



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated Jan 18, 2022)*

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

900 Edgewater Blvd, Foster City, CA 94404, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

[deniseo@diocal.org](mailto:deniseo@diocal.org)

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
60	2		
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
			<b>We're in compliance with CPF requirements.</b>
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Full family	Yes		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)		2 (standard)	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
up to/including \$500/year	Yes	No	No

*"B" classification congregation*

---

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:

deniseo@diocal.org

---

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

Adapting in the pandemic! Our small congregation brought together many individual talents to make connecting during the Pandemic possible. We had volunteers set up video and audio equipment to make live stream Sunday services available on YouTube. This allowed members who were staying home during the pandemic, those who have moved away, and those who are unwell or infirmed to join us weekly. This led us to decide to continue hybrid services now that we are back in person. We found hosts for Zoom coffee hours, and taught non-tech savvy members how to access. We learned how to have choir rehearsal virtually. We came together to celebrate the retirement of our beloved Rector mid pandemic in a safe drive by party that somehow still managed to give us all the connections we had been missing during this difficult time. We reorganized our space for the preschool in order to allow them to serve all the students who wished to attend. These were a series of firsts for us all, yet openness to change allowed us to connect meaningfully and support each other during this time.

---

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

We upgraded the sound system and started live streaming hybrid services! We have seen members that moved out of the area reconnect in the comment section and plan to continue our hybrid services to allow flexibility for attendance. On a more serious note, our members self describe as very real people who manage daily life stresses, struggles and celebrations the best they can. We look to the services as a place to regain peace, perspective and energy to cope with complexities and conflicts of life.

---

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

inclusive, adaptable, creative, motivated

---

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:

deniseo@diocal.org

---

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

We hold two Sunday services, at 8:30 am and 10 am, primarily Rite II and using the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. However, we have occasional Rite I service and use the New Zealand Book of Prayer as the congregation is open to intelligent and well thought out forms of prayer service. We have an inclusive pastoral communion policy. We consider ourselves neither a high church or a low church but somewhere in the middle, flexible. During Holy week we observe the triduum. For Christmas we typically have a 4pm service with a youth pageant, a 7pm and 11pm service on Christmas Eve, followed by 10 am Christmas day. Our membership appreciates the ability of the Rector to connect the weekly lessons and sermon to present day challenges and events to bring a relevant Christian perspective to our life. Additionally our Rector leads creative child appropriate liturgy for several pre-school assemblies on a weekly basis during school terms.

---

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

We open roles to all members, including our choir, greeters, lesson readers, bible study, meditation practice, committees and outreach opportunities. We also utilize the youth group members as often as possible in our services, including acolyte and bringing offerings. We are a church where a child can sit on mom's lap while she sings in the choir, or where potentially each member of a family might have a job on a given Sunday- between roles in the service, church school and setting up for coffee hour. Active engagement is expected and most members find the role they are most comfortable with easily. One might think our members cannot sit still!

---

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

We are lucky to be a small enough congregation that individual conversation among members is typical at Sunday services. Our congregation has highlighted that they feel welcome and cared for when they attend service. During service we ask "for what else shall we pray?" and members or the rector speak to the congregation, we have a moment of contemplation before liturgy. We take a few minutes to share at the beginning of Bible Study, Vestry, School Board and other activities. We currently have weekly meditation, bible study, prayer group and pre-covid held fellowship dinners. We are looking for a leader who can take a measure of what we need, and has the wisdom and communication to lead in a response. We value physical activity and the outdoors and so have weekly pickleball meetups, organized family friendly hikes and group outings to baseball games.

