



ST. ATHANASIOS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

FIVE MAJOR GOALS

**Envisioning the
future for our parish,
with God's help**

June 2019

The following Vision and Goals are the result of the strategic planning process which began last September with an all-parish workshop, followed by an extensive online survey and 8 different focus groups.

The summaries of those activities can be found on the parish website at:

<https://www.stathanasius.org/ministries/parish-council/>

In March of this year, the Parish Council had a retreat during which they distilled all of the collected information and came to a consensus about the Five Major areas of focus for the next 3-5 years. Obviously, circumstances can change priorities, and we have to remain flexible and respond to things beyond our control. But we believe that these major goals address the concerns and the “heart” of the parish as it exists right now in our current circumstances.

Yesterday the ministry team leaders met to discuss these goals and give their feedback. Some of the ministry teams will be meeting this summer to consider how they might reflect these major priorities within the work of their teams in the next several years.

In September, we will come together as a parish once again to share some of these ideas with everyone.

Please pray that God will guide all of us, clergy and laity, as we work towards these goals to His glory!

VISION

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Ephesians 3:14-21

Our vision is that we would be rooted and grounded in **FAITH, LOVE AND HUMILITY**, so that we might show forth and be sanctified by the **FULLNESS OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH:**

- in the **FAITHFUL WORSHIP** of the Holy Trinity,
- in the **LOVING CARE** of our people, visitors, inquirers,
- in **CO-LABORING FOR THE GREATER GOOD** with the Christian community,
- in **SERVING WITH LOVE AND GOOD WORKS** our Goleta/Santa Barbara community,

...Unto the inheritance of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

MAJOR GOALS

1. FAITHFUL WORSHIP OF THE HOLY TRINITY

We will continue to have our main focus be the continued development and participation in the holy worship of the Orthodox Church as to experience the love and beauty of the Kingdom of God.

Through education of our people and the community:

- a. In homilies
- b. In classes and study groups
- c. By praying for specific community needs

Through obedience to the Tradition:

- a. Increase the number and types of services
- b. Combine with other Orthodox Churches for feast days, etc.

Through outreach to our members:

- a. Finding available times
- b. Identifying special needs
- c. Encouraging participation
- d. Training more people to do the services

This goal touches on other goals as well: outreach, education, connecting people, serving the community.

We will know we have achieved this goal when:

1. We have increased participation in the services and church activities.
2. We see more participation in the sacraments.
3. We have developed a culture of “Spiritual Warriors.”

2. DEVELOP SPIRITUAL WARRIORS

- Nurture and inspire ALL in the development of spiritual strength and discipline -

This idea offers opportunities for growth, bonding, learning and mentoring.

- Growth: The deepening of our roots in faith, prayer rules, accountability with spiritual father/mother and father confessors.
- Bonding: Through small groups, book studies and bible studies
- Learning: about liturgy, saints and Fathers of our Faith, seminars
- Mentoring: Encouragement and discovery on our mutual spiritual journey

We will know we have achieved this goal when:

1. We have overflowing attendance at services and educational programs.
2. There is evidence of people within the parish truly taking care of each other out of love for one another, especially those in need.
3. People know each other better and as a result, feel more connected to the entire "Body."
4. There is greater knowledge of the Faith among all age groups.
5. We are cultivating inter-generational relationships.
6. More people are serving on ministry teams.
7. Parishioners are excited about the Faith and sharing the Faith with their non-Orthodox friends, families, acquaintances, colleagues, etc...

**3. BE A LOVING FAMILY WHERE RELATIONSHIPS
ARE BUILT AND NURTURED
AND MEMBERS' SKILLS ARE MATCHED WITH
OTHER MEMBER'S NEEDS.**

- Love Each other
- Help Each other
- Show up

This idea offers: love and care to the parish and supports the SAOC vision by co-laboring for the Greater Good.

We will know we have achieved this goal when:

1. A spirit of generosity is pervasive.
2. It is “easy” to plug in to the church community.
3. We know what people can do and what people need and have a team to connect them.
4. We have a team that organizes events.
5. We have a babysitting team for church events .
6. Fun events are a normal part of parish life.
7. People who have left the church stay connected to our community.
8. We have an “onboarding plan” for newcomers.

4. BE A LIGHT TO THE GREATER GOLETA/ SANTA BARBARA COMMUNITY

We will continue to reach out into our community and build upon the success of our St. Brigid Fellowship by:

1. Sustaining and building upon the existing outreach to the homeless and most in need.
2. Exploring new and innovative ways of sharing the light of Orthodoxy, such as:
 - A once-a-month meal and teaching or discussion group following Great Vespers, to which our members can invite non-Orthodox friends and colleagues;
 - More visibility and participation in community events (Goleta clean-up days, Lemon Festival, I Madonnari Festival, etc...)
 - Participation in awareness-building efforts within the greater Christian community. (Abortion, treatment of the homeless, human trafficking, etc...)
 - Hosting of speakers and events that are of interest and/or service to the greater community. (Liturgical Arts Festival, Concerts, Speakers on practical issues that could be of help to the general public, etc...)
 - Pursuing opportunities to serve our neighbors in new ways as representatives of our parish. (Singing at nursing homes, participating as a church family in good works through local initiatives and organizations.

This goal provides an increased number of opportunities for our members to become Christ's hands and feet within our community on behalf of the Church, and to help spread the Good News of Christ and His Holy Church.

This goal supports SAOC's vision by enabling us to "serve with love and good works" in our community, and to "co-labor for the greater good with the Christian community."

We will know we have achieved this goal when:

1. We see increased participation of our parishioners in good works on behalf of the Orthodox Church out in the community.
2. More visitors come to our church for services and other events, either brought by parish members or drawn to us because of our visibility within the community.
3. We have more inquirers and catechumens.

5. DEVELOP A DELIBERATE FINANCIAL PLAN

To include:

- Development of a funding source by utilizing the back property.
- Implement an ambitious capital campaign.
- Develop long term operating projections looking five years forward.

This idea offers a sense of stability and confidence to our parishioners and demonstrates our commitment to the future wellbeing and effectiveness of Saint Athanasius.

We will know we have achieved this goal when:

1. We have more paid staff and trained volunteers to support current and future programs and ministries.
2. We see steady, practical forward movement toward construction of the temple.
3. We have an organized, active capital campaign targeting the building project and providing regular ongoing feedback to the Parish regarding progress toward specific goals.
4. We have a specific, agreed upon plan to utilize at least a portion of the back property to generate funds to help facilitate the building project.
5. We have developed a written set of projections anticipating operating costs for the next 5 years.