



GROWING
The **KINGDOM** *of*
GOD



HERE *and* **BEYOND**

an invitation to pledge for 2027



INTRODUCTION

Like many parishes in the Anglican tradition, Saint Matthias holds an annual stewardship drive each fall to help our vestry plan the church's budget for the upcoming year. This drive encourages parishioners and regular attenders to prayerfully consider investing in the work of God's Kingdom, here at Saint Matthias and beyond, by making a financial commitment to this church's ministry in 2027. This year's drive will run from October 25th through November 22nd. And after it concludes, the Vestry will use this information to set our budget for 2027.

Some of us may have had negative experiences in the past with churches or ministries asking for money in ways that felt manipulative or coercive; so we want to state clearly, right off the bat, that you are in no way required to give, nor does God's love for you depend one iota on whether or how much you give. St. Paul affirms this when he writes that even while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. In this way God demonstrated that His love for us has never been based upon what we do or don't do. (Rom 5:8)

The decision to contribute financially to the church is best understood as an opportunity to partner with God to bring His Kingdom more fully into our lives and the lives of others, exercising our trust in the Lord as the One who provides for our needs (Mt 6:33). Sacrifice and generosity, while seldom easy or comfortable, are tremendous opportunities to grow in faith and to experience the miraculous provision of the God who multiplied the fish and loaves to feed thousands. The Lord has given us, the leadership of Saint Matthias, a clear and exciting vision of what we believe He is calling us to do in 2027 – and here is an outline of that vision that invites you to join with us in that eternal, kingdom work.

OUR STEWARDSHIP VISION FOR 2027

The past few years, our focus has been on investing in our physical buildings as a means of creating a safe, welcoming, accessible space to live out our mission to worship Jesus Christ, live in His truth, and bless others in His name. That included purchasing our building, investing considerable resources to address deferred maintenance, and remodeling our structure for our needs today.

This year, the theme for our Stewardship Drive is “Growing God’s Kingdom: Here and Beyond.” This reflects our conviction that, with the Lord having enabled us to purchase and update our physical buildings in recent years, He is now calling us to invest in growing His Kingdom both within our parish and beyond.

In particular, we believe God has called us into a multi-year exploration to discern if He is leading us to plant a church in Sonora, part and parcel of which is bringing on a Church-planting Curate, whom God has brought to us in Deacon Caleb Garven.

WHY SONORA?

For more than a century, there was an Anglican presence in Sonora, and the church and clergy there contributed significantly to the planting of St. Matthias in Oakdale. In fact, there was a season when once a month a priest from Sonora would walk the 35 miles and 1600’ elevation change to administer the sacrament at Saint Matthias. But due to various circumstances, Sonora has been without an Anglican church or presence since 2019, which actually led to a number of families from Sonora and the surrounding

area to commute down to Oakdale to worship with us.

In recent years, Father John began feeling God's pull to leading our parish toward discerning if God was leading us to plant a church in Sonora, so that community could also benefit from a parish committed to experiencing, receiving, and embodying the love of Christ in the Anglican tradition. Father John shared this with Bishop Eric, Deacon Dolores, and the Vestry, who all, after prayerful consideration, agreed that God was calling Saint Matthias in this direction. Around this time, Caleb and Dallas Garven moved to Sonora and began attending Saint Matthias. It seemed God's perfect timing that just as Caleb, after years of study and training, was nearing his ordination to the diaconate, we were beginning the process of launching this exploration of church-planting. After many hours of prayer and conversation, our leadership discerned that God had brought this gifted, generous young couple to our parish so that Caleb could serve as our Church-planting Curate.

As our Church-planting Curate, Deacon Caleb will spearhead our exploration of opportunities God may open for church

planting in Sonora. Caleb will be spending time each week in Sonora, building relationships there; but he will also serve regularly in our parish, ministering alongside Father John and under his mentorship. We believe God is calling us to invest in Caleb and his wife, Dallas, as they develop their unique giftings for His glory, wherever He may lead them.

Jesus often used agricultural metaphors for the kingdom of God – the mustard seed that grew to be the largest of trees, the seed that took root and multiplied a hundred-fold, the various workers who planted and watered until the harvest was finally ready. We are grateful for the years, decades – even more than a century – of careful tending by past generations in Oakdale (and Sonora!) that has led to such an abundant harvest in our parish today. And we believe that God now may be expanding our fields to the foothills of Tuolumne County. Though we're in the very early stages, we have now taken this next step of having a Church-planting Curate who can explore the soil, till the land, and begin scattering the seed. We're excited about what God is doing, we're praying for the people in

need He longs to reach, and we're asking you to join us in that new work.

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING THIS VISION

Our financial investment during this initial phase of Deacon Caleb's curacy is almost exclusively toward his part-time salary of \$31,712 per year. At present, this is being subsidized with assistance from the Diocese's Church Planting Fund. For the fourth quarter of 2026 we requested and received a grant of \$4,000 and we are requesting an additional grant of \$20,000 from this fund for 2027. For 2028 and beyond, we are exploring additional means of outside support. However, while God may provide for this venture through outside sources, we believe it is essential for our parish to also financially invest in Deacon Caleb and our efforts in Sonora.