---

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:

deniseo@diocal.org

---

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

Historically our outreach and service has been driven by a particular member's interest and leadership and so we have more than 10 outreach projects of varying size. A few examples: Home and Hope: Home and Hope ([hopeandhope.net](http://hopeandhope.net)) provides shelter for families. St. Ambrose members serve meals, dine with the clients, and sleep over at the Hope Lutheran boarding facilities in San Mateo four times a year. Sandwiches on Sunday: On 5 Sundays per year we serve hot lunch to 60 - 90 people at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. Due to COVID restrictions, we now assemble and distribute brown bag lunches. Holiday Family Sharing: St. Ambrose parishioners make Christmas a little brighter for 3 San Mateo families who are clients of Samaritan House ([www.samaritanhouse.com](http://www.samaritanhouse.com)). We contact the families, purchase and deliver gifts to them a week before Christmas. Our youth group worked with the Sierra Service Project for summer service trips to build housing in San Diego, Smith River, Spokane reservation. We hope to unify our service projects under a cohesive mission, both for potential impact and longevity for the projects and causes.

---

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

We have worked to support El Buen Pastor, a Spanish speaking Episcopal Specialized Ministry in Belmont. St. Ambrose helps with a small stipend to the musical director of El Buen Pastor. He plays the guitar and we have donated musical instruments. Members of El Buen Pastor usually join us at our annual Stewardship celebration, bringing lively musical moments of togetherness. We have a booth at the annual Foster City Festival, a street festival in June. We do a Blessing of the Animals in the Foster City Dog Park open to all in the local community. Through the Home and Hope program (described below) St. Ambrose joins over 30 Peninsula churches and synagogues that participate in this program. We also are part of a large group of Northern California churches who work together for disaster preparedness and disaster response, which has been utilized most in recent years for assistance with wildfire recovery. We have participated in the Episcopal AsiAmerica Ministries in past years. Members also attend the Diocesan Convention and we send delegates to the Deanery.

---

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

We have supported the ministry of the Rev. Elizabeth DeRuff, whose Honore Mill, an organic farm, plants, harvests and renews heirloom wheat, producing flour which members of our church have used to bake our communion bread. We hope to return to this practice when the pandemic relents. In the same area of concern for preserving our earth, families in the congregation started using a carbon tracking log to assess our carbon footprint and suggest ways we can each do our part to improve the overall greenhouse gas emissions. Both these projects focus on individual practice as part of overall climate health.

---

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:  
deniseo@diocal.org

---

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

We have a stewardship season in the fall. Pledges, mailings and reminders of our mission lead up to our Stewardship dinner, a celebration of the time and talents and generosity of the congregation. The shared dinner includes donation raffle baskets of all types, children's games, and a talent show showcasing the diversity of our membership. It is a season and celebration that usually brings renewed commitment to the church as we head into the holidays.

---

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

While the world has become increasingly polarized we view the Parish as a safe place where all people are welcome, can come together for worship and meet on common ground of acceptance, togetherness, giving and wish for improved purposeful living. Our community leans liberal and is certainly diverse in race, ethnicity, experience, resources. We take care not to alienate more marginalized community members and to keep the teachings connected to universal values of acceptance and understanding.

---

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?

Our small congregation has been successful in adapting. For instance, after a Sunday school leadership departure we had multiple members step up into a job sharing situation in order to fulfill the full weekly role for all the classrooms to have a teacher. The response to the pandemic was equally sudden, and yet multiple people stepped up to share their individual talents and together we were able to shift to virtual services, and reach out to members who might otherwise have been disconnected during this time. We have learned that direct and proactive communication to the entire membership is the best approach to avoid any issues when changes must occur.



# Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio  
(last updated Jan 18, 2022)

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:

[deniseo@diocal.org](mailto:deniseo@diocal.org)

### Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Shane Scott-Hamblin	Interim	2020-08	

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. David Ota	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1997-01	2020-07

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
------	----------------	------------	------------

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
---------------	--	--

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
---	---	--	--------------------------------------

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
------------	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------



# Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio  
(last updated Jan 18, 2022)

---

## St. Ambrose - Foster City, California

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

Contact:  
**deniseo@diocal.org**

---

Worshipping Community Web site: <http://www.stambrosefostercity.org/>

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

---

### References

Bishop:

**The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc Andrus**

Diocesan Transition Minister

**Denise Obando**

**deniseo@diocal.org 415-869-7804**

Current Warden/Board Chair

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader