governments, and the true figure may be twice that once high living costs are taken into account. The number of people at the poverty level increased substantially during the recession, particularly among African-Americans, Hispanics, and children.

Once providing “sweat shop” employment for Asians, the Bay Area’s underground economy continues today with Hispanics working for low wages and receiving few benefits. Almost all are “off the books” employees earning wages that cannot help but assure poverty– even though, as studies have shown, the undocumented are substantial taxpayers. And there are the homeless. No one really knows exactly how many homeless there are in the Bay Area, but the number is significant and painful. A one-night count by San Francisco officials in February of 2005 polled 6,248 homeless people living on the streets or in shelters, emergency facilities and, of course, jails. Homeless advocates challenged the figures as too low. All Bay Area counties save two believe that their homeless populations are growing; estimates from all regions during 2004-2005 total 29,000.<sup>8</sup> There is no end in sight. Yet we value our role in responding to homelessness. From small beginnings with a few cots in the cathedral crypt, we now provide food and shelter to more homeless people every night than anyone else.

Most people in the Bay Area, and most of those in our churches, probably consider themselves “middle class.” But middle-class life differs in the Bay Area from most parts of the United States because of the high cost of housing. Rapidly rising real estate values make many people “house rich and cash poor.” Some plan to fund their retirements by selling their real estate and moving out of the Bay Area, especially those who have roots elsewhere. Many people who would consider themselves wealthy in other parts of the country count themselves as part of the middle class in the Bay Area.

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<sup>7</sup> The raw data in this section comes from Metropolitan Transportation Commission-Association of Bay Area Governments Library, *Bay Area Census* (2003), and is based on the 2000 Census and 2002 American Community Survey estimates.

<sup>8</sup> Fagan, Kevin. “Fewer Homeless People on Streets of San Francisco,” *San Francisco Chronicle*. 15 February 2005.

## Religions

The San Francisco Bay Area features a significant religious diversity, but nearly two-thirds of residents do not claim membership in any house of worship. The Roman Catholic Church claims by far the most members of any denomination, Christian or otherwise. Substantial populations of Jews and Muslims outnumber any other Christian denomination. The many residents of South Asian and East Asian ancestry have made Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism significant factors in the Bay Area's religious life, although accurate numbers for their population are not available.

**Top Religious Affiliations in the San Francisco Bay Area<sup>1</sup>**

<i>Denomination</i>	<i>Congregations (2000)</i>	<i>Adherents (2000)</i>	<i>Congregations (1990)</i>	<i>Adherents (1990)</i>
Unaffiliated		2,805,581		2,126,774
Roman Catholic	200	939,459	206	896,349
Jewish <sup>2</sup>	71	147,000	48	155,500
Black Baptist <sup>3</sup>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	111,179
Muslim <sup>4</sup>	33	55,959	N.A.	N.A.
Latter-Day Saints (Mormon)	114	47,388	123	52,418
Presbyterian Church (USA)	91	39,662	88	43,739
Southern Baptist Convention	187	38,230	145	51,273
United Methodist Church	89	35,279	88	29,935
Baptist General Conference	22	27,895	14	1,913
<b>Episcopal Church</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>27,744</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>29,556</b>
Assemblies of God	108	23,907	99	24,100
Evangelical Lutheran (ELCA)	66	20,458	69	23,850
American Baptist USA	83	20,446	79	28,105
Lutheran-Missouri Synod	47	13,448	50	15,792
United Church of Christ	55	10,754	54	12,717
Seventh Day Adventist	35	10,067	37	10,876
Orthodox <sup>5</sup>	38	16,925	17	N.A.
Other Evangelical Protestant <sup>6</sup>	466	83,238	367	64,337
Other Mainline Protestant <sup>7</sup>	43	10,647	34	4,981
Other Religions <sup>8</sup>	234	6,334	54	3,198
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>4,380,421</b>	<b>1,655</b>	<b>3,686,592</b>

1. Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties.