A summary of our projected 2027 minimum expenses is on the following page...

2027 Expenses

Parish Operating Expenses	\$292,682
Salaries & Benefits	\$103,400
Administration	\$36,320
Ministry	\$57,750
Facilities	\$64,200
Professional Services	\$600
Other Expenses*	\$30,412
*primarily Diocesan assessment	
Additional Expenses	\$36,712
Curate / Church Planting	\$31,712
Adolescent Rm Re-model	\$5,000
TOTAL Anticipated Expenses	\$329,394

AN INVITATION TO PLEDGE

We'd like to ask you to prayerfully consider making a pledge to give to the needs we foresee in 2027, based on the direction God is leading us.

First is our General Fund, which pays for our existing ministries, salary & benefits for our rector, and operation of our buildings. For your primary giving to the church, we encourage you to pledge first to the General Fund.

Second is the launch of our new adolescent ministry. We're grateful for the thriving children's ministry we have under the leadership of Chaplain Eva and Traci, from toddlers through 6th graders. As a number of our children are now entering 7th grade, we've discerned the need to begin a ministry specifically catered to these older kids, with the goal of instilling within them a deep sense of their intrinsic worth to the Heavenly Father and encouraging them to incorporate their faith in every aspect of their lives. We believe a critical part of this ministry is to provide the kids with a space of their own, through the re-purposing of our administrative office. Our aim is to re-model that space to better fit their needs sometime during 2027. If you would like to give toward the remodel of the adolescent space or other building improvements, you can make a pledge to the Building Fund.

And finally, we invite you to consider giving toward the support of the Church-planting Curate and his efforts in the community of Sonora. If you would like to give in direct support of this, we invite you to pledge to our new Curate / Church Planting Fund.

Whether you are a parishioner or a regular attender, everyone can support God's financial provision for all the ministries of our parish, because even those who are unable to give financially can still make a commitment to pray for God to provide for these needs through whatever means He wills. If you believe God is calling you to support Saint Matthias' financial needs for the work of God's Kingdom in our parish and beyond, we invite you to make a pledge to give or pray for this in 2027.

Pledges can be made online through the link or QR Code below or by submitting the paper pledge card at the end of this document.

Submit a 2027 pledge at the QR Code or www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/pledgeonline or by using card at the end of this document



A Guide for Discerning how you will support the financial needs of Saint Matthias' kingdom ministry in 2027

- a. Come to God in prayer. Remember He is the God who loves you unconditionally and is committed to providing for your every need. Ask the God of all grace if He would guide you as you discern if He is calling you to give to the ministry of Saint Matthias.
- b. Know that as you think about giving financially, it's not at all unusual to feel concerned, afraid, or confused. If any of those feelings come up, name them to God and ask Him to sanctify your heart & mind in accordance with His truth as you discern His will. If peace continues to elude you, that may be a sign you need to continue to pray and seek God further before making a pledge.
- c. If you discern God is calling you to give but aren't sure how much, the tithe (10% of income), though not a hard-and-fast rule, can be a helpful starting point to consider. Or, you might consider an experiment of increasing by .5% or 1% of your income in 2027.

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d. While it's important to give in faith, it's also important to give wisely. To guard against giving unwisely, ask yourself, would giving this amount...

i. be at the expense of the God-given needs of those in your household?

ii. exacerbate any financial instability or cause you to incur debt

iii. be in disunity with your spouse (if married)?

iv. be an amount you would be giving under compulsion rather than from a heart of generosity?

e. If the answer to any of these is yes, you may need to continue to pray and seek the Lord or ask the advice of a trusted Christian brother or sister.

f. Intercessory prayer for the kingdom work of Saint Matthias is no less critical than a financial contribution. Whether or not you make a monetary pledge, consider whether you would like to commit to praying regularly for God to provide for these financial needs

Make your pledge using the pledge card or saintmatthiasoakdale.com/pledgeonline

Saint Matthias 2027 Pledge Card

Your Name: _____

I commit to supporting the financial needs of Saint Matthias' kingdom ministry in 2027...

(check as many as you desire)

- ☐ with an offering to the **General Operating Fund** of:
\$ _____ ☐ per week ☐ per month ☐ for the year
- ☐ with an offering to the **Building Fund** of:
\$ _____ ☐ per week ☐ per month ☐ for the year
- ☐ with an offering to the **Curate / Church Planting Fund** of:
\$ _____ ☐ per week ☐ per month ☐ for the year
- ☐ by regularly praying for God to provide for these financial needs



Other Considerations

- ☐ Check here if you do NOT wish to receive pledge envelopes (recommended for those who give online or using BillPay).
- ☐ Check here if you would like to revise your pledge for 2026 now that we are $\frac{3}{4}$ through the year. Revision: _____
- ☐ Check here if you desire more information on how to donate stock or to include the parish in your estate planning

Your Signature: _____

Please submit your pledge by **11/22/26** via the QR Code or by submitting this card in the offering plate or by mail to P.O. Box 26, Oakdale, California 95361

