OPPORTUNITY PROFILE

Lead Pastor

Good Shepherd Church

Sacramento, California

GOOD SHEPHERD

Presented by:

SIMA Partners

Rick Heltne, Partner and Senior Search Consultant - rheltne@simapartners.com

THE CONTEXT

The Church

Good Shepherd Church (https://www.gschurch.us/) is a vibrant faith community located in Sacramento County, California. Possessing a core, yet unique expression of Lutheran heritage and theology, Good Shepherd is committed to helping people experience the grace that is the great gift of God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's active work in and through its ministry.

As the Holy Spirit shapes its life and mission, Good Shepherd demonstrates a willingness to be adaptive and is experiencing a season of exciting growth and transformation, both spiritually and numerically. This momentum is reflected in expanding membership, the re-opening of the preschool, and in strengthened connections among congregation members.

Good Shepherd's mission is to "bring God's hope, help, and healing to our changing world". By expressing deeply held ideals of love, accountability, generosity, relationships, and transformation. Good Shepherd seeks to empower members to receive, respond, and redirect the generous love of Jesus Christ. Emboldened with this framework, the mission priorities include:

- Invite and foster a movement of the Holy Spirit that will transform Good Shepherd attendees into ministers of hope in Jesus Christ to our community. Growth in this area includes creating an increasingly missional culture and becoming an incubator for innovative new ministries.

- Expand & enhance existing ministry programs and launch new ministries that prioritize families. Provide opportunities for deep belonging and discipleship growth for persons at all ages and stages of life. Growth in this area includes the relaunch of our preschool, a thriving small group ministry, and periodic all church School of Ministry offerings. Through the leadership of our 6 full time Directors, a continuing strategic goal is to expand ministries for children, students, and families to make Good Shepherd an even more vibrant and positive place for families to flourish.

- Be a beacon of God's hope, help, and healing through generosity, in partnership with individuals and organizations doing audacious things in the name of Jesus both locally and worldwide. Good Shepherd seeks to provide the transformational power of healing on Good Shepherd's campus, through Good Shepherd's pastors and Deacons' visits with Good Shepherd people, through Small Groups, and in the community. Provide help to the hurting, vulnerable, and those in need through outreach ministries and partnerships with local community programs and support for several missions abroad.

Good Shepherd Church is blessed with financial strength! We are debt-free, have built up strong reserves, and consistently spend less than our annual revenue. The ministry of Good Shepherd is also underpinned by a growing culture of stewardship which invites all members of the congregation to embrace generosity of their time, talents, and treasure as a shared spiritual discipline that not only funds ministry, but also forms hearts and deepens faith.

To this end, Good Shepherd is excited about a recently launched a generosity initiative called The God First Life! Good Shepherd people have pledged to give $2.7M to their church during Calendar Years 2026 & 2027.

Church Facts

During the 10 months ended October 2026, Good Shepherd's average weekly worship attendance was 308 people, an increase of 2% over the 10 months ended October 2025.

Anchored by the Worship Center, which seats 405 people, and located on the corner of a major intersection, Good Shepherd's campus includes six well-maintained and modernized buildings, each serving a unique purpose. Five of these buildings surround a large courtyard containing shade trees, providing a comfortable space for people to engage in fellowship.

Demonstrating a commitment to a thriving, spiritually formative faith community, the 2026 Ministry Funding Plan (budget) of $1.7M was dedicated to: Powerful Worship 26%, Equipping the Saints 17%, Community Impact 12%, and Families Forward 10%. Of the total Ministry Funding Plan, 58% is allocated to compensation and benefits for pastors & staff (https://www.gschurch.us/staff) as the stewards of core areas of ministry (this includes full time Directors for kids and youth and adult formation).

Good Shepherd became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ("ELCA") in 1981. In October 2026, members of the Congregation voted in overwhelming majority to initiate the process to terminate Good Shepherd's covenant with the ELCA. The final vote in the denominational discernment process will take place in early 2027.

The Community

Good Shepherd is located in Arden Arcade, an unincorporated community in Sacramento County and as of 2023 is home to approximately 96,000 residents. The area is characterized by its diverse population and mix of affluence and need. The median household income stands at $71,767, with a per capita income of $43,815. However, 18.5% of residents live below the poverty line, indicating significant economic disparities within the community.

Employment in Arden Arcade spans various sectors. The most common industries include health care and social assistance, retail trade, and educational services plus its proximity to Sacramento, which provides residents with access to government, professional and administrative positions.

Lifestyle in Arden Arcade reflects its suburban setting and historical development. The community features a blend of mid-century neighborhoods and newer developments. Housing options range from modest apartments to upscale homes, with a homeownership

rate of 45%. The area is served by the San Juan Unified School District and several private schools, offering educational opportunities from preschool through high school.

The Transition

After serving as Senior Pastor of Good Shepherd for nearly 18 years, Pastor Todd Wallace's retirement is effective as of November 2026. He has emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit through patient, steady leadership, guiding the congregation to deepen their understanding of the presence of the Holy Spirit. This emphasis has resulted in a church that has gone from a declining congregation to significant growth and vibrancy over the years. Todd is beloved by the congregation for his steadfast and effective ministry but the timing is right for transition to a new pastoral leadership.