2. Estimated; includes "secular" Jews.

3. Estimated; most historically African-American churches did not participate in the 2000 survey.

4. Estimated; mosques do not keep membership rolls.

5. Includes 13 Orthodox denominations; about 62% Greek Orthodox.

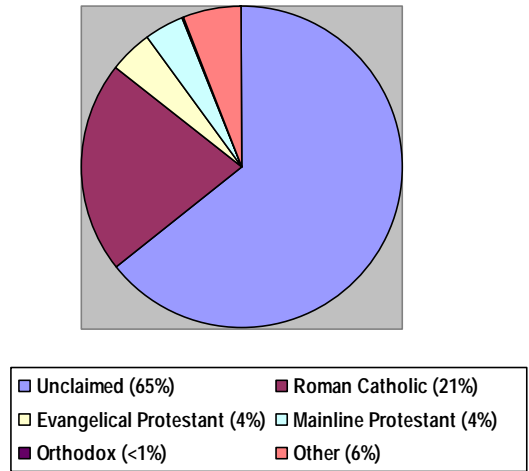
6. Includes 52 Evangelical Protestant denominations with fewer than 10,000 members each.

7. Includes 11 Mainline Protestant denominations.

8. Number of adherents for Unitarian-Universalist (2000 and 1990) and Baha'i (2000); number of congregations also includes Christian Science, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Tao, and Zoroastrian for 2000 and 1990. The actual number of adherents is likely dramatically higher than the available figures.

Source: [Churches and Church Membership in the United States 1990 and Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States 2000](#). © 2002 Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies.

The Bay Area does not reflect the evangelical trends of other parts of the United States. While evangelical Protestants somewhat outnumber mainline Protestants, membership has shifted in recent years from more conservative denominations to more liberal denominations (such as from Southern Baptist to Baptist General Conference). Most Christian denominations showed no more than modest growth during the 1990s, with some showing significant declines, even as the overall population increased more than 19%. Episcopal Church membership declined about 6% locally during this period.



The Bay Area’s prevalent post-denominational spirituality is strongest in Marin County. 26% selected “Other” as their religion in a 2000 study by the Institute of Jewish and Community Research, outpacing Catholics and Jews and almost matching Protestants.<sup>9</sup> While seldom attending services, the group considers itself spiritual. Of the “Otherists,” 26% practiced Buddhism with or without supplementation from Celtic or New Age spiritualism. The remainder included everything from Taoism on one hand to Goddess adherents, paganism, and metaphysics students on the other. Churches in Marin and elsewhere in the diocese have confirmed the study’s finding that many in Marin– and by implication elsewhere in the Bay Area– are genuine spiritual seekers.

### Education

California public education is in foment. Thirty years ago, the state’s school system was one of the country’s finest. Today, its achievement scores and graduation rates are at the bottom of the national average.<sup>10</sup> California went from about \$400 above the national average per student in 1969-70 to about \$600 below in 1999-2000. Today it ranks 11<sup>th</sup> in per capita spending on prisons and other corrections costs, but 30<sup>th</sup> on K-12 education.<sup>11</sup> It has the second highest pupil-teacher ratio of any state; of the tens of thousands of teachers lacking proper credentials, the majority of them work in

<sup>9</sup> Fimrite, Peter, “Alternative Religions Really Do Thrive in Marin,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 December 2002.

<sup>10</sup> The data in this section is largely drawn from a recent RAND Corporation study, S. J. Carroll et al., *California’s K-12 Public Schools– How Are They Doing?* (2005).

<sup>11</sup> Still, things could be worse: It ranks 51<sup>st</sup> in transportation expenditures.

low-income areas predominantly inhabited by people of color. California's Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that 33% of all students attend an overcrowded school or one in need of significant modernization. Schools are in the wrong places; the schools built to teach the baby boomers are now underpopulated due to the high cost of living; many people stay in their large homes to continue their Prop. 13 tax break thereby decreasing turnover in older neighborhoods near schools; areas where new families seek to raise their young have far too few schools.

Some of California's unique educational challenges arise out of its strengths. To have 112 languages spoken is a delightful sign of healthy diversity. So too, is a high rate of immigration, largely now Hispanic, that injects young people into the system to learn, to work, to dream and to build the state, while decreasing the overall average age of the population. Nonetheless, each factor stresses both the school system, especially at the K-12 level, and any organization striving to communicate effectively with the populace, including the diocese.

The red flag is also rising for the California State University system as it struggles to maintain enrollment in the shadow of budget cuts. Current projections indicate a shortfall of higher education space for more than 686,000 students by 2013. Californians are faced with a choice of dealing with the problems at the K-12 level now, or later losing the labor needed to sustain its high tech economy.