

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR

In 1867, Church of Our Saviour became the first Protestant Church in the San Gabriel Valley. It was the dream of Mrs. Frances Vinton of Rhode Island who, in 1859, envisioned a time when "The Glory of God might be told from sea to sea."

COS began as a Sunday School. It gained strength when Rev. C.F. Loop, an Episcopal Priest, began to hold services at the school. Services were attended by some of the most prominent figures in early California history, most notably the family of Don Benito Wilson, whose daughters Annie and Ruth attended the Sunday School as well. This small Sunday school converged with its destiny when Mrs. Vinton sent \$2500 in cash via stagecoach to the Los Angeles Diocese to purchase land on Roses Road and build a church.



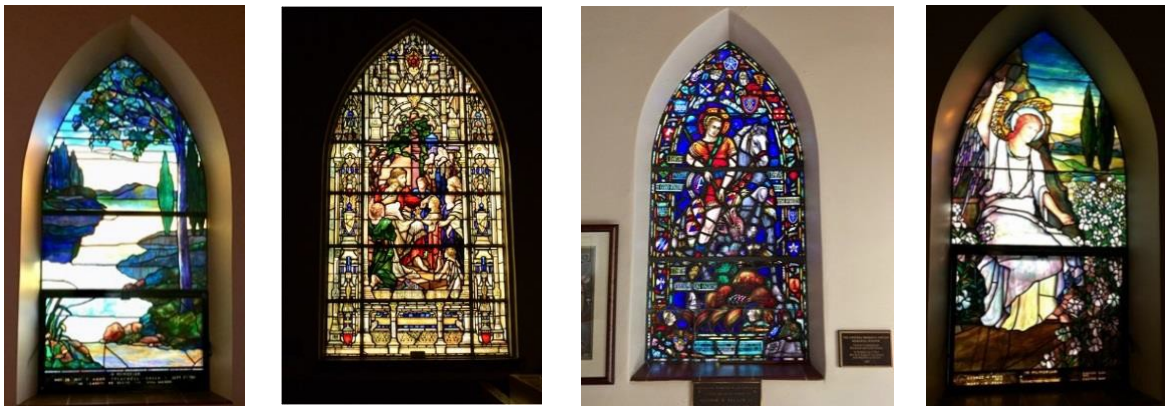
Overseeing the construction of the new church was Rev. Dr. Henry Messenger, using the parcel of land to the west for burials. Today, the historic San Gabriel Cemetery continues to operate and contains gravesites of many of the original settlers, including the Don Benito Wilson family.



After some financially challenging years, a period of expansion took place in the early 1900s. The sanctuary was expanded, from seating 90 to 250. Hitching racks (for horses and carriages) had to be set out to accommodate the overflow of congregants. By the 1940s General George S. Patton Jr. returned from World War II and worshipped at COS, the church where he was baptized and confirmed.



Throughout the 1950s, the church continued to grow, both in the number of parishioners and in the size of the campus, adding a small chapel and enlarging the Parish Hall. In 1955, an additional three acres of land was purchased and another enlargement of the church began. Today, many details of the parish's history may be found depicted in the 32 magnificent stained-glass windows, two of which were manufactured by Tiffany & Co.



In 1969, the former rectory was renovated and became the site of A Child's Garden School where today 16 teachers and administrators provide a high-quality pre-school through pre- Kindergarten program for 105 children.

While COS retains a prominent place in San Gabriel Valley history, its mission is focused on the present. What began as a senior-meals program in 1985 grew into Our Saviour Center and the Doris Dann Kid's Campus in El Monte (<http://www.our-center.org/>), which currently has 4 full- time and up to 50 part-time employees serving 140 children each day, resulting in 8,500 hours of after-school programming each month. The Center also operates a food bank, providing food and other assistance to roughly 350 families each week. In 1991, the Cleaver Family Wellness Clinic, also in the city of El Monte, was added to Our Saviour Center to help meet the basic health needs of the local community, and now has 6 full-time staff who

manage 515 patient visits per month. These ministries, so much a part of COS's DNA, rely upon significant financial support from the parish, and the sustainability of that support is a question the Vestry and congregation must address in 2019.



Jubilee Homes came to COS in 2003 under the watchful care of the Reverend Bill Doulos, COS deacon and Associate for Pastoral Care, who still provides outstanding leadership for this outreach ministry. Located in Pasadena, Jubilee Homes provides four homes, 50 beds, and a support system for those recovering from addiction or transitioning from prison. "Graduates" from Jubilee Homes often speak during Sunday morning services, sharing their recovery stories and the important part that Bill and COS play in their lives.



In 2011, the Community of Divine Love – an Episcopal monastery in the Benedictine tradition, took up residence at two of Church of Our Saviour's adjacent properties. Their main ministry is chaplaincy to the incarcerated.

As the demographics of San Gabriel and the surrounding communities have changed, so has COS. In 2010, Rev. Ada Wong-Nagata joined the staff to lead the Cantonese speaking congregation. In 2014, the Rev. Thomas Ni joined the staff, bringing with him a small Mandarin speaking congregation that has since grown to 80 adult parishioners and many young children.

In the fall of 2019, the Rev. Jeffrey D.S. Thornberg answered the call to be the rector, jumping headfirst into a global pandemic. He has brought an energy and vibrancy to the parish and continues to come up with creative ways to bring worship to a struggling world.

Church of Our Saviour is a vibrant, diverse community set in a beautiful 5.5-acre campus, with many mature trees and native vegetation. The church campus is adjacent to the San Gabriel Cemetery, whose history is shared with COS. The church community is alive with a stellar music program, many active outreach ministries, and a campus life that is welcoming and inviting to all.