It is the desire of the Church Council, Call Committee and Pastor Todd Wallace that this transition goes exceedingly well with a smooth and intentional handoff to the new Lead Pastor. Long-time Executive Pastor Sandy Long has been appointed by lay leaders of Good Shepherd to serve as Interim Lead Pastor until the congregation calls its next Lead Pastor.

THE NEED, THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE ROLE

Good Shepherd established three-year goals for the ministry:

- Proactively guide Good Shepherd Church through a healthy Lead Pastor transition, while maintaining organizational stability, mission momentum, and congregational enthusiasm as we find the next senior pastor that Jesus is calling to lead us into the future.

- Expand the effort of intentionally encouraging the entire congregation to embrace financial generosity as a shared spiritual commitment. This approach aims to build a culture of stewardship across the church, where responsibility is seen as collective.

- Empower our ministry leaders to boldly innovate in ways that enhance our programs for kids, students, families, adults of all ages, worship, creative arts, and discipleship growth to increase engagement and Kingdom impact.

It is into this thriving and anticipatory context that Good Shepherd is seeking to call its next Lead Pastor. Believing that prayer lies at the root of the spiritual life and leadership, the right fit person will be a Spirit-filled visionary leader who will not only guide Good Shepherd into its future but be committed to articulating and advancing a vision for the future as led by the Holy Spirit. Our next Lead Pastor must also be gifted as a strategic thinker so that dreams, visons, and plans are prioritized and become a reality with demonstrated experience in leading a church from its current reality to new heights. This will require creativity and innovation that considers a diversity of points of view while astutely identifying the best path forward.

To ensure that visions and plans become a reality, the right fit individual will also need to have experience in and skill as a 'stewardship leader'. This includes fiscal understanding and the expansion of congregational generosity.

The person called to Good Shepherd will most of all be a gifted communicator, with exceptional preaching skills. Their preaching will be rooted in Scripture and led by the Spirit conveying the teachings of Jesus and the Gospel tinged with a theologian's gravitas. Ultimately, the ideal candidate's preaching and teaching will lead to personal spiritual transformation so that individuals and the congregation are loving and living like Jesus, expressing that love to all of those they encounter.

In order build trust and foster congregational connections and unity, the next Lead Pastor of Good Shepherd will also demonstrate a willingness and skill at engaging members and building relationships with them. This will include people of all generations, background, and life circumstances.

Finally, a significant need is how Good Shepherd can more effectively engage its immediate neighborhood and community. This includes not only building awareness of the opportunities which exist at Good Shepherd but also how might Jesus' be calling Good Shepherd to expand its impact meeting the needs of the 'least of these'. Good Shepherd Church and the Arden Arcade neighborhood have and are experiencing ethnic and economic shifts. Good Shepherd sits at a strategic location with the resources and willingness to meet needs and transform lives. A vision and strategy for how this can best occur, while not being politically partisan, will be an exciting endeavor for the right person.

> According to congregation members, the next Lead Pastor of Good Shepherd is the one who…
> *"Keeps the momentum going and helps Good Shepherd reach its potential."*
>
> *"Builds relationships and 'sees' others thereby creating personal accessible, especially for young people."*
>
> *Continues the trajectory of spiritual and numeric growth, financial health and community engagement."*

In summary, while the transition of a long serving and highly regarded Senior Pastor is never easy, Good Shepherd is excited for what will come next in its life and ministry. The congregation is ready to welcome a new leader as there is much anticipation regarding what new and exciting ventures the Holy Spirit will lead the congregation into. The position offers a tremendous opportunity to partner with a faith community endowed with deep faith, a desire to grow and expansive talent and financial resources. Knowing that the faith community is expectant for spiritual transformation, the unique expression of Lutheran theology that is Good Shepherd offers the next Lead Pastor a framework in which to live, lead, preach and teach with confidence.

The opportunity is significant, the challenges are real but, in those challenges, the person Jesus is calling will see even greater opportunity!

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will possess the following minimum qualifications:

- Master of Divinity from an accredited seminary/divinity school
- Theological alignment with Good Shepherd
- Ten or more years of measurable success and experience in pastoral ministry leadership:
    - Demonstrated track record of innovation and sustainable growth
    - Experience supervising, discipling, and encouraging staff and volunteers
    - Competency in organizational administration and fiscal management
    - Experience in worship planning and leadership

INQUIRY PROCESS

To apply for the position, please contact Rick Heltne of SIMA Partners via email (rheltne@simapartners.com) and include:

- A current resume/CV outlining your experience and relevant qualifications.
- Preaching and Teaching sample videos

In addition, please also provide succinct responses to the following:

- Comment on the ways in which you are personally aligned with the mission, values, and theological perspectives of Good Shepherd.
- Describe your Christian faith journey, practice of spiritual disciplines and the Holy Spirit's impact in your life and ministry.
- Briefly outline your experience in leading ministries within a congregational setting, as well as oversight of staff and volunteers.
- Briefly articulate your understanding the role of the church in the current cultural milieu.
- Describe what is most motivating or compelling to you about the position.